

# Matthew - Introduction & Background

## Authorship

External evidence favors Matthew as the book's author. External sources include Pseudo Barnabas, Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Papias, Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius, Jerome, Dionysius, Theophilus, Cerinthus, Valentinus, and Tatian.

Other sources confirming the authenticity of Matthew include the Didache, Ignatius, and Barnabas' Epistle. The virtual unanimous voice of the early church is that Matthew is the book's author. One wonders how such powerful tradition and external testimony could have emerged if Matthew had not written the book. Interestingly, the earliest copies of the book contain the superscription "according to Matthew." Only Matthean authorship explains the church's early acceptance of the book.

Internal evidence also demonstrates Matthean authorship. Although Matthew does not identify himself as the book's author, such an omission is not surprising. As a tax gatherer (10:3) he no doubt felt shame regarding his former profession and therefore omitted his name from the book.

Interestingly, the book also omits other stories that Jesus told about tax gatherers (Luke 18:9-14; 19:1-10). Matthew's reluctance to identify himself as the book's author no more disqualifies him from being its writer than John's continual reference to himself as the disciple whom Christ loved (John 19:26) disqualifies him from being the author of the fourth Gospel. If a forger had written the book he probably would have used a prominent name rather than create an anonymous work.

Despite Matthew's desire for anonymity, several internal clues still point to him as the book's author. For example, while the other Gospel writers refer to a party thrown for the Lord in Matthew's house (Mark 2:14-15; Luke 5:29), Matthew refers to this same event as taking place in "the house" rather than "his house" (9:10). Moreover, while the other writers refer to this occasion as a great banquet (Luke 5:29), Matthew refers to it simply as a dinner (9:9-10). Also, unlike the other Gospel writers' list of the various disciples, the phrase "tax collector" is only associated with Matthew in Matthew's list of the disciples (10:3). In addition, while Matthew's Gospel simply alludes to Matthew as a "tax gatherer" (10:3) or a publican (9:9), the other evangelists use his surname Levi when referring to him (Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27,29). Interestingly, Paul followed a similar practice by only referring to himself with his post conversion name when penning his letters.

Matthew the tax collector would be a logical candidate as the book's author since it contains more financial references than any of the other Gospels. Allusions to money and

rare coins are replete throughout the book. Only Matthew speaks of a "talent" (18:24; 25:14-30). This monetary denomination was a sum of such magnitude that only a tax gatherer would have been familiar with it. In fact, Matthew uses three words for money that none of the other Gospel writers use (17:24,27; 18:24). Other financial terms found throughout the Book of Matthew include debt, account-taking or reckoning, and money-changers (18:23,24,27; 25:19,27). With the exception of debt, these terms are unique to Matthew. Matthew is also unique in comparison to the other Gospel writers through his employment of the terms gold (*chrusos*), silver (*arguros*), and brass (*chalkos*). Interestingly, only Matthew records Christ's payment of the two-drachma tax (17:24-27). Other factors make Matthew an appropriate candidate for the book's writer. For example, his occupation as a publican (Matt 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27) would have meant that he was literate and adept at keeping records. Also, because Matthew was from Capernaum (Mark 2:1-14), he would have been a logical candidate to write the Gospel since it seems to place a special emphasis upon this city (4:13; 9:1; 11:23). Furthermore, because Matthew was a Jew living inside the land, he would have been familiar with the Jewish geography, history, customs, ideas, classes, and terminology that are so prominently displayed throughout the book.

### **Biography**

Matthew's biography demonstrates God's grace. As a tax gatherer (Matt 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27), he was considered both a thief (Luke 3:12-13; 19:2,8) and a traitor by his peers. In biblical times, tax gatherers were placed in the same category as sinners, Gentiles, and harlots (Matt 5:46; 18:17; 21:31-32; Luke 7:34; 15:1; 18:13). Despite this vile background, Christ extended grace to him and even selected him to write the first book of the New Testament canon featuring Christ's royal identity.

While Levi was his surname (Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27), Matthew was his apostolic name. His name means "gift of the Lord." He was the son of Alphaeus (Mark 2:14) and his hometown was Capernaum. The ministry of John the Baptist and Christ may have already impacted him since he immediately obeyed the Lord and followed him when called (9:9). Matthew walked with Christ for most of His ministry and was therefore an eyewitness to Christ's incarnation and earthly ministry. Matthew is listed as being in the inner circle as one of the original twelve disciples (Matt 10:1-4; Mark 3:13-19; Luke 6:12-16). Luke also mentions him as waiting with the other disciples for the Holy Spirit after Christ's resurrection (Acts 1:13).

### **Audience**

Although no specific target audience is mentioned, various clues make it apparent that Matthew had a believing Jewish audience in mind. The Jewish nature of the letter is apparent by noting several factors. First, the book contains a disproportionate number of OT citations and allusions. Of the book's 129 OT references, 53 are direct citations and 76 are allusions. On 13 occasions, Christ's actions are said to be a fulfillment of the OT.

Second, the book follows a five-fold division. The five major sermons of the book are delineated through the repetition of the concluding formula "when He had finished saying these things" (7:28; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1). This five-fold structure would have immediately been recognizable to the Jewish mind since Jews had a tendency to categorize items, such as the Book of Psalms and the Pentateuch, according to a five-fold division. Third, although originally written in Greek, the book evidences a Hebraistic style, parallelism, and elaboration.

Fourth, *tote* ("then" or "at that time") reflects a Jewish style. While this term is employed 90x in Matthew, it is only used 6x in Mark, 14x in Luke, and 10x in John. Fifth, the vocabulary of the book is distinctly Jewish. The following Jewish terms are found in the book: David, Jerusalem as the Holy City (4:5; 27:53), city of the great king (5:35), lost sheep of the house of Israel (10:6; 15:24), kingdom of God, and kingdom of heaven. Sixth, the subject matter of the topics covered is distinctly Jewish. Among the topics covered are the Law, ceremonial defilements, Sabbath, kingdom, Jerusalem, temple, Messiah, prophecy, prophets, David, Abram, Moses, scribes, Sadducees, and Pharisees.

Seventh, Matthew's genealogy reveals a Jewish audience since Matthew traces Christ back to David and Abraham rather than back to Adam (Luke 3). Eighth, Matthew places a special focus upon the Apostle Peter. Because Peter was the apostle to the circumcised (Gal 2:7-8), Matthew's focus on Peter harmonizes with the Jewish emphasis of his book. Ninth, unlike the other Gospels that explain Jewish customs to Gentile audiences, Matthew leaves these same Jewish customs unexplained. This is true not only with regard to Jewish rulers (Matt 2:1,22; 14:1; Luke 2:1-2; 3:1-2) but it is also true with regard to ceremonial cleansing (Matt 15:2; Mark 7:3-4). The customs that Matthew does explain are of Roman rather than Jewish origin (Matt 27:15). Although some of Matthew's writings seem to anticipate at least some kind of Gentile audience by giving the interpretation of some Jewish words (1:23; 27:33,46), it does seem to be a general rule that Matthew provides fewer interpretations of Jewish customs than any other Gospel writer.

Tenth, various church fathers, such as Irenaeus, Origen, and Eusebius believed that Matthew wrote to a Jewish audience. Not only was Matthew written to a Jewish audience but to a believing audience as well. In other words, Matthew's audience primarily consisted of Jewish Christians. Both Eusebius and Origen indicated that Matthew was written to those within Judaism who came to believe.

### **Place of writing**

Numerous suggestions have been made for the place of writing of Matthew's Gospel. Among them are Alexandria, Edessa, Syria, and Caesarea. However, Judea and Syrian Antioch are the primary places where it is believed that Matthew's Gospel originated from. The Judean place of writing is adhered to because that is the general place where Matthew lived and worked in the years following the birth of the church. However, it seems

preferable to argue that Matthew wrote his Gospel from Syrian Antioch. Interestingly, Ignatius was the first known church father to quote from Matthew's Gospel. Ignatius was the Bishop of Antioch. Also, if Matthew's stylistically Hebraic Gospel was originally composed in Greek, then Antioch would serve as a logical place of origin for the book since the city was primarily comprised of Greek speaking Jews. Antioch would also be an appropriate place to write the book from since the city served as the base of operations for the church's early Gentile missionary outreach (Acts 11:19-30). Matthew's emphasis upon Gentile inclusion and Israel being presently set aside would serve as a helpful explanation for the church during this critical transitional time period.

### **Date**

Matthew obviously had to have been written prior to 110 AD since Ignatius makes reference to the book. Liberals typically date the book after 70 AD since they believe there is no way that Matthew could have known of the events of 70 AD ahead of time (Matt 21:41; 22:7; 24:2). However, this position emanates from an anti-supernatural bias rather than sound scholarship.

Others date the book late on the basis that the book incorporates a baptismal formula that began later in church history (28:19). However, this statement could have just as easily proceeded from the lips of Christ.

Still others suggest a late date on the basis of the continuation of the name of the potter's field (27:7-8) and the continuation of the story that the disciples stole the body (28:13,15) even "to this day." Late date proponents argue that this phrase suggests a lengthy period in between the transpiring of the recorded events and the writing of the book. However, not too long of an intervening time period is needed in order to accomplish these events. Interestingly, these events actually end up arguing for a pre 70 AD date since they presuppose no major upheaval for national Israel. Other factors arguing for a pre 70 AD date include references to the city of Jerusalem as if it were still standing (4:5; 27:53) as well as a lack of mention of the fulfillment of Christ's prophecies of Jerusalem's destruction. Matthew certainly would have mentioned this event if his book were written after the fact because of his interest in using fulfilled prophecy in order to establish Christ's messianic credentials. If the book was written to Jewish believers living inside the land of Israel, it obviously must have been written prior to 70 AD.

Irenaeus pushes the date even earlier when he says that the book was written during Nero's reign while Peter and Paul were in Rome. Since these apostles were martyred in 67-68 AD, the book obviously had to have been written prior to this time. Whether one dates the book closer to 70 AD or earlier depends upon whether he adheres to Marcan or Matthean priority. Since Mark was probably written around 65 AD, adherence to Marcan priority causes Matthew's Gospel to be dated even later. However, as previously explained, Marcan priority is problematic. It counters tradition, forces an eyewitness to depend upon a

secondary source when recounting events, places Mark's non-apostolic Gospel into the most authoritative position, ignores the logical reality of the most Jewish gospel being written at a time when the church was heavily Jewish, and forces Matthew, Luke and Acts to be given a post-70 AD date. Because of the preference for Matthean priority, a date of 45–50 AD for the composition of Matthew's Gospel seems appropriate.

### **Matthean Priority**

The fancy word that indicates that Matthew was the first Gospel written. We believe this today for a number of textual reasons, as well as the fact that the early church fathers almost unanimously agreed. It wasn't until German liberal thought entered the picture (1800s) that this was questioned.

Luke was written to Gentiles, and emphasizes Gentile themes; Matthew was written to Jews, and emphasizes Jewish themes. Luke links Jesus genealogy back to Adam, but Matthew links it back through David to Abraham, the father of the Jewish race.

Mark 7 talks about a washing of hands, and in a parenthetical comment, mentions that this was something that was custom among Jews. Matt 15 talks about the same ceremonial hand washing, but doesn't have the parenthetical comment. Mark was written to a Roman audience, who didn't understand Judaism, so he needed to explain certain cultural customs. Matthew did not.

Matthew answers the Jewish question: If Jesus is the King, where is the kingdom? They needed an explanation as to why, if the King was present, His kingdom did not come. They needed confirmation that they believed in the right Guy. In the context of Matt 21:43, a Hebrew can understand how God can cut off one generation of Jews and bless a future generation of Jews. They already know that's a reality, because they're familiar with Num 13-14.

### **(6) Occasion**

### **(7) Purpose**

Matthew wrote in order to accomplish three purposes. First, he wrote to convince his Jewish audience that the Christ in whom they had believed was indeed the long awaited Jewish messiah. Thus, Matthew shows that Christ was the rightful heir to the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants.

Matthew appeals to a variety of devices to accomplish this purpose such as genealogies, fulfilled prophecy, messianic titles, kingdom teachings, and miracles. Because the Jewish understanding was that the kingdom would be immediately established upon the arrival of the king (Is 9:6-7; Matt 20:20-21), the next logical question that a Jew would ask is, "if Christ is indeed the Jewish king then where is His kingdom?"

Thus, Matthew wrote for the second purpose of explaining why the kingdom had been postponed despite the fact that the king had already arrived. In order to accomplish this purpose, Matthew carefully traces the kingdom program. Here Matthew explains the kingdom's offer to the nation (Matt 3:2; 4:17; 10:5-7; 15:24), its rejection by the nation (Matt 11-12; 21-23; 26-27), the present interim program for those who will inherit the kingdom (sons of the kingdom) due to Israel's rejection of the kingdom (Matt 13; 16:18), and the nation's eventual acceptance of the kingdom (Matt 23:38-39; 24:14,31; 25:31). The notion of a past rejection and future acceptance of the kingdom by national Israel would lead to the question, "what is God doing in the present?"

Thus, Matthew wrote for the third purpose of explaining God's interim program. Here, Matthew introduces the interim program that the sons of the kingdom will experience (Matt 13) as well as the advent of the church (Matt 16:18; 18:17; 28:18-20). The church age represents God's present earthly program in between Israel's past rejection and future acceptance of the king and His kingdom. Since Christ's disciples would play foundational roles in the church (Eph 2:20), Matthew explains how Christ prepared them not only for His death but also for their new role in the church age.

Because at the time of writing, the Gentiles were beginning to become more prominent in the church, the Jewish believers needed an explanation for this Gentile inclusion. Thus, Matthew explains how God's interim program would thrust the Gentiles into prominence (Matt 2:1-12; 8:11-12; 13:38; 15:22-28). In sum, Matthew selectively (John 20:30-31; 21:25) includes material from Christ's life in order to accomplish these purposes. Therefore, the message of Matthew is the confirmation to Jewish Christians that Jesus is their predicted king who ushered in an interim program by building the sons of the kingdom into the church in between Israel's past rejection and future acceptance of her king.

### ***Sub-Purposes***

In addition to this overarching purpose, Matthew wrote to accomplish three sub-purposes. First, Matthew wanted to confirm the Jewish Christians in their faith. He wanted them to understand that the Jesus in whom they had believed was indeed the Jewish king. This was true in spite of the fact that the kingdom had not immediately materialized according to their expectations and instead God's program had taken a new direction.

Second, Matthew wrote to offer the believing Jews an explanation regarding Gentile inclusion in God's present program. This was an explanation that the believing Jews desperately needed since the church was on the verge of becoming predominately Gentile through the coming three missionary journeys launched from Syrian Antioch. Thus, Matthew wrote his Gospel from this very locale for the purpose of assisting the church through this delicate transition.

Third, Matthew wanted to encourage the Jewish Christians. Thus, he explained that although Israel had rejected her king, God was going to use this negative act for the positive purpose of including the Gentiles. He was also going to restore the kingdom to Israel in the future.

## **Message**

### **Themes**

#### **Unique characteristics**

Matthew's Gospel boasts several outstanding characteristics.

First, in comparison to the other Gospels, Matthew has the longest discourse sections. Matthew contains more of Christ's teaching than any other Gospel. Of Matthew's 1071 verses, 60% of them contain Christ's teaching.

Second, Matthew makes extensive use of OT prophecy. While the phrase "that the Scriptures might be fulfilled" or a close variant of it is used 9x in Matthew (Matt 1:22; 2:15, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:56), this same phrase is not employed a single time in the other Gospels.

Third, the kingdom parables seem to be emphasized more in Matthew in comparison to any other Gospel.

Fourth, the five discourse sections are unique to Matthew.

Fifth, Matthew is the only Gospel that mentions the church (16:18; 18:17).

Sixth, Matthew does more to demonstrate Christ's royal identity than any other Gospel writer. Matthew accomplishes this goal by genealogically connecting Christ to the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants (1:1-17), referring to Christ as the messianic king (1:20; 2:6) and the Son of David (1:1,20; 9:27; 12:23; 15:22; 20:30-31; 21:9,15; 22:45), associating Christ with the kingdom (2:11; 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; 12:26-28; 13; 16:28; 17:1-2; 20:20-23; 25:31-46; 26:29; 28:18), and appealing to fulfilled prophecy (21:5; Zech 9:9).

Seventh, Matthew uses the verb *maqhteuw* (to disciple) more than any other NT writer.

While this verb is used 3x in Matthew (13:52; 27:57; 28:19), it is only used 1x elsewhere (Acts 14:21). Matthew probably uses the verb more than any other Gospel writer because of His emphasis upon the training of the disciples to fulfill foundational roles in the soon to be birthed church in view of Israel's rejection of the kingdom offer.

Eighth, while Matthew's discourse sections are comparatively longer than those of the other Gospels, His narrative sections seem to be smaller by way of comparison.

Ninth, Matthew places a special emphasis upon eschatology (13; 24-25; 28:20).

Tenth, Matthew seems more interested in precision and details in comparison to the other Gospel writers.

Eleventh, in addition to following a basic chronology of Christ's life, Matthew also seems interested in grouping material on the basis of logic. For example, his genealogy is broken down into three categories. Christ's miracles performed for the benefit of the nation are also categorized together. The same can be said for the material involving Israel's rejection of the kingdom offer and Christ's training of the disciples.

Twelfth, Matthew provides an important bridge in between the Old and New Testaments. Matthew shows that God has not forgotten His covenant program even after four hundred years of prophetic silence. His book not only shows the fulfillment of the OT messianic expectation but it also provides a transition into the church age. This emphasis may explain why Matthew was placed first in the NT canon.

## **Structure**

### **I. Presentation of the King (Matt 1:1—10:42)**

#### **(1) Birth (Matt 1:1—2:23)**

##### **(A) Genealogy (1:1-17)**

(a) Abraham to David (1:1-6a)

(b) David to Babylonian deportation (1:6b-11)

(c) Babylonian deportation to Christ (1:12-16)

(d) Summation (1:17)

##### **(B) Virgin birth (1:18-25)**

##### **(C) Reception by the wise men (2:1-12)**

##### **(D) Opposition by Herod (2:13-23)**

#### **(2) Forerunner (3:1-12)**

#### **(3) Baptism (3:13-17)**

#### **(4) Temptation (4:1-11)**

#### **(5) Initial Ministry (4:12-25)**

(A) Announcement of kingdom (4:12-17)

(B) Kingdom co-laborers (4:18-22)

(C) Kingdom message spread (4:23-25)

#### **(6) Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:1—7:29)**

(A) Setting (5:1-2)

(B) Beatitudes (5:3-12)

(C) Influence of the sons of the kingdom (5:13-16)

(D) Relationship of the kingdom to the Law (5:17-48)

(a) Christ's ambition to return to the Law's original intent (5:17-20)

(b) Six contrasts between pharisaical and Christ's interpretation of the Law (5:21-48)

(i) Hatred (5:21-26)

(ii) Lust (5:27-30)



- (iii) Divorce (5:31-32)
  - (iv) Oaths (5:33-37)
  - (v) Retaliation (5:38-42)
  - (vi) Love toward enemies (5:43-48)
- (E) Relationship of kingdom to public and private righteousness (6:1-18)
  - (a) General principle (6:1)
  - (b) Application to three areas (6:2-18)
    - (i) Giving (6:2-4)
    - (ii) Prayer (6:5-15)
    - (iii) Fasting (6:16-18)
- (F) Relationship of the kingdom to wealth (6:19-34)
- (G) Relationship of the kingdom to judging (7:1-6)
- (H) Kingdom righteousness can be received by prayer and exhibited in conduct (7:7-12)
- (I) Comparison of Christ's teaching on righteousness with that of the Pharisees (7:13-27)
  - (a) Two ways: narrow versus wide gate (7:13-14)
  - (b) Two trees: true versus false prophets (7:15-20)
  - (c) Two claims: true versus false professors (7:21-23)
  - (d) Two buildings: rock versus sandy foundation (7:24-27)
- (J) Conclusion: listeners amazed at Christ's authority (7:28-29)
- (7) Authority (Matt 8:1—10:42)
  - (A) Authority over disease (8:1-17)
    - (a) Leprosy (8:1-4)
    - (b) Paralysis (8:5-13)
    - (c) Fever and miscellaneous diseases (8:14-17)
  - (B) Authority over disciples (8:18-22)
  - (C) Authority over nature (8:23-27)
  - (D) Authority over demons (8:28-34)
  - (E) Authority to forgive sins (9:1-8)
  - (F) Authority to call men from their chosen vocations (9:9)
  - (G) Authority to forgive the worst sinners (9:10-13)
  - (H) Authority to usher in a new dispensation (9:14-17)
  - (I) Authority over hemorrhage and death (9:18-26)
  - (J) Authority over blindness and dumbness (9:27-34)
  - (K) Authority to delegate authority (Matt 9:35—10:42)
    - (a) Christ's compassion (9:35-38)
    - (b) The apostles (10:1-4)

- (c) Limitations of their work (10:5-6)
- (d) Description of their work (10:7-8)
- (e) Provisions for their work (10:9-15)
- (f) Dangers of their work (10:16-25)
- (g) Perspective of workers (10:26-39)
  - (i) God-ward perspective (10:26-33)
  - (ii) Christ-ward perspective (10:34-39)
- (h) Workers reward (10:40-42)

## II. Rejection of the King (Matt 11:1—12:50)

- (1) Unbelief of John the Baptist (11:1-15)
- (2) Unbelief of the cities (11:16-31)
- (3) Unbelief of the Pharisees (12:1-50)
  - (A) Pharisees reject Christ (12:1-24)
    - (a) Provocation of the controversy (12:1-23)
      - (i) Sabbath controversies (12:1-14)
        - (a) Eating (12:1-9)
        - (b) Healing (12:10-14)
      - (ii) Christ's identity (12:15-21)
      - (iii) Healing of the demoniac (12:22-23)
    - (b) Pharisees attribute Christ's power to Satan (12:24)
  - (B) Christ rejects 1st century Israel (12:25-50)
    - (a) Refutation to charge of demon possession (12:25-37)
      - (i) Satan's kingdom cannot be divided (12:25-26)
      - (ii) By whom do your magicians cast out demons? (12:27)
      - (iii) Christ's miracles evidence the kingdom (12:28)
      - (iv) Binding of Satan necessary for Christ's kingdom work to go forward (12:29)
      - (v) Pharisees placing themselves against Christ (12:30)
      - (vi) Pharisees had committed blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (12:31-32)
      - (vii) Pharisees' speech dictated by their nature (12:33-37)
    - (b) That generation only to be given the sign of Jonah (12:38-40)
    - (c) Ninevites and the Queen of the South to condemn present generation (12:41-42)
    - (d) Present generation likened to a repossessed person (12:43-45)
    - (e) Christ rejects physical ties and instead embraces spiritual ties (12:46-50)

## III. King's interim kingdom program (Matt 13:1—20:28)

- (1) Kingdom parables (13:1-52)

- (A) Parables given while out of the house (13:1-35)
  - (a) Parable of the sower (13:1-9)
  - (b) Explanation of the necessity of the parabolic presentation (13:10-17)
  - (c) Interpretation of the parable of the sower (13:18-23)
  - (d) Parable of the wheat and tares (13:24-30)
  - (e) Parable of the mustard seed (13:31-32)
  - (f) Parable of the leaven (13:33)
  - (g) Christ's parabolic instruction as the fulfillment of prophecy (13:34-35)
- (B) Parables given while inside the house (13:36-52)
  - (a) Interpretation of the parable of the wheat and tares (13:36-43)
  - (b) Parable of the earthen treasure (13:44)
  - (c) Parable of the pearl of great price (13:45-46)
  - (d) Parable of the dragnet of fish (13:47-50)
  - (e) Parable of the householder (13:51-52)
- (2) Why the interim program was necessary (Matt 13:53—14:12)
  - (A) Christ rejected in his hometown (13:53-58)
  - (B) Beheading of John the Baptist (14:1-12)
- (3) Christ trains the disciples (Matt 14:13—20:28)
  - (A) Feeding of the 5000 (14:13-21)
  - (B) Calming of the storm (14:22-33)
  - (C) Healings at Gennesaret (14:34-36)
  - (D) Christ defends the disciples' violation of the Sabbath regulations (15:1-20)
  - (E) Christ heals the Canaanite woman (15:21-28)
  - (F) Feeding of the 4000 (15:29-39)
  - (G) Warnings against pharisaical doctrine (16:1-12)
  - (H) Revelation of the church (16:13-20)
  - (I) First prediction of Christ's death (16:21-28)
  - (J) Transfiguration (17:1-13)
  - (K) Christ casts out the demon (17:14-21)
  - (L) Second prediction of Christ's death (17:22-23)
  - (M) Christ pays the two drachma tax (17:24-27)
  - (N) Sermon on humility (18:1-35)
    - (a) Necessity of childlike humility (18:1-4)
    - (b) Necessity of not stumbling a disciple (18:5-14)
    - (c) Necessity of exercising church discipline (18:15-20)
    - (d) Necessity of forgiveness (18:21-35)
  - (O) Teaching on marriage and divorce (19:1-12)
  - (Q) Teaching on wealth and entrance into the kingdom (19:16-30)

- (R) Parable of the landowner and laborers (20:1-16)
- (S) Third prediction of Christ's death (20:17-19)
- (T) Request of the mother of the sons of Zebedee (20:20-28)

#### IV. Formal presentation and rejection of the King (Matt 20:29—23:39)

- (1) Transitional event: the blind could recognize Christ's identity while Israel could not (20:29-34)
- (2) Formal presentation of the King to Israel (21:1-22)
  - (A) Triumphal entry (21:1-11)
  - (B) Cleansing of the Temple (21:12-17)
  - (C) Cursing of the fig tree (21:18-22)
- (3) Questions and parables demonstrating Israel's rejection of Christ (Matt 21:23—22:46)
  - (A) Question regarding John's Authority (21:23-27)
  - (B) Parable of the two sons (21:28-32)
  - (C) Parable of the tenants (21:33-46)
  - (D) Parable of the wedding feast (22:1-14)
  - (E) Reciprocal questions (22:15-46)
    - (a) Three questions from Israel's leaders trying to trap Christ (22:15-40)
      - (i) Taxation (22:15-22)
      - (ii) Resurrection (22:23-33)
      - (iii) Greatest commandment (22:34-40)
    - (b) Christ's question: whose son is David? (22:41-46)
- (4) Woes demonstrating Christ's rejection of the nation (23:1-39)
  - (A) Guilt of the Pharisees (23:1-12)
  - (B) Seven woes against the Pharisees (23:13-36)
    - (a) Three woes involving doctrine (23:13-22)
    - (b) Transitional woe involving doctrine and character (23:23-24)
    - (c) Three woes involving character (23:25-36)
  - (C) Christ's lament over Jerusalem (23:37-39)

#### V. Re-offer and eventual acceptance of the King (Matt 24:1—25:46)

- (1) Christ's prophecy about the Temple (24:1-2)
- (2) Disciples' questions (24:3)
- (3) Events of the Tribulation (24:4-31)
  - (A) First half (24:4-14)
  - (B) Middle (24:15-20)
  - (C) Second half (24:21-22)
  - (D) Second Advent (24:23-31)
- (4) Attitude believers should have towards these events (Matt 24:32—25:46)

- (A) Fig tree: watch for the signs (24:32-35)
- (B) Days of Noah: do not be caught surprised (24:36-44)
- (C) Slave: faithfully doing master's will (24:45-51)
- (D) Ten virgins: preparedness (25:1-13)
- (E) Talents: stewardship (25:14-30)
- (F) Sheep and goats: doing good to Christ's brethren (25:31-46)

#### VI. Passion of the King (Matt 26:1—28:20)

- (1) Events leading to the crucifixion (Matt 26:1—27:32)
  - (A) Plot to crucify Christ (26:1-5)
  - (B) Mary anoints Christ (26:6-13)
  - (C) Judas agrees to betray Christ for 30 pieces of silver (26:14-16)
  - (D) Preparation of the upper room (26:17-19)
  - (E) Christ's predicts Judas' betrayal (26:20-25)
  - (F) Celebration of the Lord's table (26:26-29)
  - (G) Christ's predicts Peter's denial (26:30-35)
  - (H) Christ in Gethsemane (26:36-46)
  - (I) Christ's arrest (26:47-56)
  - (J) Christ's trial before Caiaphas (26:57-68)
  - (K) Peter betrays Christ (26:69-75)
  - (L) Judas' remorse (27:1-10)
  - (M) Christ before Pilate (27:11-26)
  - (N) Soldiers mock Christ (27:27-31)
  - (O) Simon of Cyrene carries Christ's cross (27:32)
- (2) Crucifixion (27:33-56)
  - (A) Events involving the crucifixion (27:33-44)
  - (B) Christ's death (27:45-56)
- (3) Burial (27:57-66)
  - (A) Body placed in Joseph of Arimathea's tomb (27:57-61)
  - (B) Grave sealed (27:62-66)
- (4) Resurrection (28:1-20)
  - (A) Christ appears to the women (28:1-10)
  - (B) Israel argues that the disciples stole the body (28:11-15)
  - (C) Christ appears to the eleven (28:16-17)
  - (D) The Great Commission (28:18-20)

### **Other Introductory Notes on Matthew**

### **The New Testament's Relationship to the Old Testament**

It is a very wrongful conclusion to claim that the OT must be interpreted by the NT because subsequent revelation must be determined by previous revelation and not vice versa. Why do we Bible believers not interpret the NT by the *Book of Mormon* or by *The Key To The Scriptures*? Because we find these writings that claim to be subsequent revelation are simply not consistent with what is taught in the previous revelation and therefore, it is rejected. Thus if the NT changes what the OT teaches, rewrites the obvious meanings of the OT statements, and contradicts the OT, then the NT is a fraudulent document. But if the OT is quoted by the NT, it shows not contradiction but fulfillment, not cancellations of previous promises but expansions of previous promises. Whatever new information the NT may give, it cannot simply contradict what was revealed previously, or change it, or rewrite it. So whatever additional things God may choose to do for the Church and whatever additional plans God may have for the Church, these plans cannot cancel what He already promised to Israel. A promise can only be fulfilled to whom the promise was made. A prophecy can only be fulfilled to whom the prophecy was made.

### **The “Jewishness” of Matthew’s Gospel**

Matthew (himself a Jew) was writing primarily to a Jewish audience in his Gospel, using terms a Jew would readily understand. His goal was to convince them that Jesus is the promised Jewish Messiah. Substantiation for the Jewish character of the book is found in the style of writing, the vocabulary, the subject matter, the Jewish customs that are mentioned, and the testimony of tradition. Moreover, Matthew’s Gospel contains about 130 OT citations and allusions, more than any other Gospel (for example, Matt 2:17-18; 4:13-15; 13:35; 21:4-5; 27:9-10). Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus is particularly relevant in this regard. Since Matthew’s Gospel was written to Jews, he needed to prove to Jews that Jesus was the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen 12:1-3) and the Davidic Covenant (2 Sam 7:12-14). By tracing Jesus’ lineage to Abraham and David in the opening genealogy, Matthew accomplished this end (see Matt 1:1).

Matthew’s Gospel is the bridge that leads us out of the OT and into the NT. It is distinctive in its “Jewishness,” using many parallelisms and a Jewish vocabulary. Matthew referred to the OT more than any other evangelist: there are 54 direct citations of the OT, plus approximately 262 widely-recognized allusions and verbal parallels. Matthew typically referred to the OT, or quoted someone doing so, to prove a point to his readers. Two other examples of Matthew’s Jewish bent are the genealogy of Jesus, which he traced back to Abraham, and he gave prominent attention to Peter, the apostle to the Jews. He also referred to many Jewish customs without explaining them, evidently because he believed most of his original readers would not need an explanation.