

The Gospel of Matthew

Author

Although all of the Gospel writers do not explicitly identify themselves, the claim that Matthew the Disciple of Christ is the author of our first gospel book is supported by both internal and external evidence.

Internally the Gospel of Matthew plays down (writer's humility) the possible author's "dinner" (9:9-10) while others call his gracious act a "great banquet" (Luke 5:29). When we consider that Matthew was a tax collector requiring good record keeping and that He was knowledgeable of the Lord's activities, Matthews penmanship for the gospel becomes very plausible.

Externally, tradition strongly identifies the Apostle Matthew as the writer of the book that bears his name. Writers such as Clement of Rome, Polycarp, and Justin Martyr accompany a longer list of early support for Matthew. Also our Earliest manuscripts of the gospel have for the heading "KATAMATTHION"... "according to Matthew." Fourth Century Eusebius, quotes Papias indicating Matthew as the author "*Now Matthew compiled the reports in a Hebrew manner of speech, but each interpreted them as he could*" (*Ecclesiastical History 3.39.1*). Although this quote opens another issue concerning the possibility of a Hebrew Text before our Greek text, it none the less affirms Matthew as the author.

Recipients

Matthew appears to have written primarily to a Jewish audience. Opening with the genealogy of Jesus, Matthew works to demonstrate that Jesus is the Son of Abraham and David providing a direct royal link to the prophetic promises. Matthew's persistent quoting of Old Testament texts throughout his letter also indicates Jewish recipients. The fact that he is overwhelming concerned about the Kingdom and its establishment promotes a Jewish audience. He explains the offering and the rejection of God's Kingdom. This provides a needed explanation for any Jew.

Although Matthew wrote primarily for the Jew, his message also addresses the Gentile. His telling of the Magi bearing gifts (2:11) and the evangelistic commission to the whole world (28:18-20) indicate that the book is applicable worldwide.

Place and Date

The place and dating of any Gospel necessitates a discussion of the “synoptic problem.” Between the Gospels there are parallel stories that appear to be copies of one another. Some people attribute this copying to Holy Spirit claiming total independence between the writers as they formed their work. Other people hold that the writers borrowed from one another or possibly from other writings in order to form their work (Luke 1:1-4). Within this discussion of the “synoptic problem,” some understand that Matthew wrote his gospel first, then Mark, and then Luke. Others understand that Mark wrote first followed by Matthew and Luke.¹ I believe that Matthew wrote first between 40-60’s AD.

Matthew’s clear references to Jerusalem and even its coming destruction indicate a pre-70AD dating as the city was destroyed during that year. Matthew’s statement “unto this day” (27:8; 28:15) indicate that at the time of his writing some time has elapsed beyond the crucifixion. These statements provide time boundaries in the dating of Matthew.

Purpose

Several purposes can be identified as we consider Matthew’s Gospel. Matthew wrote to identify Jesus as Israel’s rightful King as indicated by both his genealogy reference to King David (1:1-17) as well his persistent quoting of the Old Testament. His writing would have provided a needed explanation of Israel’s relationship with God in light of their denial of Christ. Matthew’s through work in presenting the Kingdom parables (13) explaining the world’s reaction to his message, his recording of Israel’s leaders (23), and his concern for the timing of the Kingdom (23-25) all indicate a concern to explain God’s relationship to covenant Israel.

Message

Jesus is Israel’s King who sacrificially offered Himself for Sin and who will come again to Judge the World in Righteousness.

Theme

Jesus is the King of Israel.

¹ Internal evidence for interdependence includes at least the following three facts: 92-96% of Mark is in Matthew or Luke, 45% of Mark is recorded by both Matthew and Luke, 250 verses are shared by Matthew and Luke. These three facts provide the possibility that Matthew and Luke used Mark as a source. External evidence is not entirely straightforward. Anti-Marcionite Prologue to Luke notes that when Luke wrote Matthew and Mark already existed. Papias, called on of the most important transmitters of early history, indicates that Matthew “logia” possibly a Hebrew writing copy of his gospel or even what many have labeled as call “Q.” Augustine indicates that Matthew wrote first then Mark and Luke. This internal and external information calls for further study and respect for each others opinions.

Outline of Matthew

I. Messiah Introduced 1:1-2:23

- A. The Royal Genealogy of Jesus 1:1-17
 1. Jesus' Genealogy from Abraham to David 1:1-6
 2. Jesus' Genealogy from Solomon to the Deportation 1:7-11
 3. Jesus' Genealogy from Deportation to His Birth 1:12-16
 4. Summary of Jesus' Genealogy 1:17
- B. The Childhood Years of Jesus 1:18-2:23
 1. Announcement of Conception to Joseph 1:18-22
 2. The Birth of Jesus 1:25
 3. The Visit of the Magi 2:1-12
 4. The Flight to Egypt 2:13-15
 5. Herod's Slaughter of Children in Bethlehem 2:16-18
 6. The Return of Jesus' Family 2:19-23

II. Message Introduced 3:1-7:29

- A. His Preparations for Ministry 3:1-4:11
 1. Jesus ministry anticipated by John 3:1-12.
 2. Jesus Baptism 3:13-17
 3. Jesus' Temptation 4:1-11
- B. Jesus Ministry in Galilee 4:12-7:29
 1. Introduction 4:12-17
 2. Call of First Disciples 4:18-22
 3. Jesus' Effective Work in Galilee 4:23-24
 4. The Sermon on the Mount 5:1-7:29
 - a) His Teaching
 - (1) The Beatitudes 5:1-12
 - (2) Salt and Light Analogy 5:13-16
 - (3) The Need for True Righteousness 5:17-20
 - (4) Proper Relationships 5:21-48
 - (5) Warnings against Hypocrisy 6:1-18
 - (6) Warnings Against Materialism 6:19-24
 - (7) Warnings against Anxiety 6:25-34
 - (8) Warnings against Judging 7:1-6
 - (9) Encouragement to Prayer 7:7-12
 - (10) Encouragement to True Righteousness 7:13-14
 - (11) Warnings of False Righteousness 7:15-23
 - (12) Encouragement to Accept Jesus' Word 7:24-27
 - b) The Crowds Reaction of Amazement 7:23-29

III. Message Clarified 8:1-10:42

- A. Powerful Ministry Demonstrated 8:1-17
 1. Jesus' Healing of the Leper 8:1-4
 2. Jesus' Healing of the Centurion's Servant 8:5-13
 3. Jesus' Healings in Peter's House 8:14-17
 4. The Cost of Discipleship 8:18-22

5. Jesus Calms the Storm 8:23-27
6. Jesus heals the Gadarene Demonic 8:28-34
- B. Initial Contact with Pharisees 9:1-26
 1. Jesus demonstrates ability to forgive Sins by healing paralytic 9:1-8
 2. Jesus' association with sinners 9:9-13
 3. Jesus answers question concerning fasting 9:14-17
 4. Jesus raises synagogue leader's daughter 9:18-26
- C. Jesus Powerful Ministry Continued 9:27-10:42
 1. Jesus heals two blind men 9:27-31
 2. Jesus heals demon possessed man 9:32-34
 3. Jesus confirmed great need 9:35-38
 4. Jesus sends out the Twelve 10:1-42
 - a) Jesus separates and instructs the Twelve 10:1-15
 - b) Jesus warns the Twelve 10:16-23
 - c) Jesus describes cost of Discipleship 10:24-39
 - d) Jesus describes the Rewards of Discipleship 10:40-42

IV. **Message Confronted 11:1-13:52**

- A. John the Baptist Question concerning Jesus 11:1-4
- B. John's Godly Ministry Rejected 11:5-19
- C. Jesus' denunciation of unrepentant Galilean Cities 11:20-24
- D. Jesus' Invitation to Accept Messiah 11:25-30
- E. Jesus Confrontation with Pharisees Over the Sabbath 12:1-21
 1. Pharisees confront Jesus over working on Sabbath 12:1-8
 2. Jesus' Confrontation over healing on the Sabbath 12:9-21
- F. Jesus' Confrontation with Pharisees due to Healing 12:22-37
 1. The Healing of a Demon-possessed man 12:22-23
 2. The Pharisee's Response 12:24
 3. Jesus Response 12:25-37
 - a) House divided will not stand 12:25-29
 - b) Jesus Warning of Unpardonable Sin 12:30-32
 - c) Jesus Warning of Careless Words 12:33-37
 - d) Jesus denies Pharisee's request for sign 12:38-45
 4. Jesus clarifies His relationship to the People 12:46-50
- G. The Kingdom Parables 13:1-52
 1. The Parable of the Sower 13:1-9
 2. Jesus Explains reason for Parables 13:10-17
 3. The Parable of the Sower explained 13:18-23
 4. The Parable of the Wheat and Tare 13:24-30
 5. Parable of the Mustard Seed 13:31-32
 6. The Parable of the Leaven 13:33-35
 7. The Parable of the Tares Explained 13:36-43
 8. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure 13:44
 9. The Parable of the Costly Pearl 13:45-46
 10. The Parable of the Dragnet 13:47-52

V. Message Opposed 13:53-18:35

- A. Jesus' hometown unbelief 13:53-58
- B. John the Baptist Beheaded 14:1-12
- C. Jesus' Lessons for the Disciples 14:13-15:20
 - 1. Jesus Compassionate and Miraculous feeding of Five Thousand 14:13-21
 - 2. Jesus' miraculous rescue of the Disciples 14:22-33
 - 3. Jesus' Compassionate Care for the multitudes in Gennesaret 14:34-36
- D. Jesus' Confrontation with Pharisees concerning unwashed hands 15:1-20
- E. Gentiles Ready acceptance of Jesus 15:1-39
 - 1. The Healing of the Syrophonecian's Daughter 15:21-28
 - 2. The Healing of Many 15:29-31
 - 3. Jesus Feeds 4000 followers 15:32-39
- F. Pharisees demand a Sign 16:1-4
- G. Further Teachings for Disciples 16:5-18:35
 - 1. Jesus warns disciples of Pharisee's faith 16:5-12
 - 2. Peter's Confession of Christ 16:13-20
 - 3. Jesus' 1st Prediction of His Death 16:21-23
 - 4. Jesus describes the cost of Disciple 16:24-27
 - 5. Jesus' power privately Revealed 16:28-17:13
 - 6. Jesus Rebukes Disciple's lack of Faith 17:14-21
 - 7. Jesus 2nd Prediction of His Death 17:22-23
 - 8. Jesus' Miraculous payment of Temple Tax 17:24-27
 - 9. Jesus' 1st teaching about Greatness 18:1-6
 - 10. Jesus Warning of becoming a Stumbling Block 18:7-11
 - 11. The Father's Love for the Little One's 18:12-14
 - 12. A Disciple's Responsibility to Restore 18:15-20
 - 13. A Disciple's Responsibility to Forgive 18:21-35

VI. Message Rejected 19:1-25:46

- A. Teachings while around Judea 19:1-20:34
 - 1. The Pharisee's Question Concerning Divorce 19:1-12
 - 2. Jesus' Acceptance of Little Ones 19:13-15
 - 3. Jesus and the Rich Young Ruler 19:16-26
 - 4. A Disciples Reward 19:27-20:16
 - 5. Jesus' 3rd prediction of His Death 20:17-19
 - 6. Jesus 2nd Teaching on Greatness 20:20-28
 - 7. Jesus Mercifully heals Blind Man 20:29-34
- B. Jesus Entry into Jerusalem 21:1-23:39
 - 1. Jesus Triumphant Entry in Jerusalem 21:1-11
 - 2. Jesus Confrontation in the Temple 21:12-17
 - 3. Jesus Curses Barren Fig Tree 21:18-22
 - 4. Jesus Confrontation with Israel's Leaders 21:23-22:46
 - a) Jesus Confrontation with Temple Leaders 21:23-22:14
 - (1) The Question of Authority 21:23-27
 - (2) The Parable of the Two sons 21:28-32
 - (3) The Parable of the Landowner 21:33-46
 - (4) The Parable of the Marriage Feast 22:1-14

- b) Jesus' Confrontation with the Pharisees 22:15-22
- c) Jesus' Confrontation with the Sadducees 22:23-33
- d) Jesus' 2nd Confrontation with the Pharisees 22:34-46
 - (1) The Pharisees Question Jesus 22:34-40
 - (2) Jesus Questions the Pharisees 22:41-46.
- 5. Jesus Public Denunciation of Scribes and Pharisees 23:1-39
 - a) Jesus warns people of Pharisees 23:1-12
 - b) Jesus' Pronouncement of Woes 23:13-36
 - c) Jesus' mourning over Jerusalem 23:37-39
- C. The Olivet Discourse 24:1-25:46
 - 1. Jesus Explains Timing of the Kingdom 24:1-44
 - a) Antichrists and Tribulation will come first 24:1-28
 - b) The Son of Man will come in Power 24:15-31
 - c) The Parable of the Fig Tree 24:32-35
 - d) The Coming will be Sudden and Unexpected 24:36-44
 - 2. Jesus Encourages Faithfulness 24:45-25:46
 - a) The Need for Faithfulness 24:45-51
 - b) The Parable of the Ten Virgins 25:1-13
 - c) The Parable of Ten Talents 25:14-30
 - d) The Judgment of Faithfulness 25:31-46

VII. The Messiah Crucified and Risen 26:1-28:20

- A. Preparations for His Betrayal and Crucifixion 26:1-26:46
 - 1. Jesus' 4th Prediction of His Death 26:1-2
 - 2. Leaders Plot to Kill Jesus 26:3-5
 - 3. Jesus' Body anointed for burial 26:6-13
 - 4. Judas' Preparation to Betray Jesus 26:14-25
 - 5. The Last Supper 26:26-30
 - 6. The Disciples Pledge Commitment 26:31-35
 - 7. Prayer in the Gethsemane Garden 26:36-46
- B. The Betrayal and Trials of Jesus 26:47-27:32
 - 1. The Betrayal and Arrest of Jesus 26:47-56
 - 2. The Trials of Jesus 26:57-27:32
 - a) Before Caiaphas 26:57-68
 - b) Peter's Denial of Jesus 26:69-75
 - c) Judas' Remorse 27:1-10
 - d) Jesus Before Pilate 27:11-26
 - e) Jesus Mocked by Soldiers 27:27-32
- C. The Crucifixion of Jesus 27:33-66
 - 1. The First Three Hours 27:33-44
 - 2. The Last Three Hours 27:45-56
 - 3. His Burial 27:57-66
- D. The Resurrection of Jesus 28:1-15
- E. The Great Commission 28:16-20