

Introduction to the book of Matthew

- Who wrote Matthew?
 - Many scholars adhere to the traditional belief that the apostle Matthew wrote the book.
 - Other scholars believe, if he did not write the whole book himself, his writings were used to compose the book.
 - There are a few scholars that believe Matthew the apostle had nothing to do with writing the book, but no alternative author is provided.
 - The Nazarene church tends to follow the traditional belief that Matthew either composed or helped compose the gospel of Matthew.
- Who is Matthew?
 - Matthew, called Levi, was the son of Alphaeus
 - Matthew (translated Yahweh's Gift) is believed to be the Christian name of Levi (a name change similar to Peter and Paul)
 - Before following Jesus Matthew was a Publican (tax collector) in service of Herod Antipas
 - His occupation would have made him fluent in Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic
 - Tax collectors were hated and despised
 - They were viewed as Jewish agents for the Romans
 - Matthew would have most likely been shunned from the Jewish community
 - Matthew was sitting by a customs house in Capernaum when Jesus called him
 - Matthew (according to many scholars) most likely died in Ethiopia on missions
 - They say he was arrested, impaled to the earth by spears, and then beheaded
- Arguments for who Matthew wrote the Gospel...
 - Gospel was written in Greek
 - Written to a Jewish audience
- When was Matthew written?
 - Most scholars give the creation of this Gospel somewhere in the 70s AD
 - Mark was written first in the 60s AD, Luke in the 80s AD
 - The Gospel of Mark and the Gospel of Matthew share a large portion of text and stories
 - The Gospels can be perceived as Jesus from four different perspectives
- Historical Context of the Gospel
 - 70 AD started on a Monday
 - About April 14th started the siege of Jerusalem: Future Emperor Titus surrounds the Jewish capital with three legions.
 - They limit the food and water in the city and refuse passage to pilgrims coming to celebrate passover
 - April 21st starts a full scale assault on the city
 - May 6th the third wall of Jerusalem collapses
 - May 11th the second wall of Jerusalem is breached

- July 14th all sacrifices cease in the temple
- August 4th the Jewish temple is destroyed, the order of the Jewish high priests and the Sanhedren were abolished
- September 2nd Rome gains control of Jerusalem, burns the city to the ground, and kills all the remaining residents
 - Any residents that were not killed were captured and either sold as slaves or killed later (most likely in an arena)
- Some Final Facts....
 - The apostle Matthew is only mentioned twice in his gospel
 - Matthew (the gospel) is one of three synoptic gospels
 - Synoptic gospels is the term categorizing the books of Matthew, Mark, and Luke
 - These gospels describe events from a similar point of view
 - Matthew presents Jesus as a teacher greater than Moses
 - It is the first book in the New Testament canon (our Bible today)
 - The gospel starts with the paternal human genealogy of Jesus
 - This is proof of fulfilled promises as well as naming Jesus the son of God
 - The Gospel of Matthew has the most fulfilled prophecies and promises named (57 in Matthew vs 30 in Mark)
- The Breakdown
- The book of Matthew can be broken down into six major sections
 - Jesus: Conceived, Commissioned, Resisted, Witnessed to, Confirmed, and Faithful
 - Chapters 1-4
 - Jesus' Ministry Begins
 - Chapters 4-11
 - The Twofold Response to Jesus' Ministry
 - Chapters 11-16
 - Jesus' Journey to Jerusalem and the Cross
 - Chapters 16-29
 - Jesus in Jerusalem: The Empire Strikes Back
 - Chapters 21-27
 - God Thwarts the Rulers
 - Chapter 28
- The Genealogy Observations:
- It is the first confirmation of all prophesy
 - Line of Abraham, Issac, Jacob, Judah, and David
- Fourteen generations between each section leads to the acknowledgment of divine intercession in this lineage
- There are five women listed in the genealogy
- Each woman had a scandalous or "unacceptable" story or relationship in the Old Testament
 - Tamar- had children by her dead husbands (plural) father
 - Rahab- a gentile prostitute
 - Ruth- a foreigner
 - Bathsheba- another man's wife taken by David

- Mary- pregnant out of wedlock
- Jesus has Gentiles in his genealogy, meaning also a gentile heritage (not practiced)
- Jesus accepted everyone equally (Jew and Gentile)
- There was evil men in the genealogy of Jesus (some evil kings)
- Each major break in the genealogy has great significance
 - Abraham- start of the genealogy
 - David/Solomon- the beginning of a royal lineage
 - The exile- the end of the royal lineage
 - The exile is the turning point, almost explaining why Joseph is a carpenter and not a king