

MTA JULY 2019

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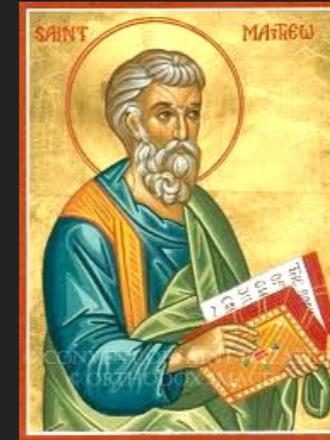
# MATTHEW: GOD WITH US

1:22-23 Jesus will be called: Immanuel

28:20 "...I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

## BACKGROUND

- ▶ **Author:** Matthew
  - ▶ Irenaeus :“Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews...”
- ▶ **Date:** early 60's (Pre-70)
  - ▶ Temple tax (17:24-27) & Swearing by the Temple (23:16-22)
  - ▶ Sadducees mentioned 7 times
  - ▶ OT quotations from the Hebrew text of the OT
- ▶ **Location:** Palestine (perhaps Syria or Antioch)



Many scholars date the gospel of Matthew to the mid-to late 80's. This late date is based on the assumption that Jesus was not capable of predictive prophecy (Mt 24). His accurate predictions must have been written after, looking back.

That's of course based on an assumption, not actual historical evidence but rather a modern view

It has further been pointed out that Matthew's story of the temple tax (17:24-27) implies that it is proper for Jewish followers of Jesus to pay that tax. This would apply before a.d. 70, for during that period the tax went to maintain the temple at Jerusalem. But after that date the Romans insisted that, while the tax must be paid by all Jews, it was to be used for the support of idol temples. It is not easy to see why the story should be included without qualification if it was written after a.d. 70.

A vow that meant “may the temple be destroyed if I break my word” would be ridiculous if the temple had already been destroyed.

Matthew refers to the Sadducees 7 times (as many as all the other books of the New Testament put together). This reflects the time before a.d. 70; after that date we hear little of the Sadducees.

In his OT quotations Matthew is shown to have “working upon the Hebrew text of the OT,” for after the church broke from the synagogue “access to Hebrew scrolls must have been difficult.

Very little can be said about the location of this writing. The indications that it was written for a Jewish Christian community might point to a place in Palestine, but also to such a centre as Antioch in Syria. That city had a sizeable number of Jews in it, and we know from Acts that quite early there was a church there.

## STRUCTURE

- ▶ Infancy Narrative: chapters 1-2
- ▶ Narrative 3-4
  - ▶ First Sermon: Sermon on the Mount 5-7
- ▶ Narrative 8-9
  - ▶ Second Sermon: Missionary Instructions 10
- ▶ Narrative 11-12
  - ▶ Third Sermon: Collection of Parables 13
- ▶ Narrative 14-17
  - ▶ Fourth Sermon: Community Instructions 18
- ▶ Narrative 19-22
  - ▶ Fifth Sermon: Eschatology 23-25
- ▶ Conclusion and Passion Narrative: 26-28

Each “Sermon” concludes with: “When Jesus had finished saying these things...” (7:28, 11:1, 13:53, 19:1, 26:1)

Begins with grand contrasts—beatitudes inverted values

SOM: subtle contrasts—with a choice

Two ways of life, which on the surface, look highly similar.

1-Salt, but salt that is no longer salty.

2-Light, but not providing light, instead covered.

v. 20 Both are trying to obey God, but one is in and one is out. You can strive to keep the 620-650 of the commands in the OT and not “enter the kingdom of heaven”.

1-Letter

2-Heart

vv. 21 & 22 “You have heard...But I tell you”

vv. 27 & 28 “You have heard...But I tell you”

vv. 31 & 32 “You have heard...But I tell you”

vv. 33 & 34 “You have heard...But I tell you”

vv. 38 & 39 “You have heard...But I tell you”

vv. 43 & 44 “You have heard...But I tell you”

Jesus doesn't abolish the Law, He (5:17-20) pushes it deeper into the heart.

### **Contrasts continue into Righteous Acts**

Does he say some people give and some people don't give? No, he says some people give like this, I say give like this.

Some people pray like this, I say pray like this.

Some people fast like this, I say fast like this.

Some store treasure here, others store treasure heaven

Two Masters—God or Money

Worry Will you be like the Pagans or Creation?

Hypocritical Judge or a Humble Judge?

Culminating with the Golden rule!

Two Paths

Two Gates

Two Disciples

Two Trees

Two Houses

## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS

- ▶ Jewishness
- ▶ OT Fulfilment in Jesus
- ▶ Church Interest
- ▶ Teaching
- ▶ The King & His Kingdom

## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS: JEWISHNESS

- ▶ 61 quotations from the Old Testament: compared with 31 in Mark, 26 in Luke, and 16 in John
- ▶ Mt does not explain Jewish customs (15:1-9 vs Mk 7:1-13)
- ▶ Mt alone writes that Jesus was sent to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel” (15:24 & 10:5-6)
- ▶ Genealogy (1:1-17)
- ▶ Jewish (religious) Rebukes: Chapter 23, expressions like “their” scribes (7:29) and “their” synagogues (9:35), Magi (2:1-2) & Centurion (27:54), great faith 2 x’s (8:10 Roman Centurion & 15:28 Canaanite Woman)

the main message of the genealogies is right here in verse 1, “This is the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah the son of David, the son of Abraham ...” A promise was made to both David and Abraham. Abraham was promised that through one of his descendants, his seed, all the families of the earth would be blessed. David was promised one of his descendants would sit on a throne, and his reign would last forever. Now, in Jesus Christ, the promises have come true. It’s not just Matthew; Luke starts the same way.

Look how long it took God to fulfill his promise. It’s centuries after he made the promise to David, and millennia after he made the promise to Abraham. It took God thousands of years to fulfill his promise, but he did. Something else that’s important to notice is not only did it seem to take God a long time as we consider it, but on the road, it didn’t look like he was working toward that at all. Prophecy had died out 400 years before Jesus was born. Not only that, but the kings had died out. The lines of David seemed to have died out. There were no more Davidic kings on the throne. The children of Israel had been sent into exile, and when they came back, they were ruled by Rome.

In other words, not only did the promise of God go centuries and centuries without God fulfilling the promise, but it looked like history was going in a different direction away from the promise. The lesson is God always fulfills his promises, but he never operates on our timeframes. Even the way in which he’s working to fulfill the promises is something we cannot see. It looks like he’s abandoning us, but in the end he will give you more than you can imagine or even want.

There are five names of women in this genealogy.

in verse 3, “Judah the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar ...”

In verse 5, “Salmon the father of Boaz, whose mother was Rahab, Boaz the father of Obed, whose mother was Ruth ...”

In verse 6, “David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah’s wife ...”

And at the very end, down at the bottom, there’s Mary.

Five women.

Ruth was a Moabitess, and Rahab was a Canaanite. They weren’t Jews. These were the people of despised, marginalised races you usually cut out. You didn’t have them on there, but there they are.

More than that (it’s intriguing what Matthew does here), it says, “Judah [was] the father of Perez and Zerah, whose mother was Tamar ...” Tamar had these two boys with Judah, her father-in-law. By Jewish moral code she, therefore, was committing incest.

Rahab, we know from other passages in the Bible, was a prostitute.

That means you have not only gender outsiders (women), but you have racial outsiders (Moabitess and Canaanite), and now you have moral outsiders, immoral people.

**Why would Jesus bring in people the law of Moses would exclude?** I hope you recognise great writing when you see it. This is the first chapter of the first book of the entire New Testament, and the answer is the rest of the New Testament. If you understand genealogies, this raises all kinds of questions in your mind. You say, “Wait a minute, what’s going on?” It makes you want to read the rest of the book. That’s good writing.

But then Matthew goes out of his way not to mention a particular woman’s name.

Verse 6 says, “David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had been Uriah’s wife ...” She had a name. She’s Bathsheba, David’s wife and the mother of King Solomon, but Matthew deliberately calls her not “Bathsheba” but “Uriah’s wife.” This is not a slam at her, but an enormous slam at David himself. He forces the reader to remember the whole story. Your glorious king? Adultery-Murder. No different than the women we just discussed. That’s the Gospel. All fall short—yet Jesus is willing to associate with them all.

### **Magi**

J.C. Ryle, 19th century Anglican bishop of Liverpool: “They saw no miracles to convince them. They heard no wise words out of his mouth. They saw nothing but a newborn infant on the lap of a poor woman, but they worshiped. No greater faith than this can be found in the whole volume of the Bible.”

### **Centurion**

Matthew closes his gospel with a similar warning:

Mt 27:54 “When the centurion and those with him who were guarding Jesus saw the earthquake and all that had happened, they were terrified, and exclaimed, “Surely he was the Son of God!”

### **Canaanite Woman: Mt 15**

v. 21 “Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew...”

double emphasis on Jesus’ exit from Israelite territory

V, 14 “Leave them...”

15:1-2 The religious travel from Jerusalem to have a go at Jesus for His disciples not washing their hands before they eat.

Comical really. But also sadly tragic.

Common Symptoms of Religiosity are seen there:

### **A-Miss the Mark**

Interesting exchange of questions vv. 1-3

*Pharisees:* Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders?

*Jesus:* Any why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?

Supposedly the Pharisees tradition is rooted in: Exod. 30:17–21

“Then the Lord said to Moses, 18 “Make a bronze basin, with its bronze stand, for washing. Place it between the tent of meeting and the altar, and put water in it. 19 Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and feet with water from it. 20 Whenever they enter the tent of meeting, they shall wash with water so that they will not die. Also, when they approach the altar to minister by presenting a food offering to the Lord, 21 they shall wash their hands and feet so that they will not die. This is to be a lasting ordinance for Aaron and his descendants for the generations to come.”

Problems?

Addressed to: Aaron and his descendants (priesthood) NOT everyone

Application: when ministering at the altar NOT whenever eating

Similar point is made

v. 4 “For God said...”

v. 5 “But you say...”

What’s Jesus challenging?

The basis for their beliefs

What is Matthew showing us?

Already—first generation or two of the Church—traditions were are very real problem

How much more for us?

### **B-Out of Touch**

They come to Jesus with v. 1 “Why do your disciples...”

Jesus responds with v. 3 “And why do you...”

Hypocrites/Blind guides

Lack of self awareness

TEDx researcher

95% think they are self aware

10-15% actually are

On a good day 80% of us are lying to ourselves about ourselves

Jonathan Edwards: “The spiritually proud person shows it in his finding fault with other saints...The eminently humble Christian has so much to do at home and sees so much evil in his own that he is not apt to be very busy with other hearts.”

### **C-Often Offended**

v. 12 “Then the disciples came to him and asked, “Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this?”

Offended: Psychologists: 'narcissistic injuries' - they bruise our egos, make us feel belittled. Ultimately, all types of slights boil down to the same basic feeling: of being devalued or disrespected.

### ***Sharp Contrast***

#### **They Miss the Mark, She is ON POINT**

"Lord, Son of David"

Significant statement for a Greek...non-Jew...greater clarity to the obvious.

She had fresh eyes--no preconceived ideas or traditions that cloud her spiritual perception.

Even highlights a strong contrast between Jesus' rebuke of Peter in vs. 16 "Are you still so dull?"

Progression here.

Religious: won't believe-stubborn refusal. Convinced of the correctness of their position even in the face of clear evidence

Disciples: working to believe-less stubborn and more confused. Struggling to release preconceived ideas and accept Jesus' words

Woman: believes

#### **They were Out of Touch, She is In Touch with Herself**

v. 22 “...have mercy on me...”

Where as the Religious were very clear on the shortcomings of Jesus' disciples and therefore Jesus—this Canaanite woman fully embraces her shortcomings.

Her appeal is on the basis of mercy—not merit.

The Good Place

Moral desert (one s) is deserving something in moral terms for something you have done.

Just Desert (just punishment)

Moral dessert: doing X and Y in order to Gain Z. Eating your vegetables so you can have ice-cream.

Season 2 Finale of The Good Place examines this concept. If someone does good simply for reward is it actually a good act? Perhaps poking at the false doctrine of merit based salvation which tragically a majority of christians believe. Many would argue that this is what 1st Century Judaism had become infected with and why Paul (former Pharisees) gospel unpacking in Romans 3:19-31 is perhaps the most important section for those with a religious or philosophical backgrounding all of the NT.

This woman of course does not approach or appeal to Jesus on that basis of Moral Dessert, or just desert.

She accepts that her only appeal is on the basis of God's Mercy—not her merit.

#### **They are easily offended, She Can't be offended!**

V. 26

Many see it as an insult...she sees it as she should.

Now that everyone sees what Jesus already saw:

The point of all that is made clear:

v. 28 “Woman, you have great faith!”

## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS: OT FULFILMENT

- ▶ Jesus fulfilled the purposes of all the Old Testament to such a degree that He alone now has the authority to dictate how His followers must obey those Scriptures in the new age He has inaugurated.
  - ▶ “Christ” 17 times & “the Son of David” 8 times
  - ▶ Mt often uses a “fulfilment formula”
    - ▶ Five of these unique references appear in the first two chapters alone (1:22-23; 2:5-6, 15, 17, 23)
  - ▶ Jesus’ baptism as fulfilling “all righteousness” (3:15)
  - ▶ Only Matthew has Jesus declare that he has not come to abolish the law but to fulfil it (5:17)

26:57-27:10

The heart of this Jewish trial is the person of the accused. ***It is not what he has done but who he is that is the issue.***

26:59-60 “The chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false evidence against Jesus so that they could put him to death. 60 But they did not find any, though many false witnesses came forward.”

Jesus’ Words are twisted and thrown back at him as evidence: v. 61 (John 2:19)

This fellow said, ‘I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.’ ”

Ironic, In their attempt to find evidence for crucifying Jesus they:

1-could find none

2-then mis-understand a quote He made about how the clearest sign God will give them Regarding WHO He is... His Resurrection

Caiaphas knows that isn’t enough though. With the trial nearly collapsing as Jesus stood silently like a lamb before its shearer...

Caiaphas gambled on a last, illegal throw of the dice. He applied what was called the oath of testimony (26:63). This was a question under oath to which the prisoner was legally bound to reply—but it was illegal to pose it in a trial for life.

I charge you under oath by the living God: Tell us if you are the Messiah, the Son of God.”

### **This is the central question of Matthew**

If Jesus said ‘No’, he would walk out of that trial a free man. If he said ‘Yes’, he signed his own death warrant. Which was it to be?

Yes—a guarded yes, but yes nonetheless.

He could not and would not deny it. He is the Messiah. He is the Son of God.

*And then Jesus puts it his way:* just as incriminating, but in line with his own teaching and consistent with his claims to be the Son of Man. 'I say to all of you: In the future you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One (a reverential Hebrew periphrasis for God), and coming on the clouds of heaven' (26:64).

*Here were two of his favourite ways of understanding himself and his mission:*

1-He is the Son of Man of Daniel 7:13–14, to whom all kingdoms would eventually bow and whose dominion would be everlasting and indestructible.

2-He is that Son of David who was also David's Lord (as he had told them in 22:41–46), and whom God vindicated, set on his right hand, and with whom he shared his throne.

That is how Caiaphas should think of him!

The priests and leaders of Israel would very soon see facts and circumstances that would show beyond reasonable doubt that Psalm 110:1 and Daniel 7:13–14 had been fulfilled in the person and achievement of Jesus. (resurrection)

The road to that Throne was through the cross.

## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS: CHURCH INTEREST

- ▶ Matthew is the only Gospel to use the word “church”
  - ▶ 16:18 “...I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church...”
  - ▶ 18:17 “If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church...”

### Matthew 18

Chapter we probably read too much in isolation instead of piecing them all together.

18:1-5 Greatest? is the lowest.

18:6-9 Your concern can't be just not stumbling yourself, though we should take that seriously (vv. 8-9), how we interact with one another is incredibly important (vv. 6-7).

Human relationships constantly need repair.

Christians should be experts at relationship repair. If we never learn how to repair—how to repent and forgive and help others to do the same—we are failing to understand the fundamental message of The Gospel.

18:10-14 Don't Despise—Treasure

Despise means to “look down on”...we look look down on others because we see ourselves as superior. They are useless—I am useful. They do nothing—I do everything.

v. 10 For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven. Guardian angels?

Angels watch-over nations (Daniel 10) & Churches (Rev 2-3)

“always see the face of my Father”

The ‘face’ of the eastern ruler was hard to approach. He was a busy and important person. But the angels always see God's ‘face’. They have unrestricted access to his presence. God cares very much for the little ones, the stray sheep of his flock. They receive greater attention & care.

vv. 12-14

Begins with “What do you think?” Consider.

A shepherd knows one is missing: aware—they are valued, treated with special honour

Leaves the others in search: they are indispensable; unwilling to have any perish

Rejoices over the one: greater honour given

Don't Avoid—GO!

Mt SoM if you remember someone has something against you—GO

Mt 18 if you see something—GO

**Always your move. (typically each side thinks its the other sides move)**

We say: come to me—ball is in your court...Jesus says: You Go

Not to anyone and everyone else—to the person.

How do we go? (our attitude)

What do we go & do? (our strategy)

Why are we going? (our goal)

How do we go (our attitude)?

This is one of those passages that we probably read too much on its own. When we do that we are getting out the scissors and removing it from its surroundings and then we can very easily lose a great deal of the meaning.

A-Humbly (17:24-18:5): like a child. Viewing them over above and beyond self

-Arrogantly: I'm here to fix you. I know best, learn from me.

B-Carefully (18:6): not wanting to cause one of God's "little ones" to be offended or to stumble

-Recklessly: don't consider how best to help, we just unload

C-Soberly (18:7-9): gracious towards others, ruthless towards self

-blindly. Ruthless towards others, gracious towards self

D-Constructively (18:10-14): the goal is not to destroy but to restore (they are indispensable)

-destructively. By product of failure to account for the previous ones. Arrogant, reckless and blind approach will destroy.

E-Mercifully (18:21-35): we've committed far worse and been forgiven far more. Mercy.

## **Forgive**

18:21 Jesus' reply will have shattered him. 'Not seven times, but seventy-seven times,' better, seventy times seven.

Peter: 7 times?

There was a rabbinic view that one need forgive only three times: "If a man commits a transgression, the first, second and third time he is forgiven, the fourth time he is not forgiven" (Yoma 86b). Peter more than doubled this quota of forgivenesses. Peter has clearly learned something from Jesus...but Jesus isn't done yet with teaching Peter.

Jesus 77 times:

Why does Cain kill Abel? Jealousy? Sure. Remember: Sin is justifying yourself at the expense of other people. Attempting to mask shame & guilt by trying to feel superior to other people. Your life to enhance mine. When covering up, blame shifting, and competitiveness fall short. Removing the other person is the next logical progression. For Cain it was destroying Abel.

Genesis 4:23-24 "Lamech said to his wives,

"Adah (Jewel) and Zillah (Melody), listen to me;

wives of Lamech, hear my words.

I have killed a man for wounding me,

a young man for injuring me.

24 If Cain is avenged seven times,

then Lamech seventy-seven times."

First of all, the word wound and injured is the word for bruise. Just bruise, scratch. The word for young man is actually best translated lad. It means a boy or, at best, an adolescent.

Lamech is boasting that if even a kid scratches or bruises him he'll take his head off, literally. When he says, "If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times," seven was a symbolic number of perfection. Therefore, to say, "I will be avenged 77 times," 7 times 70 or 77 times (depending on how you translate it; it's actually hard to translate), what Lamech is trying to say is, "I will never give up revenge. I will never lay aside my anger. I will never, ever, ever forgive anybody for ever wronging me."

God is saying that cycle of sin (being wounded and then wounding) against one another escalates without end as Cain-Lamech-mankind has shown doesn't work.

Instead of never ending cycle of revenge, never ending forgiveness.

Wow.

How?

10,000 bags of gold owed...

Josephus speaks of the taxes from Palestine as amounting to 8,000 talents, Ant. 12.175

-At that time: 10k was highest number in math combined with the most valuable monetary unit (bags of gold). His point being that the debt is beyond computing

Such is our debt before God.

v. 27 "The servant's master took pity on him..."

v. 28 BUT

This man owed him money, but whereas the debt he had just been forgiven was so large that its extent could scarcely be computed, this debt was certainly small enough to be understood, a hundred denarii (a denarius was a Roman silver coin; it was the wage an ordinary laborer was paid for a day's work; there were 6,000 denarii to a talent).

## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS: TEACHING

- ▶ Matthew has five sections of teaching (chs. 5-7, 10, 13, 18, 23-25).
  - ▶ Each concludes with: "When Jesus had finished saying these things..." (7:28, 11:1, 13:53, 19:1, 26:1)
  - ▶ Replacing the five books of Moses with five books of the Messianic Torah
- ▶ Easily memorised form: Arranged in... 2's in SoM, 3's (three messages to Joseph, three denials of Peter), 7's (seven parables in ch. 13, seven woes in ch. 23)

## DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS: THE KING & HIS KINGDOM

- ▶ David's dynastic succession
  - ▶ Gematria in Jesus' Genealogy (1:17) & 1:16 "David the king"
  - ▶ Son of David (9:27-31)
  - ▶ "What do you think about the Christ? Whose son is he?" (Mt 22:41-46)
    - ▶ Psalm 110:1 "The LORD says to my Lord: Sit at my right hand..."
- ▶ "the kingdom of heaven" (32 times); "the kingdom of God" (5 times); "the kingdom" (5 times); "The kingdom of heaven is like..." (10 times)

Mt 1:17 Matthew omits 4 members of the succession from David to Babylonian exile to achieve 3 groups of 14. This shows that the arrangement of 3 groups of 14 was not demanded by the genealogical data, but was imposed on the genealogy for some other reason.

Most scholars are convinced that Mt's emphasis on the number 14 is an example of gematria, a form of biblical interoperation using numerical values letters of the Hebrew alphabet to decipher words. The first letter of the Hebrew alphabet equals number one; the second, 2, etc and so forth.

In Hebrew David's name consists of 3 letters and has the numeric value of 14. Furthermore, David appears as the 14th name in the genealogy. Thus the repetition of the number 14 points naturally to King David and therefore Jesus' description as "son of David".

David wasn't merely a king, he was THE king. Numerous others kings are listed in the genealogy, but only David is called THE king.

Even Jesus' father, Joseph, is addressed by an angel in a dream: Joseph son of David..."

Mt 9 This account is unique to Mt's gospel. It is significant that the "Son of David" heals the blind. The OT promises that when the Messiah arrives, he will preserve the sight of those who see and grant sight to the blind (Isa 32:1; 33:17; 35:5-6)

Two other examples: Triumphal entry, only Matthew's gospel added "the Son of David"

Within the Temple as Jesus cleansed it (Mark and Luke also record this one). Mt along mentions the children shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David"

### **The LORD says to my Lord**

Then Jesus asks, If then David calls him Lord, how is he his son? Jesus' argument is not intended to undermine notions that the Messiah is a descendant of David.

Rather, His argument demonstrates that the Messiah is far more than a mere descendant of David. The Messiah is both Davidic & Divine.

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# MATTHEW: GOD WITH US

1:22-23 Jesus will be called: Immanuel

28:20 "...I am with you always, to the very end of the age."