

Matthew

Author: Matthew (Levi); a Jew; from the Galilee region, a tax collector for Rome = rejected by Romans for being non-Roman, and rejected by the Jews for being allied with the Romans = outcast - he must have belonged to that group of 'publicans and sinners'; becomes a disciple(apostle) of Jesus, and later a widespread evangelist to foreign nations: Ethiopia, Macedonia, Syria, Persia, Parthia and Medea.

-In his Jewish upbringing, he was 'not good enough' to be picked by any Rabbi. So, he eventually fell into being a tax collector. He oppressed his own people by taking more than the tax to line his own pockets.

So when Jesus calls him to be a disciple, think of this meaning: FORGIVENESS.

No wonder he drops everything when Jesus calls him to follow. (And he's so excited that throws a party for all his 'publican and sinner' friends to meet this Jesus who forgives 'our kind'!) **Matt 9:9-13**

Audience: The Jews (whereas Luke: to the Gentiles)

Purpose: to prove that **Jesus was the Messiah**, the King of the Jews, and fulfilled every qualification according to the prophets; and to introduce the **Kingdom of God** (Heaven)

Ex: 1. "Son of David" is used throughout the book

2. 53 quotes from the Old Testament, and 76 other references

...the book is the connection between the OT and the NT with all of these references

Style: Narrative of Jesus' life, nativity to resurrection, and 'what He said.' Oral tradition. (Mark – 'what He did')

Date: 60-65 A.D.

Context: A.D. 54 Nero becomes emperor, possible beginnings of persecution; A.D. ~64 Rome burns and Nero blames Christians, severe persecution. Debatable as to which was written first, Mark or Matthew, so possibly Matthew is writing before widespread persecution starts.

The context at the time of the birth of Jesus: The Jews at this time were looking for a military king to bring justice and kick out the Romans (Maccabees influence...). That's how they interpreted the prophecies in the O.T. about the Messiah and the coming Kingdom (like David's). But they ignored the prophecies about the Messiah being a King who would also *suffer* and *serve*, and be *rejected* and *killed*.

Ex: They assumed He was from Nazareth (i.e. born there), when He really was born in Bethlehem in fulfillment of prophesy.

So, think of being a Jew at this time, looking for the Kingdom of God to come, a Messiah... And Jesus comes on the scene preaching the K.O.G., and says that it is "at hand", "within/among you"... what would you think? "I don't see the armies of Israel, or a king, how come the Romans are still here in charge?"

Required repentance first = change of mind – they were interpreting OT wrong, or omitting. So Matthew explains how Jesus taught them about how He will be rejected and killed, just like the prophets said. But... disciples still did not completely get it until after the resurrection!!!

Outline:

A. Birth and Preparation of Jesus **Matt. 1-3**

B. Message and Ministry of Jesus **Matt. 4-25**

Temptation and start of ministry

Sermon on the Mount (Be-Attitudes)

Miracles (leper, woman issue blood, child in fire, paralyzed, withered hand)

Teachings and parables on the Kingdom of God/Heaven (mustard seed, dragnet)

Differing reactions to his ministry

Religious leaders opposition

Teaching on the Mount of Olives – End times and His 2nd coming

C. Death and Resurrection of Jesus **Matt. 26-28**

A Key Verse: Matt 5:17 "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them."

Themes:

1. Jesus King – authority; miracles; leadership & teachings; victory over death!

2. Jesus Messiah – fulfillment of prophecies; the One that would die for all people to free them from the oppression of sin (not Rome) and restore them to a right relationship with God; trust Jesus for salvation, not your own good deeds of righteousness

-Key message here: *freedom from sin's oppression is more important than freedom from Rome's oppression.*

3. K.O.G./Heaven – mentioned at least 35 times; *good news* = "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand." -**Matthew 3:2; 4:17**; 'Now' and the 'Not Yet' aspects; enter by faith in God's Son

"We enter the kingdom by orienting our life to Jesus."

-Michael Morrison, 1993

4. Teachings, Parables – *emphasis* on: how to live in the K.O.G. now until His return; the essence of faith vs. hypocrisy; forgiveness of others and receiving forgiveness

5. Resurrection – King over the earth and heaven, physical and spiritual

Great Commission: **Mat 28:18-20** Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

Conclusion: Every one of us is a 'tax collector'/'sinner', just like Matthew. We have gone astray, maybe been rejected, or gained prestige in the wrong crowd... but Matthew was grateful that Christ chose him. We must accept Jesus' choice of us too. We need to rely on Him to save us, and live our lives in the Kingdom of God now (understanding the fullness is yet to come), demonstrating our gratefulness, and advancing His message of forgiveness and salvation.

Jesus is the Savior/Messiah for the whole world. He is who He said He is. Give your life to Him.

**"Seek 1st the kingdom of God and His righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you." -Matt 6:33**