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# Intro to the New Testament:

*The Gospel of Matthew*

Session Two

# Genre

- N. T. Wright “*Jewish-style biographies, designed to show the quintessence of Israel’s story played out in a single life. ... The gospels are therefore the story of Jesus told as the history of Israel in miniature.*”

# Author

- This Gospel is an anonymous biography of Jesus
- It is attributed to Matthew, the apostle, very early
- The title kata Maththaion was likely added by AD 100
- The title was added likely to distinguish this Gospel from the other canonical Gospels, especially when they were combined

# Audience & Writing Setting

- Most scholars consider Matthew to write to a Jewish audience that had been persuaded that Jesus was God's Messiah
- This is supported by the frequent fulfillment quotations, emphasis of Jesus fulfilling the Torah, and omission of explanation of Jewish customs found in Mark
- The Jewish character of Matthew's Gospel suggests he wrote it in Palestine or Syria, likely in Antioch, as many of the original Palestinian disciples had migrated there (Acts 11:19, 27)

# Date

- A number of factors goes into dating Matthew:
  - Dependence among Synoptic Gospels
  - Reference/relation to fall of Jerusalem A. D. 70
  - Dependence on canonical Gospels in Christian writings of early 2nd century
- If Matthew draws on Mark then it must postdate Mark
- If Mark writes just prior to the destruction of the temple this would give Matthew a range of approximately A. D. 70–85

# Purposes

- The organization of Jesus's teaching in Matthew with its strong ethical content and emphasis on discipleship lead some to see Matthew as a catechetical manual for new converts
- Or a scholastic manual for church leaders
- Or it is designed for liturgical and homiletical reading in early church services
- In short, it functions to remind Jewish Christians to have a universal outlook

# Features

- One major setting in Matthew that has theological importance is the mountain; key revelation and eschatological moments occur such as the sermon on the mount, the transfiguration, and the final commissioning of the disciples
- Especially significant is Matthew's arrangement of Jesus's teaching into 5 primary blocks
  - 5:1–7:29 (Sermon on the Mount: Kingdom Manifesto)
  - 10:1–11:1 (Mission Discourse: Disciples' Kingdom Mission)
  - 13:1–53 (Parables Discourse: Kingdom Disclosure of Already/Not Yet)
  - 18:1–35 (Community Discourse: Community Embodying the Kingdom)
  - 24:1–25:46 (Eschatological Discourse: Temple's Fall and Kingdom's Full Arrival Predicted)

# Outline: Part 1

- **1:1–4:16 Jesus's Identity and Preparation for Ministry**
  - 1:1–2:23 Birth and Infancy
  - 3:1–4:16 Baptism and Temptation



# Outline: Part 2

- **4:17–16:20 Jesus’s Announcement of the Kingdom to Israel and Resulting Responses**
  - *4:17–11:1 Proclamation of the Kingdom in Word and Action*
    - 4:17–25 Summary of Jesus’s Message and Ministry
    - 5:1–7:29 Jesus’s First Discourse: Sermon on the Mount
    - 8:1–9:38 Jesus’s Enactment of the Kingdom
    - 10:1–11:1 Jesus’s Second Discourse: Mission
  - *11:2–16:20 Rejection by Leaders and Jesus’s Withdrawal from Conflict to Ministry*
    - 11:2–12:50 Rejection of Jesus as Messiah by Jewish Leaders
    - 13:1–53 Jesus’s Third Discourse: Parables
    - 13:54–16:20 Continued Conflict and Emerging Identity

# Outline: Part 3

- **16:21–28:20 Jesus to Jerusalem: Kingdom Enactment through Death and Resurrection**
  - *16:21–20:28 Journey to the Cross and Teaching on Discipleship*
    - 16:21–17:27 Cross Predicted and Discipleship Defined
    - 18:1–35 Jesus’s Fourth Discourse: Community
    - 19:1–20:28 Nearing Jerusalem: Illustrations of Discipleship
  - *20:29–25:46 Final Proclamation, Confrontation and Judgment in Jerusalem*
    - 20:29–22:46 Jesus’s Royal Arrival and Controversies with Jerusalem Leaders
    - 23:1–39 Judgment on Jewish Leadership: Woes to Scribes and Pharisees
    - 24:1–25:46 Jesus’s Fifth Discourse: Eschatological
  - *26:1–28:20 Jesus’s Execution by Rome and Resurrection/Vindication by God*
    - 26:1–56 Prelude to the Cross: Betrayal and Desertion
    - 26:57–27:26 Jesus on Trial
    - 27:27–66 Jesus’s Crucifixion, Death, and Burial
    - 28:1–20 Resurrection as Vindication and Commissioning of the Disciples

# Theological Focus

- The Kingdom of God
- Fulfillment of Scripture
- Gentile Inclusion
- Already / Not Yet of God's Reign

# Christological Emphasis

- Christology in Matthew comes from a combination of titles, scriptural citations and allusions, and the narrative portrait of Jesus through his words and actions
- In Matthew, Jesus is:
  - a. Davidic Messiah
  - b. Torah fulfilled and Wisdom embodied
  - c. Representative Israel
  - d. Embodiment of YHWH

# Community of Disciples

- This community is to be marked out by care for vulnerable, sacrifice and service which renounce status and ambition, practicing unlimited forgiveness which reflects the forgiveness of God—in short, love of God and neighbour
- Matthew is the only Gospel to use the term *ekklēsia* directing it at his own post-easter community focusing on its mission which is a derivative of Jesus's own mission now open to the nations making the community necessarily Jew and Gentile (multiethnic)
- The community is most marked by Jesus's presence in their midst until the end of the age which gives the church its authority to teach and lead and to bind and loose