

## The Book of Matthew

### The Title, Author, and Date of Matthew

1. Title: "According to Matthew"
2. Author: Matthew Levi
  - a. The name "Matthew" means "gift of God."
  - b. One of Christ's apostles. *Mt 10.3*
  - c. Levi was his name as "the tax collector." *9.9; Lu 5.27-28*
3. Date: c. A.D. 50-60

### The Background and Setting of Matthew.

1. Rome is ruling. Israel has not had any prophecy for 400 years.
2. Matthew is an eyewitness account of a Jew, written to the Jews.
3. All the major themes of the book are rooted in the OT, in light of Messianic expectations.
4. Matthew is the bridge between the OT and NT.

### The Purpose and Message of Matthew

1. The **purpose** of the book is to **to present Jesus Christ as the King and Messiah of Israel.**
  - a. Matthew contains over 60 quotations (130 quotations + allusions) from the OT prophecies of Messiah, showing that Jesus Christ is the promised King and Messiah of Israel. "Son of David"
  - b. This book would encourage Jewish believers, and show Jewish unbelievers that Jesus is their promised Messiah and King.
2. The **message** of the book of Matthew is: **"Jesus Christ is the Messiah, Son of David, King of the Jews."**

### Themes in Matthew

1. Key theme: Jesus is Messiah and King
  - a. "Son of David" – *1.1; 9.27; 12.23; 15.22; 20.30; 21.9, 15; 22.42, 45*
  - b. Prophecy – *1.21-23 = Is 7.14; 2.5-6 = Mic 5.2; 2.15 = Ho 11.1; 2.17-18 = Je 31.15; 2.23 = Is 11.1*
2. Davidic Covenant – The Kingdom
  - a. "Kingdom" (55 of 160 in NT) and "King" (10 of 40 in NT)
  - b. "Kingdom of Heaven" – *3.2; 4.17; 5.3, 10, 19, 19, 20, 7.21; 8.11; 10.7; 11.11, 12; 13.11, 24, 31, 22, 44, 45, 47.52; 16.19; 18.1, 3, 4, 23; 19.12, 14, 23; 20.1; 21.31; 22.2; 21.13; 25.1*
  - c. "Kingdom of God" – *12.28; 19.24; 21.31, 43*
  - d. Other uses of "Kingdom" (often in context "of God" or "of Heaven") – *4.23; 6.10, 13, 33; 8.12; 9.35; 12.25, 26; 13.19, 38, 41, 43; 16.28; 20.21; 24.14; 25.34; 26.29*
3. Conflict with Pharisees and Sadducees → Rejection of the King by the Jews
4. Concerns for Gentiles (Abrahamic Covenant) – *8.11-12; 15.24; 21.43; 28.19*
5. Some key verses: *1.1, 16; 3.17; 7.28; 12.50; 16.18; 16.24-27; 20.18-19; 20.28; 28.18-20*

## **The Structure/Outline of Matthew**

1. The main structure of Matthew is a series of five *discourse-narrative* sections, each marked by the phrase: “When Jesus had finished these sayings.” 7.28; 11.1; 13.53; 19.1; 26.1
2. The outline (mainly from MacArthur)
  - a. Prologue – 1.1-4.25
    - 1) Birth of the King 1.1-2.23
    - 2) Entry into Ministry 3.1-4.25
  - b. Discourse-Narrative 1 – The Authority of the King – 5.1-9.38
    - 1) Discourse #1: Sermon on the Mount 5.1-7.29
    - 2) Narrative #1: The Miracles of the King 8.1-9.38
  - c. Discourse-Narrative 2 – The Agenda of the King 5.1-9.38
    - 1) Discourse #2: Commissioning of the 12 10.1-42
    - 2) Narrative #2: The Mission of the King 11.1-12.50
  - d. Discourse-Narrative 3 – Adversaries of the King 13.1-17.27
    - 1) Discourse #3: Parables of the Kingdom 13.1-52
    - 2) Narrative #3: Conflict of the King 13.53-17.27
  - e. Discourse-Narrative 4 – Administration of the King 18.1-23.39
    - 1) Discourse #4: Childlikeness of the Believer 18.1-35
    - 2) Narrative #4: The Ministry in Jerusalem 19.1-23.39
  - f. Discourse-Narrative 5 – Atonement of the King 24.1-28.15
    - 1) Discourse #5: Olivet Discourse 24.1-25.46
    - 2) Narrative #5: The Passion of the King 26.1-28.15
  - g. Epilogue – 28.16-20

## Tom Vacek's overview of Matthew

The writer is Matthew Levi, one of the Twelve. He had been a Jewish tax-collector for the Romans, which meant that he was a despised turn-coat outcast. His call to discipleship is recorded in the Gospels.

He was a man of humility, and he never got over the fact that Christ had saved him from his sinful past. When he names himself in the list of Apostles, he calls himself "the tax-collector." None of the other Gospel writers refer to him as such; they refer to him by his given name, Matthew Levi.

Matthew records Jesus' comments on the destruction of Jerusalem, which occurred in July of 70 AD, as yet future. Therefore, we would conclude that Matthew wrote his Gospel sometime in the 60's AD.

- ✦ The Lord Jesus Christ is presented in this Gospel as the coming Messiah and King of the Jews, who had been promised throughout the Old Testament, and is the rightful King of Israel.
- ✦ There are 128 direct quotes or clear references in this Gospel to the Old Testament in support of that.
- ✦ Matthew wrote his Gospel specifically for the Jews. He often mentions Jewish customs and practices without any explanation. His readers would have understood what he was referring to. On the other hand, the other Gospel writers often give a brief explanation of Jewish customs for the benefit of their readers. Matthew also traces Christ's genealogy back only as far as Abraham, who was the father of the Hebrew race.
- ✦ Christ's genealogy is traced through his foster father, Joseph. This line goes back directly through King David to Abraham's great-grandson Judah. This is the royal blood-line, and it demonstrates that Christ has the legal right to sit on David's throne.
- ✦ As Israel's Messiah, Christ comes offering His Kingdom. The first recorded sermon by the King is in Matt 5-7, known as "the Sermon on the Mount." The King comes offering His Kingdom by pronouncing a blessing - "the Beatitudes." This is in direct contrast with the way the Old Testament had closed with the threat of a curse.
- ✦ The offer of the Kingdom is clearly rejected by the Jewish leaders. *Matt 12:22-24; 30-32* They had seen Christ's ministry and knew what He was claiming, but they attributed His work to the power of the Devil. They have rejected Christ and His offer, and therefore that offer is withdrawn.
- ✦ In chap 13. Jesus teaches about His coming Kingdom in parables. The parables served a dual purpose: 1) they hid the truth from those who rejected it; but 2) they also explained the truth in a more graphic, picturesque way to those who received it. *Matt 13:10-17*
- ✦ Matthew mentions the Sadducees more than any of the other Gospels. He presents the Pharisees and Sadducees both in a consistently negative light. Their doctrine is a bad leaven and must be avoided. Even though these two groups were at theological odds with each other, Matthew unites them in their opposition to Christ.
- ✦ The Olivet Discourse is Christ's prophecy concerning the Tribulation and the end times (chaps 24-25).
- ✦ Even though Matthew was written to the Jews, those outside of Judaism are clearly included.
  - There are 4 Gentile women mentioned in Christ's genealogy.
  - Christ performs miracles and preaches to those outside of Israel in the surrounding areas.
  - The Gospel closes with "the Great Commission," which is our mandate to go into all the world and make disciples. *Matt 28:18-20*
  - The word "church" is used in Matthew's Gospel, and only in Matthew's Gospel. *Matt 16:18*
  - Jesus is presented in His genealogy as the son of Abraham. God had promised to bless all the families of the earth in Abraham.
- ✦ Matthew's Gospel is not a strict chronology. He groups his narrative around 5 major discourses and he places events according to the theme of the discourse, rather than according to an historical chronology. He lays out his narrative according to themes and broader concepts, rather than a specific timeline.

