

MATTHEW – INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION:

1. Matthew is listed first in the New Testament books and is the first of three books known as the “Synoptic” Gospels. The other two are Mark and Luke.
 - a. “synoptic” means: “presenting or taking the same common view”.
 - b. Each of these three books presents a common view of the life of Christ.
 - c. The gospel of John does not contradict the three synoptic gospels, but views the life and teaching of Christ from a different perspective
 - (1) Matthew, Mark and Luke, though distinct in their presentations, emphasize Jesus’ life and work in Galilee, whereas the Gospel of John emphasizes Jesus’ work in Judea. Matthew, Mark and Luke emphasize Jesus’ teachings in the form of parables, whereas the Gospel of John emphasizes Jesus’ teachings in the form of His discourses.
2. Distinction between “gospel” and “Gospel”.
 - a. Our Anglo-Saxon word “gospel” (Greek- evangelion) means “good news”. It is God’s “good news” of how man can be saved in Christ (Romans 1:16).
 - b. The “Gospel” according to Matthew is the “good news” of the life of Christ as told by Matthew.
 - c. There are not four “gospels” (Gal.1:8-9), but there are four “Gospels” each one covering the life of Jesus from the “perspective of” or “according to” Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

I. AUTHOR AND DATE OF THE BOOK:

- A. With some exceptions, the authorship of this Gospel is commonly accepted from antiquity as being that of the apostle Matthew.
 1. Papias (125 A.D.), Irenaeus (182 A.D.), and Origen (210-250 A.D.) attributed the gospel to Matthew.
 2. While these early fathers believed that Matthew wrote the Gospel first in the Hebrew and then was translated into the Greek, they did attribute the Gospel account to him.
 3. There is no manuscript evidence of the Gospel first written in Hebrew. All manuscripts of Matthew’s Gospel are in Greek.
- B. Facts about the author: Matthew
 1. He was a Galilean Jew.
 2. He is also known as Levi (Lk. 5:27).
 3. He was the son of Alphaeus (Mark 2:14).
 4. He was a publican (a collector of Roman taxes) – many times the publicans were extortioners and looked down on by society (cf. Lk. 3:12, Matt. 9:10,11).
 5. He became an early disciple of Jesus (Matt. 9:9).

6. He is mentioned in the four lists of the twelve apostles (Matt. 10:3, Mk. 3:18, Lk. 6:15, Acts 1:3).
 7. His name “Matthew” is from the Hebrew “Mattithiah” which means “gift of Jehovah”
- C. Date: varies between A.D 38 – A.D. 70.
1. Exact date is unknown.
 2. McGarvey places the date at A.D. 67 before the destruction of Jerusalem.
 3. Placed first in all manuscripts of the New Testament is evidence for some that it was a Gospel early written.

II. PURPOSE OF BOOK

- A. To present to the Jews Jesus as the MESSIAH
1. “Messiah” –is used of priests and kings who are consecrated to the office by the ceremony of anointing “Anointed One” – “Christ” (Lev. 8:12; I Sam. 10:1)
 2. Priest – “the anointed priest”; King “the Lord’s anointed” (Lev. 4:3 I Sam. 24:6, 10)
 3. “Christ Jesus” is “the anointed Saviour”(cf. Matt. 1:1, 17, 4:4, 16:16).
- D. To present to the Jews Jesus as the KING
1. Jesus is also presented as “King” pointing to Jesus’ rule over the coming Kingdom as prophesied (Dan. 2:44; 7:13-14; 2 Sam. 7:13-14, Matt. 3:2, 4:17, 6:10, 10:7).

III. DISTINCTIONS OF THE BOOK FROM THE OTHER GOSPELS

- A. Matthew traces the genealogy of Jesus to Abraham – Luke traces it to Adam.
- B. Parables found only in Matthew: The Tares, The Hidden Treasure, The Net, The Pearl of Great Price, The Unmerciful Servant, The Ten Virgins, and The Talents.
- C. Three miracles peculiar to the Gospel of Matthew:
1. The healing of two blind men (9:27-31).
 2. The healing of a dumb man possessed with a demon (9:32-33).
 3. The finding of the half-shekel (17:24-27).
- D. Matthew is the only Gospel where the word “church” occurs (Matt. 16:18, 18:17).

IV. OUTLINE OF THE BOOK

- A. The human ancestry of Jesus, His birth, His childhood, His baptism and temptation (1:1-4:12).
- B. Jesus' Galilean ministry (4:13-18:35).
- C. Jesus' ministry in Perea (a district in trans-Jordan) (19:1-20:34).
- D. Jesus' last week in Jerusalem (21:1-26:46).
 - 1. Jesus' triumphant entry, His discourses and arrest (21:1-26:56).
 - 2. Jesus' trial, crucifixion, burial and resurrection (26:57-28:10).
- E. Aftermath of Jesus' death among the Jewish authorities (28:11-15)
- F. Gathering of disciples and Jesus' great commission (28:16-20).