

OPENING PRAYER

Proper 28¹

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written
for our learning:
Grant us so to hear them, read, mark, learn,
and inwardly digest them,
that we may embrace and ever hold fast
the blessed hope of everlasting life,
which you have given us in our Savior Jesus Christ;
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW

An account* of the genealogy* of Jesus the Messiah,* the son of David, the son of Abraham. (1:1)

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”* (28:19-20)

Footnotes

1.1 Or *A book*

1.1 Or *birth*

1.1 Or *Jesus Christ*

28.20 Other ancient authorities (manuscripts) add
Amen

OVERVIEW²

- 1) Basic Information
 - a) Gospel as genre – Mark and Mathews contributions
 - b) History and New Testament Chronology
 - c) Authorship, Date, Location, Unity, Sources
- 2) Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology: range of expectations
- 3) Unique Contributions
 - a) Nativity/Proto-Incarnation
 - b) Teaching (the 5 Discourses) – what, when and how to teach.
 - c) Ecclesia/Church – “my Ecclesia” (16:18) – the huge leap – also how we do church
 - d) Proto-Trinitarian
 - e) Mission – to Jews, Gentiles, all nations
- 4) Themes and Issues
 - a) Jesus’ Identity
 - i) Theology
 - ii) Christology

¹ Episcopal Book of Common Prayer pp.236

² Sources include notes from Raymond E. Brown, Oxford Bible Commentary, James R. Edwards, William L. Lane, Ched Myers, and N.T. Wright

- iii) Abraham, Moses, and David
- iv) Titles and Names (frequency in Matthew)
- b) Jewish/Anti-Semitism
- c) Discipleship
- d) Purpose of Gospel: Jews and Gentiles
- 5) Relevance today
 - a) How do I understand Jesus in the 1st and 21st Century contexts?
 - b) How do I follow Jesus and address the challenges of modern cultures?

REFLECTION

What is my goal in studying Matthew?

CLOSING PRAYER

We thank you, heavenly Father,
for the witness of your apostle and evangelist,
Matthew, to the Gospel of Beatitude and Grace
which you have given us in your Son, our Savior;
and we pray that, after his example,
we may with ready wills and hearts obey
the calling of our Lord to follow him;
through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

The Rev. Zoila Schoenbrun

SLOW RELIGION: GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW



*The Inspiration of St. Matthew,
Caravaggio, 1602*

Slow Religion, The Gospel According to Matthew is a lay person-led adult education weekly series for Christians and seekers. Slow Religion uses a literary and historical approach to the ancient texts to identify and apply insights from the Gospel to today's world.

Matthew's gospel is worth studying because the author attempts to uphold Jesus' Jewish past, with Jesus ministry, death, and resurrection, in the context of the 1st Century CE Jesus movement and early church, and in a hostile Hellenistic and Jewish world.

21st Century readers recognize Matthew as the source of many of the best-known stories and sayings of Jesus as well as a social philosophy that many non-Christians believe in. Famous for its Sermon on the Mount, The Beatitudes, and other teachings, Matthew is often called the most Jewish of the Gospels, while also contributing with the Gospel of John to antisemitism.

The class is created and led by Joe Jennings and advisors include: the Rev. Zoila Schoenbrun and the Rev. Robert Gieselmann, St. Stephens Episcopal Church, Belvedere, CA; the Rev. Br. Richard Edward Helmer, Episcopal Church of our Saviour, Mill Valley, CA; and Eugene E. Lemcio, PhD, Emeritus Professor of New Testament, Seattle Pacific University and the Rev. Heather Wenrick, the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Seattle.

Prior Slow Religion Classes include the Gospel of According to Mark (2021-22), the Foundations of Christian Faith (2020-21), the Holy Spirit (2020), the Gospel According to John (2019-20), and Paul's Letter to the Romans (2017-8).

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VIDEOS

Walsh, Robyn Faith, 'The Origins of Early Christian Literature'
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2GFDG50s90>

Yale Bible Study: Gospel of St. Matthew (Series of 8 Videos)
Harold W. Attridge in discussion with Michal Beth Dinkler.
<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLPQBt1pZ2B7EedLS2SDyAABTjJo7JMYji>
<https://yalebiblestudy.org/courses/the-gospel-of-matthew/lessons/ancestry-and-birth-video/>

Yale Courses: Gospel of St. Matthew
New Testament History and Literature with Dale B. Martin
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eZG4in_i9z4

BACKGROUND NOTES

Gospel as Genre

The English word “Gospel” (from Anglo-Saxon Godspell) or “good news” is translated from the Greek euangelion³. Originally in Christian usage it meant the good news of God's saving act in Jesus Christ, focused on the cross and resurrection (1 Cor. 15:1-11). The term was used in the opening verse of the Gospel of Mark. It signified that the prefacing of the account of Jesus' death and resurrection with a string of passages covering his earlier ministry was a way of proclaiming the good news. The NT contains four Gospels-Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Mark wrote his account to put a human/historical face on Jesus; strengthen his community's faith under persecution; modify or correct some of his contemporaries views of Jesus; and shape the reader's view of discipleship. Matthew's contribution to the genre: Teachings; Christology; Theology; Ecclesiology; and Eschatology.

Historical and New Testament Chronology⁴

30 CE+/-	Death of Jesus
40-65 CE	Paul's conversion and ministry
51-52 CE	I Thessalonians
54-55 CE	Galatians
55 CE	Philemon
56 CE	Philippians
56-7 CE	I Corinthians
57 CE	II Corinthians
57-8 CE	Romans
62 CE	Death of James, brother of Jesus, leader of the early church
64 CE	Emperor Nero's persecution of the Christians in Rome
65-68 CE	Death of Peter and Paul in Rome
67-73 CE	Jewish Revolt Against Romans
70 CE	Destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem by the Romans
60-75 CE	Mark
80-90 CE	Matthew
85 CE +/-	Luke
85 CE +/-	Acts of the Apostles
80-110 CE	John

Matthew Authorship, Date, Location, Unity, Sources⁵

Date	80-90 +/- 10 years
Author by Tradition	Matthew a tax collector among the Twelve, wrote either the Gospel or collected the Lord's sayings in Aramaic.
	Eusebius, <i>Hist Eccl</i> 3:39 attributes to Papias, a second century CE bishop of Hierapolis in Asian Minor, the earliest testimony to Matthews's authorship.

³ <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/glossary/Gospel/>

⁴ Brown, Raymond E., *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 1996

⁵ Brown, Raymond E., *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 1996

“Now Matthew made an ordered arrangement of the oracles in the Hebrew language, and each one translated it as he was able.” The “Gospel according to Matthew” appeared not long after the gospel was written in the 2nd century CE.⁶

Author Detectible
From Contents

A Greek-speaker, who knew Aramaic or Hebrew or both and was not an eye witness of Jesus’ ministry. Drew on Mark and a collection of sayings of the Lord (Source Q) as well as on available other traditions oral and written. Probably a Jewish Christian.

Locale Involved

Probably Antioch in modern Syria

Unity and Integrity

No major reason to think more than one author or of any sizable additions to what he wrote.

Sources

Matthew reproduces 80% of Mark.
Matthew is 50% longer than Mark.
Q Source of Sayings (also in Luke but not found in Mark)
Unique oral traditions

Divisions⁷

1:1-2:23

Introduction: Origin and Infancy of Jesus the Messiah

The who and how of Jesus’ identity (1:1-25)

The where and whence of Jesus’ birth and destiny (2:1-23)

3:1-7:29

Part One: Proclamation of the Kingdom

Narrative: Ministry of JohnBap, baptism of Jesus, the temptations, beginning of the Galilean ministry (3:1-4:25)

Discourse: Sermon on the Mount (5:1-7:29)

8:1-10:42

Part Two: The Ministry and Mission in Galilee

Narrative mixed with short dialogue: None miracles consisting of healings, calming a storm, exorcism (8:1-9:38)

Discourse: Mission Sermon (10:1-42)

11:1-13:52

Part Three: Questioning of and Opposition to Jesus

Narrative setting for teaching and dialogue: Jesus and JohnBap, woes on disbelievers, thanksgiving for revelation, Sabbath controversies and Jesus’ power, Jesus’ family (11:1-12:50)

Discourse: Sermon in Parables (13:1-52)

13:53-18:35

Part Four: Christology and Ecclesiology

Narrative mixed with much dialogue: Rejection at Nazareth, feeding the 5,000, walking on water, controversies with the Pharisees, healings, feeding the 4,000,

⁶ Baryon, John, and John Muddiman, *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, 2001

⁷ Brown, Raymond E., *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 1996

Peter's confession, first passion prediction, transfiguration, second passion prediction (13:53-17:27)
Discourse: Eschatological Sermon (18:1-35)

19:1-25:46

Part Five: Journey to and Ministry in Jerusalem

Narrative mixed with much dialogue: teaching, judgement parables, third passion prediction, entry to Jerusalem, cleansing the Temple, clashes with authorities (19:1-23:39)
Discourse: Eschatological sermon (24:1-25:46)

26:1-28:20

Climax: Passion, Death, and Resurrection

Conspiracy against Jesus, Last Supper (26:1-29)
Arrest, Jewish and Roman Trials, crucifixion, death (26:30-27:56)
Burial, guard at tomb, opening the tomb, bribing the guard, resurrection appearances (27:57-28:20)

Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology⁸

Apocalyptic⁹ affording a revelation or prophecy; predicting or presaging imminent disaster and total or universal destruction. Greek *apokalyptikos*, equivalent to *apokalypt(ein)* to uncover, disclose (see apocalypse) + -ikos-ic

Eschatology¹⁰, the doctrine of the last things/end times. It was originally referred to Jewish, Christian, and Muslim beliefs about the end of history, the resurrection of the dead, the Last Judgment, the messianic era, and the problem of theodicy (the vindication of God's justice).

The Book of Daniel's¹¹ apocalyptic hope anticipated the "kingdom of the Son of Man". Daniel offers an expression of hope in a messiah, a Son of Man, that unites the fulfillment of the history of Israel with the end of world history. In many ways, the Book of Daniel, is a prototype for Jesus.

Unique Contributions

Teaching (5 Discourses)

A close study of Matthew's five discourses provides grounds for concluding that they are not transcripts of actual sermons. The discourses are anthologies of the remembered sayings of Jesus organized around central themes of his ministry. When the content of Matthew is paralleled in the other gospels, the contents are often scattered.

Each of the five discourses is paralleled with a shorter version in another synoptic gospel:¹²

Matthew	Mark and Luke
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⁸ The category of "apocalyptic literature" was invented by the German New Testament scholar Friedrich Lücke in 1832 in the context of an introduction to the Book of Revelation. Lücke identified a small number of Jewish apocalyptic writings (Daniel, 1 Enoch, 4 Ezra, and the Sibylline Oracles) and also discussed some Christian apocalypses such as the Ascension of Isaiah. Source: <https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195170498.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780195170498-e-3>

⁹ Source: <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/apocalyptic>

¹⁰ Source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/eschatology>

¹¹ Source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/eschatology>

¹² France, R. T., *The Gospel of Matthew* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament) – July 27, 2007

Matt 5-7 (107 verses)	Luke 6:20-49 (30 verses)
Matt 10 (38 verses)	Mark 6:7-13 (7 verses), Luke 9:1-6, 10:1-12
Matt 13 (50 verses)	Mark 4:3-34 (32 verses)
Matt 18 (33 verses)	Mark 9:35-48 (14 verses)
Matt 24-25 (94 verses)	Mark 13:5-37 (33 verses)

The longer Matthean discourses are thus the work of a responsible anthologizer who had a wide range of traditional sayings of Jesus at his disposal. He shaped these into powerful teaching discourses to serve his church as they explored and communicated key aspects of Jesus teaching.

In Jesus Matthew finds the fusion of thought and deed – discourse and narrative¹³:

Jesus words	Jesus deeds
Be meek (5:5)	As he is (11:29; 21:5)
Mercy (5:7)	As he is merciful (9:27; 15:22; 20:30)
Congratulates those oppressed for God's cause (5:10)	Jesus suffers and dies innocently (27:23)
Demands faithfulness to the Mosaic law (5:17-20)	Faithfully keeps the law during his ministry (8:4; 12:1-8, 9-14; 15:1-20)
Recommends self-denial in the face of evil (5:39)	Does not resist the evil done to him (26:67; 27:30)
Calls for private prayer (6:6)	Prays alone (14:23)
Rejects the service of mammon (6:19)	Lives without concern for money (8:20)
Commands followers to carry crosses (16:24)	Carries his own cross until Simon helped (27:32)

Nativity/Proto-Incarnation

1:18-2:23 are 5 scriptural proofs that Jesus of Nazareth is the messiah. These 31 lines are one of Matt's most distinctive contributions to the Christian story. The narrative is largely unparalleled in the other gospels. They are in fact a set of arguments, not a narrative per se, to show how in the coming of Jesus a wide range of scriptural material is fulfilled.¹⁴

Matt agrees with Luke on the basic elements: a betrothed couple called Joseph and Mary, Joseph of the line of David, conception through the Holy Spirit, without human intercourse, angelic revelation of the name of Jesus, birth in Bethlehem during the reign of Herod the Great, and upbringing in Nazareth.

There is nothing in Matt's presentation or in the nature of the events he outlines, to suggest that he is doing more than recording and reflecting on traditions which he had received apparently from some source associated with Joseph.

¹³ Barton and Muddiman Editors, Dale C. Allison Jr., Matthew Contributor, *Oxford Bible Commentary*, 2001

¹⁴ Source: France, R. T., *The Gospel of Matthew Notes*

Quoting Isaiah, the angel tells Joseph that God through the Holy Spirit is at work in Mary to create a son. It is interesting to note that no one in the first century CE interpreted Isaiah this way – this is a Matthew innovation. It looks like Matt knew the story and found the verse to support it, not the other way around.¹⁵

Ekklesia/Ecclesia/ Assembly/Church¹⁶

The OT Septuagint (the Greek language version of the Pentateuch) gives two senses of the meaning: 1) an “assembly duly summoned”; and 2) the “Jewish congregation”. In both secular and biblical use *ekklesia* distinguishes between the assembling of men and the men thus assembled. So it is likely that the word assembly had a concrete and abstract meaning.

The NT follow the same arrangement but go on to make the distinction between the Church, 1) as the whole body of believers; and 2) as the individual congregation, e.g. the house church. This raises the question as to which meaning came first and to what degree did the two meanings co-exist in the early Jesus movement.

The word *ekklesia*/assembly does not appear in Mark, Luke, John, 2 Timothy, Titus. 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John or Jude.

The three occurrences in Matthew are disputed (16:18; 18:17). The most frequent are varied use of the term is in Acts.

16:18 “And I tell you, you are Peter (Gk *Petros*), and on this rock (Gk *petra*) I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.”

18:17 “If that person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector.”

The *ekklesia*/church Matthew 16:18 and 18:17 do not appear to be consonant with one another. The first implies a worldwide church and the second a specific congregation or synagogue.

The first passages in Acts (5:11; 7:38; 8:1; 8:3; 9:31) are highly significant.

Acts 5:11 “And great fear seized the whole *church* and all who heard of these things.”

Acts 7:38 “He is the one who was in the *congregation* in the wilderness with the angel who spoke to him at Mount Sinai, and with our ancestors; and he received living oracles to give to us.”

Acts 8:1 “That day a severe persecution began against the *church* in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria.”

Acts 8:3 “But Saul was ravaging the *church* by entering house after house; dragging off both men and women, he committed them to prison.”

Acts 9:31 “Meanwhile the *church* throughout Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and was built up.”

Proto-Trinitarian

¹⁵ France, R. T., *The Gospel of Matthew* (The New International Commentary on the New Testament) – July 27, 2007

¹⁶ Kittel, Gerhard Editor, Geoffrey W. Bromley, Translator, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Volume III, 1965

The Son is placed together with the Father and the Holy Spirit at the Baptism (3:13-17) and the Mission (28:19) the end of the Gospel. The Son of God and Son of Man motifs are prominent throughout, and, the Emmanuel motif appears at the beginning and the end. Jesus is implicitly compared with Moses and David. The theme of Jesus as divine wisdom also appears (11:19, 27). The divine revelation of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, comes in the middle of the gospel. (16:16)

Mission

Who is the Jesus movement to evangelize? Jews and/or Gentiles?

“These twelve Jesus sent out with the following instructions: “Do not take a road leading to gentiles, and do not enter a Samaritan town, but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (10:5-6)

“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”[d] (28:19-20)

Titles and Names (frequency in Matthew)

Son of Man (29)
David, Son of David (16)
Messiah (17)
Son of God (7)
Moses (7)
Abraham (6)
King of the Jews (4)
Jesus of Nazareth, of Galilee (3)

Theological Emphasis Compared to Mark

Christology: The divine revelation of Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of the Living God, comes in the middle of the gospel. (16:16) The Son of God and Son of Man motifs are prominent throughout; and, the Emmanuel motif appears at the beginning and the end. Jesus is implicitly compared with Moses and David. The theme of Jesus as divine wisdom also appears (11:19, 27). The Son is placed together with the Father and the Holy Spirit at the end of the Gospel.

Ecclesiology: Not only are there reflections of the Matthean community life throughout the gospel, but also the theme of church foundation appears (16:18-19); and qualities to be emphasized in church life (18).

Eschatology: The appearance of Jesus as marking a decisive change of times is already anticipated in the infancy narrative, where his birth is signified by a star. A theme that is echoed in the earthquake at Jesus death and his resurrection.

The Moses/Jesus Theme¹⁷

Matthew asserts that the histories of Moses, the first deliverer, and Jesus, the messianic deliverer, are in the mysterious providence of a consistent God. Matthew uses three types of intertextualities in Matt 2:1, 11, 19-20: borrowing which alludes to no subtext; borrowing which alludes to a series of subtexts; and borrowing which cites a specific subtext. Matthew primarily uses the latter

¹⁷ Allison, Dale C. Jr., *The New Moses, A Matthean Typology*, 1993

two types of borrowings and shows a conscious intention of the author which are designed to be perceived by the reader/audience.

The Moses Typology in Matthew 1-2:

Language from Exodus (2:19, Exodus 4:19-20)

Deliverance from Egypt (2:15; Hos 11:1)

The purpose is to tell the reader that there is parallelism between what unfolds in Matthew 2 and what unfolded long ago in Egypt. It compels the reader to set the story of Jesus and the story of the exodus, which is the story of Moses, side by side and ask: how exactly are they similar.

In Matthew, Jesus' superiority to Moses is not argued it is assumed: 5:21-48 does demand more than Moses demanded; and makes Jesus, not Moses, the mediator with God.

There is no explicit diminishment of Moses in Matthew. For Matthew Jesus was the unquestioned Lord. Jesus was greater than the Temple, greater than Jonah, and greater than Solomon (12:6, 41-42).

Moses was the paradigmatic prophet-king, the Messiah's model, the worker of miracles, the giver of the Torah (Laws), the mediator for Israel, and the suffering servant.

Jesus was similarly a suffering servant, the mediator of Israel, the giver of Torah, a worker of miracles, the Mosaic Messiah, and the eschatological prophet-king. For Jesus, Moses is his typological herald and foreshadow.

Jesus' authority (*exousia*) is a central theme of both Mark and Matthew, and a core supporting point of Matthew's Christology, the theological interpretation of the person and work of Christ¹⁸ (8:27; 9:6; 10:1; 21:27; 28:18). For Judaism Moses was the personification of authority and its living definition. In the OT, "Moses says" is interchangeable with "scripture says" and with "God says". The theme of Jesus' authority appears often with Moses typology. In 17:1-8 the voice from heaven enjoins obedience to Jesus, the prophet like Moses "listen to him" (Exodus 24 and 34). The correlation between Jesus authority and his Mosaic character was a product of design. Matthew has draped the Messiah in the familiar mantle of Moses, by which dress he made Jesus the full hearer of God's authority.

If it was true that Jesus was, for Matthew, the hermeneutical key to unlocking the religious meaning of the Jewish Bible, it is also true that the Jewish Bible was for him the hermeneutical key to unlocking the religious meaning of Jesus. Thus Matthew's Gospel contains a defining dialectic: the past informs the present, and the present informs the past. The lines between Moses and Jesus are bidirectional: informed understanding of Jesus requires true understanding of Moses, and true understanding of Moses requires informed understanding of Jesus.

¹⁸ Merriam Webster

Jesus may have transcended the lawgiver, but in Matthew Moses' laws and Moses are still an imperative. Thus Jesus story, the Gospel, is inexorably tied to Moses, and the OT. This may be Matthew's most conservative insight – even as the movement was widening among Gentiles and moving away from the synagogue, Matthew wrote a Gospel forever tying the story of Jesus to Moses and the OT.

Ekklesia/Ecclesia/ Assembly/Church¹⁹

The OT Septuagint (the Greek language version of the Pentateuch) gives two senses of the meaning: 1) an “assembly duly summoned”; and 2) the “Jewish congregation”. In both secular and biblical use *ekklesia* distinguishes between the assembling of men and the men thus assembled. So it is likely that the word assembly had a concrete and abstract meaning.

Greeks used *ekklesia* to denote a popular assembly: the citizens are the assembly and are called together for civic purposes.

The NT follow the same arrangement but go on to make the distinction between the Church, 1) as the whole body of believers; and 2) as the individual congregation, e.g. the house church. This raises the question as to which meaning came first and to what degree did the two meanings co-exist in the early Jesus movement.

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¹⁹ Kittel, Gerhard Editor, Geoffrey W. Bromley, Translator, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Volume III, 1965

Matthew 16:18 and 18:17

16:18 “And I tell you, you are Peter (Gk *Petros*), and on this rock (Gk *petra*) I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.”

18:17 “If that person refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church, and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a gentile and a tax collector.”

The *ekklesia*/church Matthew 16:18 and 18:17 do not appear to be consonant with one another. The first implies a worldwide church and the second a specific congregation or synagogue.

Virgin Birth

1:16, 18-25 clearly describes a virginal conception of Jesus. There is no reason to assume that Matthew does not believe this to be the case. His theological point is that Jesus is God’s son.

Anti-Perspectives

Such a miracle is impossible.

Imaginative account based on Isaiah 7:14 “Behold the virgin will conceive and will give birth to a son.”

No Jewish expectation that the Messiah will be a virgin birth.

This is a Christian adaptation of the Pagan legends in which god’s impregnate women.

The Matthean evangelist is writing symbolically.

Pious Christian attempt to hide the fact that Mary was raped, and Jesus was illegitimate.

Pro-Perspectives

The virgin birth through the Holy Spirit is affirmed by both Matthew and Luke independently which suggests an earlier tradition that either evangelist.

In both cases the conception is put in an awkward setting, after Mary and Joseph are betrothed but before they are married – an unlikely invention by the early church.

The non-historical explanations are weak.

There is theological support for a virgin conception.

Judaism

Rabbinic scriptural interpretations²⁰

Argumentative style: arguing a minor to a major premise (if God takes care of birds, how much more will he take care of his believers (6:26)); using one passage to reach a conclusion about another (when questioned about divorce, Jesus replies citing another passage (19:3-6)).

Invectives against Pharisees (23:2-36), the curse of the people that Jesus “blood be on us and our children” (27:25). This suggests that the strain between the Matthean community and their local Jewish community was at a breaking point.

²⁰ Levine, Amy-Jill and Marc Zvi Brettler, The Jewish Annotated New Testament, Second Edition, 2017

Post Jewish Revolt after 70 CE

The Pharisees emerged dominant and asserted themselves on the local level to reunite Israel and define Judaism in opposition to splinter groups and sects, such as the Christians.

Not clear whether Matthews's community was still within Judaism or had recently declared their independence from it. Signs of differentiation include that Jesus followers did not refer to their meeting places as synagogues but as church; and their leaders were not called rabbi.

The emphasis on forgiveness and reconciliation seemed to strengthen the smaller Christian community under pressure from the larger outside forces of Judaism and Roman occupation.

Relation to Anti-Semitism²¹

The parable of the vineyard (21:33-45), the wedding feast (22:1-14), the invectives toward the Pharisees (23:3-36), and the self-curse of "all the people" that Jesus' "blood be on us and on our children" (27:25) suggest a strained if not broken relationship between Matthew's community and the Jewish authorities and synagogue.

The self-curse of "all the people" that Jesus' "blood be on us and on our children" (27:25) is the infamous "blood cry", was used by Christians throughout the centuries to claim that all Jews in all times and places were collectively responsible for the death of Jesus. It may also reflect that after the destruction of the Temple and the rise of the Pharisees and later the Rabbinic movement, the tensions between Jews and Jewish-Christians is what is driving Matthew's narrative.

Preaching Christianity and Monotheism

"Christian missionary preaching was not only the proclamation of Christ, but, when addressing Gentile audiences, a preaching of monotheism as well. For this, not all arguments derived from the Old Testament, but rather natural theology of Stoicism was pressed into service."²²

The Gospels as Subversive Biography²³

Narratives of Jesus sayings and deeds can be seen in the same context as ancient subversive biographies. Jesus is at the margins of society. A Galilean peasant powerless in terms of the state. In his encounters with Pharisees or other interlocutors he wins his victories by means of his wits and his ability to turn his opponents words against them.

Although we are not given a description of him, he is depicted as an underdog from the lower class of society and of few means. He is followed by fisherman

²¹ Levine, Amy-Jill and Marc Zvi Brettler, *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, Second Edition, 2017

²² Bultmann, Rudolf, *Primitive Christianity: In Its Contemporary Setting*, 1956, pp 210-11

²³ Walsh, Robyn Faith, *The Origins of Early Christian Literature*

and teaches and interacts with other marginalized persons. He is baptized by John, and comes to an untimely end, accused of impiety, and publicly executed.

The gospels are situated in conversation with the literary tradition of biography, demonstrating that certain details of Jesus' life may have been the product of a writer's engagement with an established genre of writing lives, and not necessarily the reflection of an "oral tradition". What we do know is that these gospels/biographies are the product of a creative literary activity.

The gospel writers were aware of a diverse range of ancient literature (Jewish and pagan) and were in conversation with social peers (other writers) and were thus parts of literary networks in the ancient world. If we stop trying to see the gospels and letters as evidence of the early Jesus movement and community, and we can then see the gospels and letters as reflecting, in many cases unknown, author's interests in a subject in the context of a broader literary tradition.

Barton and Muddiman, *Oxford Bible Commentary*, Notes

Authorship

Eusebius attributes to Papias the earliest testimony that Matthew the disciple was the author of the gospel, originally in Hebrew or Aramaic. Most scholars now doubt this tradition:

The gospel is unlikely to be the result of a translation from Hebrew to Greek.

There is very little personal remembrance in Matthew, other than what already appeared in Mark.

It is however clear that the author was a Christian who was raised in the Jewish tradition: concentrated focus on the synagogue (6:1-18; 23:1-39); and affirmation of the binding force of Mosaic law (5:17-20).

Date and Place of Origin

Modern scholars say 75-100 CE.

May have been written in Antioch Syria. No clear evidence for one city versus another.

Matthew's Purpose and Setting in Judaism

The primary purpose of Matthew was to preserve what Jesus said and did for posterity.

After 70 CE and the Fall of Jerusalem and the Temple, Pharisees emerged as dominant in Judaism. They started the process that would lead to the rabbinic movement, collecting their oral laws, establishing a standard calendar for the religious year, and transferring rites that has previously occurred at the Temple to synagogues. They were concerned by the disunity in Judaism and were asserting themselves to reunite Israel. This resulted in defining themselves in opposition to Christianity.

Scholars are mixed on whether by the time Matthew is written the Christian community is still within Judaism or a sect outside of Judaism. It is clearly under pressure to either conform or leave.

The need for group identity and community unity among the Christians is of paramount concern to Matthew. The Sermon on the Mount and Chapter 18 emphasize forgiveness and reconciliation. Matthew makes very clear that there is a desperate need for love and peace rather than hate and vengeance. Matthew may have been trying to maintain a bridge between his Jewish and Christian instincts and communities.

Theology

There is no systematically developed body of thought in Matthew. He is concerned less with correctness of belief than with obedience. He collects stories and sayings from Mark, Source Q and his own community and presents them as traditions he is handing on. It is less a statement of personal opinions than an expression of traditional faith. Matthew is retelling his community's story with some added commentary of his own.

His God was the Jewish God of the OT. His theology was a Jewish theology, transmitted to him by his upbringing and the early church.

Christology: Matthew added nothing original in his Gospel. All of the titles for Jesus in Matthew appear elsewhere in other letters and gospels. Even the virgin birth has a parallel story in Luke.

In terms of soteriology, the doctrine of salvation, the gospel says that Jesus gave his life as a ransom for many and saved his people from their sins. Convictions very common in the 1st century CE church.

Matthew believed the Mosaic law was still in effect and expected Jewish Christians to keep it. But Gentile Christians were not required to do so (circumcision, kosher, etc.).

Story, Structure and Plot

The structure of the gospel is one of Narrative (N) then Discourse (D):

Chapters	Narrative/Discourse	Content
1-4	N	The main character introduced
5-7	D	Jesus' demands upon Israel
8-9	N	Jesus' deeds within and for Israel
10	D	Extensions of ministry through words and deeds
11-12	N	Negative response
13	D	Explanation for negative response
14-17	N	Founding of new community
18	D	Instructions to new community
19-23	N	Commencement of passion
24-25	D	The future: judgement and salvation
26-28	N	Conclusion: passion and resurrection

Nature of the Text

The gospel stipulates that it must be interpreted in the context of other texts. It evokes tradition through the device of allusion. This means that it is, in a fundamental sense, and incomplete utterance, a book full of holes. It may have had a liturgical or catechetical end in view, meaning it was designed to be heard over and over again, by readers/listeners who were referencing what was written and said to the OT and to itself for insights.

Genre and Moral Instruction

Prior to the 20th century CE Matthew was often referred to as a biography. Modern scholars reject this view and see the gospels not in a historical perspective but rather as first century CE expressions of the earliest Christian proclamation. Some modern scholars do see it as being a form of Greco-Roman biography.

The truth is that Matthew presents several genres of literature: apocalypse, community rule, catechism, cult aetiologia... in a mix of several things at once.

Matthew viewed Jesus as the center of his religion. It is around Jesus that his theology revolves. Revelation belonged to the life of Jesus as the Son of God. Rabbinic Judaism reports what a Rabbi said, Matthew tells you who Jesus was, how he lived and what he taught. It is a significant break from 1st century CE rabbinic literature.

In Jesus Matthew finds the fusion of thought and deed – discourse and narrative:

Jesus words	Jesus deeds
Be meek (5:5)	As he is (11:29; 21:5)
Mercy (5:7)	As he is merciful (9:27; 15:22; 20:30)
Congratulates those oppressed for God’s cause (5:10)	Jesus suffers and dies innocently (27:23)
Demands faithfulness to the Mosaic law (5:17-20)	Faithfully keeps the law during his ministry (8:4; 12:1-8, 9-14; 15:1-20)
Recommends self-denial in the face of evil (5:39)	Does not resist the evil done to him (26:67; 27:30)
Calls for private prayer (6:6)	Prays alone (14:23)
Rejects the service of mammon (6:19)	Lives without concern for money (8:20)
Commands followers to carry crosses (16:24)	Carries his own cross until Simon helped (27:32)

Matthew provides two types of teaching, according to Clement of Alexandria, “that which assumes the form of counselling to obedience, and that presented in the form of an example.” In Matthew, Jesus embodies his speech; he lives as he speaks and speaks as he lives.

Brown, Raymond E., An Introduction to the New Testament, 1996

Harper Collins Study Bible Notes

Matthew transformed the Markan “gospel” genre by heightening Israelite (Jewish) features, such as poetic parallelism; scribal argument; an emphasis on the law, religious practice, and piety; symbolic numbers; scriptural quotation and fulfillment; genealogy; baptism as a rite of entry; a special meal related to Passover; communal disciple; and prayer.

In this transformation, Jesus became the authoritative interpreter of Moses, but also the promised messianic king of Israel. Jesus transferred his authority to a prominent disciple, Peter, and then appeared after his death, promising his followers that he would continue to be present with them until the end of the age.

Authorship

It is an anonymous work in antiquity, likely written by a Greek speaking Israelite male, possibly a scribe.

Location

Scholars place it in Antioch Syria, but the location is hotly debated.

Date

After 70 CE, likely between 80-90 CE.

Circumstances of writing

The gospel was written during the Roman empire, which can be described as a hierarchically ordered, commercialized, advanced agrarian society with little to no middle class. A few powerful men and families ruled, and they were supported by a bureaucracy, slaves, officials, priests, and a military establishment. The vast majority of the population was at the bottom of the social pyramid, local business people, artisans, and peasant farmers and fisherman. Below them were the expendables: bandits, beggars, prostitutes, orphans, widows and people with disabilities and sickness. Women were ranked below men, and children below women.

Jesus is portrayed as an advocate for the lower socio-economic strata and thus in tension with the ruling class, who was subject to Rome. The gospel has important stories of strong women (9:18-26; 15:21-28; 26:6-13; 27:55-56; 28:1-10).

Political resistance to Rome is not overt, but it is implied: Jesus descending from line of King David, being the promised messiah, whose name recalls Joshua “the Savior”, his birth is marked by a heavenly star, he is a threat to the Herodian kings and the Roman occupiers, his message is about the kingdom of God, his predecessor, JohnBap is executed by the Roman supported Herod Antipas, he opposes the Temple hierarchy, he is condemned by the Roman governor Pilate, and his execution s by crucifixion a method reserved for political prisoners.

The religious opposition is overt: the Pharisees are Jesus’ earliest opponents, Jesus accuses them of being hypocrites, and emphasizes his righteousness that exceeds the Pharisees. There is evidence that the Matthean group included Israelite messianic believers who had split from the Pharisees post 70 CE, and that the group had a mix of good and bad believers, false prophets, and Christ believers who wanted freedom from the Torah. The disciples are portrayed as having little faith, but some understanding. Uniquely the word church, *ecclesia* (Gk), is used in relation to the transfer of authority to Peter, and in the assembled groups power to ban an errant member.

Structure and Composition

Generally follows the Markan outline of movement from Galilee to Jerusalem, but Matthew adds the nativity stories, genealogy, resurrection stories and the great commission. The most striking structural feature is the five major discourses that each conclude with the formula “When Jesus finished saying these things...”.

Though Matthew contains subtle anti-Romanism, opposition to a religious establishment, and apocalyptic severity. It also has a marvelous vision of Jesus as the Moses-like teacher, the compassionate, healing Messiah/Son of David, the royal Son of God, and the apocalyptic Son of Man.

France, R. T. , *The Gospel of Matthew Notes*

Structure

Matthew did not provide markers to an underlining outline of the Gospel. Any proposed outlined is thus imposed by the interpreter/commentator.

Matthew closely adheres to the overall narrative pattern of Mark; a brief prologue set in the wilderness, then presents Jesus ministry in three successful phases in Galilee, the journey to Judea and then Jerusalem. Mark used a geographical framework to underpin his gospel and Matthew largely conforms to this structure.

To read Matthew as a continuous narrative, structured around the geographical progress of Jesus from growing success in Galilee, to his rejection and death in Jerusalem, and then the triumphant scenes in Galilee after the resurrection is to begin to appreciate its power as a work of literature. Unlike Mark, that can be read/spoken in one sitting, Matthew seems designed for several classes of teaching in addition to the narrative story.

Galilee and Judea/Jerusalem

A summary comparison of Galilee and Judea/Jerusalem:

Race	Galilee had a more mixed population, including conservative Jewish areas like Nazareth and Capernaum, and largely pagan cities like Tiberius and Sepphoris.
Geography	Galilee is separated from Judea by the non-Jewish territory of Samaria, and the Hellenistic settlements of the Decapolis.
Politics	Galilee was under separate administration from Judea for most of its history since the 10 th Century BCE. In early 1 st Century CE, Judea is under a Roman governor and Galilee is ruled by a native Herodian prince reporting to Rome.
Economics	Galilee offered better agricultural land and fishing resources than the mountainous Judea. Judea though had the Temple in Jerusalem which was a major component of their economic wealth.
Culture	The Judeans despised their northern neighbors as country cousins, their lack of Jewish sophistication, and their openness to Hellenistic influences.
Linguistics	Galileans spoke a distinctive form of Aramaic which was the butt of Judean humor.
Religion	Judeans viewed Galileans as lax in their observance of proper ritual. The distance from the Temple exacerbated this problem and perception. The Judeans viewed the theological leadership of Judaism as being in Jerusalem.

Thus Jesus of Nazareth had significant obstacles in gaining acceptance in Judea and Jerusalem. Even if he was accepted in the north, in Galilee, as a Messiah.

Mark and Matthew's North-South, Galilee/Judean divide is a useful framework for understanding the ideological and historical underpinnings of the story. Mark has Jesus enthusiastically received in Galilee and opposed and misunderstood in Jerusalem. Mark concludes that the hope for the future lies not in Jerusalem but in Galilee with the risen Jesus.

Matthew endorses and enhances this geographical divide. He enhances Mark's resurrection and juxtaposes the Jewish authorities constructing a coverup, with the presence of Jesus in Galilee and the great commission.

The Discourses

A close study of Matthew's five discourses provides grounds for concluding that they are not transcripts of actual sermons. The discourses are anthologies of the remembered sayings of Jesus organized around central themes of his ministry. When the content of Matthew is paralleled in the other gospels, the contents are often scattered.

Each of the five discourses is paralleled with a shorter version in another synoptic gospel:

Matthew	Mark and Luke
Matt 5-7 (107 verses)	Luke 6:20-49 (30 verses)
Matt 10 (38 verses)	Mark 6:7-13 (7 verses), Luke 9:1-6, 10:1-12
Matt 13 (50 verses)	Mark 4:3-34 (32 verses)

Matt 18 (33 verses)	Mark 9:35-48 (14 verses)
Matt 24-25 (94 verses)	Mark 13:5-37 (33 verses)

The longer Matthean discourses are thus the work of a responsible anthologizer who had a wide range of traditional sayings of Jesus at his disposal. He shaped these into powerful teaching discourses to serve his church as they explored and communicated key aspects of Jesus teaching.

Fulfillment—The “Formula Quotations”

The central theme of Matthew is fulfillment. Copious quotations and the genealogy both stand out to present Jesus as the fulfillment of the OT Judaism.

1:22 “All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet”.

Matthew weaves his narrative story with his OT fulfillment references to draw attention to both the narrative and what it is fulfilling in the OT. It appears that the formula quotations are not part of Matthew’s tradition, but his own editorial gloss on the story of Jesus. Their subtle and elusive quality is a testimony to the ingenuity of his pervasive Midrashic²⁴ agenda.

Author

Likely it was the disciple, Matthew.

Provenance and Setting

Syria or Palestine, though not sure of Antioch Syria.

One thesis is that the *Birkat ha-Minim*²⁵, the denunciation of the “Nazarenes” (Christians) and *minims* (heretics) which was introduced into regular synagogue liturgy toward the end of the 1st Century CE, came into use at roughly the same time throughout the Jewish world and at a date which can be precisely determined (85 CE). This is seen as the cutoff point for the Christian sect being within the Jewish religion and synagogues.

France believes this scenario is too simple. Unlikely that the *Birkat ha-Minim* was introduced uniformly everywhere. It is more likely that it was a gradual process depending on the relations in each synagogue. Current scholarship shows that the Matthew church may have been torn being uncomfortable within Judaism, open to Gentiles, still upholding the Torah.

There are seemingly incompatible elements of the Matthew Gospel: deeply rooted Jewishness, pride in their OT heritage, sharp antipathy toward the Jewish establishment and authorities, and conviction that the future of the kingdom of heaven lies not in institutions of Judaism but in the newly constituted people of God focused not on national origin but on allegiance to Jesus the Messiah.

²⁴ The term Midrash (“exposition” or “investigation”; plural, Midrashim) is also used in two senses. On the one hand, it refers to a mode of biblical interpretation prominent in the Talmudic literature; on the other, it refers to a separate body of commentaries on Scripture using this interpretative mode. Source: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Talmud>

²⁵ The Jerusalem Talmud version of the *Birkat ha-Minim* reads:

For the apostates (meshumaddim) let there be no hope,
and uproot the kingdom of arrogance (malkhut zadom), speedily and in our days.
May the Nazarenes (ha-nazarim/nošrim/notzrim) and the sectarians (minim) perish as in a moment.
Let them be blotted out of the book of life, and not be written together with the righteous.
You are praised, O Lord, who subdues the arrogant.

Thus Matthew's theology of fulfillment have elements of continuity and discontinuity with the emerging rabbinic Judaism after the destruction of the Temple. It seems to reflect an existential situation for the author and his Jewish-Christian community. They have come to recognize Jesus as the true Messiah of Israel, supported by the OT, they also recognize that he has established a new covenant that is no longer limited to the descendants of Abraham.

It is as if Matthew speaks with two voices: both inside and outside of the Jewish community and faith, that may be an interpretation of the commentators. Matthew portrays a new community which is both faithful to its OT scriptural inheritance and open to the new directions demanded by Jesus' proclamation of the kingdom of heaven. His contribution to an integrated Christian theology of salvation and of the people of God is thus similar to the Letter to the Hebrews, but with the added dimension of an explicit recognition that, as Paul wrote in Romans 4, Abraham is now the father of many nations.

Date

Possibly around 85 CE though a minority of scholars support a pre-70 CE date.

Relation to Mark and Luke

For 1,800 years scholars and theologians assumed that Matthew was the first Gospel written. Starting in the 1800s the scholarly consensus shifted to viewing Mark as first, and that Matthew and Luke draw Mark and on a Source Q for sayings which they shared, and unique oral traditions that set apart their Gospels from each other.

This is not to say that Mark's version is the original version of any given saying or story. It is to say that Mark's overall structure and narrative approach had a formative influence on how the later writers approached the material.

Levine, Amy-Jill, and Marc Zvi Brettler Editors, *The Jewish Annotated Bible Notes*

Structure and Major Themes

Matthew is divided into five major discourses (the Sermon on the Mount, and teachings on mission, parables, church organization, and eschatology). Some interpreters see this as a similar structure to the Pentateuch and the Book of Psalms is organized in a similar fashion.

Matthew relies on OT scriptures more than any other gospel, and uses the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Tanakh. He portrays Jesus as the fulfillment of Torah and the prophets. (5:167; 7:12; 17:3, 12)

Jesus shows an understanding of how to apply Jewish laws to the circumstances of the early church community consisting of Jewish and Gentile members. Matthew's Jesus says: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. 18 For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished." (5:17-18) Matthew eliminates Mark's claim that Jesus declared all foods clean (Mark 7:19, Matt 12:1-14).

Jesus is presented as the new Moses and superior to Moses. Jesus is also the "Son of David" the long-awaited Messiah or Anointed One (Christos in Gk). Matthew surpasses this title by presenting Jesus as the Son of God who will save his people. The concept of Jesus as the *shekhinah*, the physical manifestation of the divine presence, frames Matthew's entire Gospel (1:18; 18:20; 28:20); as the Son of God and the incarnation of the divine on earth, Jesus thus replaces the Temple as the locus of the divine presence.

Relation to Anti-Semitism

The Parable of the Vineyard (21:33-45), the Wedding feast (22:1-14), the invectives toward the Pharisees (23:3-36), and the self-curse of “all the people” that Jesus’ “blood be on us and on our children” (27:25) suggest a strained if not broken relationship between Matthew’s community and the Jewish authorities and synagogue.

The self-curse of “all the people” that Jesus’ “blood be on us and on our children” (27:25) is the infamous “blood cry”, was used by Christians throughout the centuries to claim that all Jews in all times and places were collectively responsible for the death of Jesus. It may also reflect that after the destruction of the Temple and the rise of the Pharisees and later the Rabbinic movement, the tensions between Jews and Jewish-Christians is what is driving Matthew’s narrative.

Morris, Leon, The Gospel according to Matthew Notes

Distinctive Characteristics

Jewishness

The writer is concerned to show that Christianity is a continuation of the Jewish Old Testament. Matthew asserts that this is true Judaism. He includes a genealogy that starts with Abraham, the great ancestor of the Jewish race, asserts that Jesus was sent to the “lost sheep of Israel” (15:24), and focuses on Jewish matters like the Sabbath and the Temple.

Matthew is a Jewish Christian who emphasizes how Jesus fulfills Jewish prophecy and lists 61 quotations from the OT (the most of any gospel, 31 in Mark, 25 in Luke, and 16 in John). But it must also be said that with the great commission to make disciples of all nations (28:16-20) Matthew shows he is also interested in the relevance of Jesus to Gentiles.

Fulfilment in Christianity

The idea that what God promised in the OT is fulfilled on Christianity runs deep in Matthew. With this he shares the perspective of Paul.

The theme of kingship: Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of David, and is greater than David (22:41-45). Matthew uses the kingdom of heaven (32 times), kingdom of God (5 times), kingdom (6 times) and the kingdom of the Son of man (3 times). The divine kingdom has drawn near in the person of Jesus.

Ecclesiastical Interest

The Gospel is written when the Christian sect has become distinct from Jewish communities. They are no longer a group within Judaism. Matthew is the only gospel to use the term church (16:18; 18:17).

16:18 “And I tell you, you are Peter,[d] and on this rock[e] I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.”

Footnotes

Matthew 16:18 Gk *Petros*

Matthew 16:18 Gk *petra*

18:17 “If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.”

It may be favorably compared to the Manual of Discipline from Qumran as a handbook for teaching and administration within the narrative theology of Matthew.

Anti-Pharisaism

The Pharisees were a religious sect that oppose Jesus throughout Matthew.

Gentiles

Matthew is interested in how Gentiles are drawn to Jesus and is clear that they have a place in the divine scheme of things. Specifically they will receive the teaching and healing of Jesus.

Teaching

Matthew has great interest in Jesus' teachings. He presents five great teachings, including the Sermon in the Mount, and many parables to show what and how Jesus taught. Matthew also organizes the teachings so they would be easy to remember, arranging things in threes (messages to Joseph, three denials by Peter), and sevens (Chapter 13 parables, Chapter 23 woes).

Matthew shows as good or greater economy of words as Mark. When he shares a narrative with Mark, Matthew is usually the shorter version.

The Five teaching sections: Chapters 5-7, 10, 13, 18, 23-25. Some scholars think Matthew is replacing the five books of the Pentateuch.

Date

Modern scholarship shows evidence that Matthew is dependent on Mark as a source. Mark is thought to have been written between 65-69 CE, so Matthew is dated from the early 70s. There is also evidence for seeing it as being authored before the 70 CE, possibly as early as 50-60 CE.

Place of Origin

Very little can be said with certainty about the provenance of this gospel. It appears to have been written for a Jewish-Christian community, possibly in Palestine or in Antioch in Syria.

Authorship

As quoted by Eusebius in Hist. Eccl. 3.39, Papias wrote: "Matthew put together the oracles [of the Lord] in the Hebrew language, and each one interpreted them as best he could." In Adv. Haer. 3.1.1, Irenaeus says: "Matthew also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome and laying the foundations of the church."

The gospel we have was originally written in Greek. It was universally ascribed to Matthew in ancient times, though his name does not appear as the author. There is no definitive proof of who the author was, though tradition ascribes it to the disciple Matthew the former tax collector.

Sources

Most modern scholars think Mark was written first and was a source document for Matthew and Luke. It is also thought that Matthew and Luke shared a Source Q of sayings, and then each had their own additional oral and written sources unique to each of them.