

Matthew

"Jesus the King"

Background Information

Named after its author, Matthew ("gift of the Lord") or Levi (9:9), who was a tax collector who left everything behind to follow Jesus.

This account of the Gospel was clearly written before the destruction of Jerusalem in AD70, and most scholars date it to the early- to mid-50s.

Matthew's intended audience was Jewish. Starting with the genealogy, there are almost countless references to Old Testament individuals, and numerous quotations and allusions to the Old Testament, as well. Further, Matthew often cites Jewish custom or tradition, but, unlike the other Gospel writers, does not take the time to explain them.

Time Covered and Outlines

The book is, for all intents, a biography. Not including the names of Matthew 1, it spans the earthly life of Jesus, which was from about 4BC until 30AD, or a little over 30 years.

Matthew can be outlined following the life of Jesus:

- I. His Coming (chapters 1-4)
 - A. His birth (chapters 1-2)
 - B. His entry into public ministry (chapters 3-4)
- II. His Authority (chapters 5-9)
 - A. Sermon on the Mount (chapters 5-7)
 - B. Miracles proving his authority (chapters 8-9)
- III. His Ministry (chapters 10-23)
 - A. Setting His agenda (chapters 10-12)
 - B. Enemies rise up (chapters 13-17)
 - C. What the Kingdom is Like (chapters 18-23)
- IV. Mission Accomplished (chapters 24-28)
 - A. Preparing the disciples (chapters 24-25)
 - B. The King on a Cross (chapters 26-17)
 - C. He is Risen! (28:1-15)
 - D. Our assignment (28:16-20)

Major Themes

Jesus is the Messiah

Jesus has all authority

God's plan for redemption culminated

God's Character in Matthew

Accessible (6:6)

Good (5:45)

Holy (13:41)

Patient (23:37)

Perfect (5:48)

Powerful (6:13; 10:28)

Providing (6:26-34)

Unified (19:17)

Wise (6:8; 6:18)

Wrath (10:28)

Jesus in Matthew

In Matthew, Jesus is presented as the King and the promised Messiah. He is the Christ (Anointed One), who had been prophesied hundreds of times in the Old Testament and who had been waited for over the centuries. Matthew makes it clear that Jesus died for the sins of the whole world.

Key Words in Matthew

Jesus (Greek, *Iesous*) 1:1; 4:23; 8:22; 11:4; 19:1, etc. The equivalent of the Old Testament name Joshua, the name literally means, "The Lord will save."

Christ (Greek, *Christos*) 1:1; 1:18; 2:4; 11:2, etc. Literally, "the Anointed One." Note that "Christ" is not a proper name, but a title.

Kingdom of heaven; 3:2; 4:17; 5:3; 5:10; 10:7; 25:1; also, "kingdom of God"

Elsewhere in the World...

Just prior to the birth of Christ, sumo wrestling begins in Japan (about 23BC).

Elsewhere in Scripture...

Of course, Matthew is just one account of the Gospel, so much of his writings overlap with Mark and Luke, and some with John. Each Gospel, however, is written from a slightly different perspective, and is worthy of study. Books such as J.W. McGarvey's *The Fourfold Gospel* and the two-volume *The Life of Christ: A Supplement* by David Roper help the Bible student put the four accounts of the Gospel together in a chronological fashion.