



Matthew

Lesson 1

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Author:

All four of the gospels are anonymous. None have a title, but each were established by the ancient church as written by their individual authors and are, therefore, designated according to that author's name. In both Mark and Luke's gospels, Matthew is identified as Levi the tax collector who was called by Christ to be His disciple. (Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27-28)

Date:

Most theologians date Matthew between A.D. 50 and 115. Many prefer a date earlier than 70 A.D. because Matthew 24 records Jesus' reference to the destruction of the Temple which didn't occur until Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D.

Major Themes:

One of Matthew's major themes is stated in the first sentence of his gospel: "The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." Clearly Matthew wanted to reveal Jesus as the One who fulfilled the genealogical requirements of the Jewish Messiah.

Another major theme of Matthew's is shown by his use of Old Testament prophecy. He wanted to exhibit how Christ fulfilled all the requirements passed down by the prophets regarding the life of Messiah. Therefore, he reveals Christ as the suffering servant, born of a virgin, and One who would die for the sins of His people. Matthew also records many of the miracles Christ performed and stresses His

ministry to the lost sheep of Israel. Matthew identifies Jesus as the complete fulfillment of all the Law and the Prophets. His gospel is a bridge that connects the Old Testament to the New. The Good News

The books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John are called the Gospels because they record the life and ministry of the Messiah and the redemption brought by Him. The word "gospel" means "good news" which is exactly what the truth of Jesus brings. From each gospel writer we see a different perspective of the events that consummate mankind's position in history both past and future. Though the life and ministry of Jesus Christ involved a much broader scope than any writer could put into words, through each of the gospel accounts we get vivid pictures of the events of His life that present Him as the reconciliation between a holy God and fallen man.

Matthew, Mark and Luke are referred to as the "synoptic" gospels. The meaning of the word synoptic is "to view together." The many similarities of these books in subject matter and form make a combined view that, when brought together, create a more complete picture of Christ's life and teaching.

Read Chapter 1

1. *From the following verses, give some information about Matthew. Matthew 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:29*

2. *What can you infer was the general attitude toward those in his profession? Matthew 9:11, 11:19, 18:15-17, 21:28-32; Mark 2:15; Luke 5:30-32*

3. *How might this attitude affect Matthew's relationship with the other disciples?*

4. *Why, in vs. 1, does Matthew immediately tie Jesus into the lineage of David and Abraham? 2 Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 89:3-4 & 34-37; Genesis 22:16-18; Romans 4:13*

5. *Identify the time divisions the genealogy is broken into? V. 17*



This division of the names in the genealogical tables was doubtless adopted for the purpose of aiding the memory. It was common among the Jews; and other similar instances are preserved. The Jews were destitute of books besides the Old Testament, and they had but few copies of that among them, and those chiefly in their synagogues. They would therefore naturally devise plans to keep up the remembrance of the principal facts in their history. One method of doing this was to divide the tables of genealogy into portions of equal length, to be committed to memory. This greatly facilitated the remembrance of the names. (Barnes Commentary notes)



Prayer requests:

Group time notes:
