



## Matthew the Scribe

Rembrandt, "The Evangelist Matthew Inspired by an Angel"

"More than any other book of the New Testament, the Gospel of Matthew has defined the shape and contours of Christianity. With its inclusion of the Sermon on the Mount and its development of a church separate from Judaism, the author of the Gospel of Matthew paved the way for the first's Gospel's eventual dominance in church history."  
(Holzapfel, Huntsman, and Wayment, *Jesus Christ and the World of the New Testament*, 62)

## Authorship, Internal Evidence

What does the text itself tell us about who wrote Matthew?

- Direct Evidence
  - The text does not explicitly state who its author was nor to whom or when it was written
- Indirect evidence
  - Does *not* seem to be a translation from Hebrew or Aramaic, but a **composition originally in Greek**
    - Often corrects Mark's Greek!
  - Author was a **conservative-minded Jew**, perhaps a scribe, **well-trained in Jewish law and texts**
    - Cf. possibly autobiographical reference in 13:52, "Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."
  - Has apparent connections with Mark and Luke, producing the so-called "Synoptic Problem"
    - "**Synoptic**" means **the same point of view** and refers to the similarities between Matthew, Mark, and Luke (more below)

## Authorship, External Evidence

What do others tell us about who wrote Matthew?

- Like the other gospels is anonymous; **the superscription is late**
  - The JST, however, does not correct it (other than changing “gospel” to “testimony”)
- Papias (c. A.D. 60-130, quoted by Eusebius, *EH* 3.39.16)
  - after Mark, Matthew “compiled the ‘sayings’ (*logia*) in the Hebrew language.”
- Irenaeus (c. A.D. 140-202, also quoted by Eusebius, *EH* 5.8.2)
  - “Matthew published a gospel in writing also, among the Hebrews in their own language.”
    - Although the gospel as we now have it was composed in originally in Greek
- Clement of Rome (died c. A.D. 101)
  - claimed that Matthew was the first gospel, although this may again be referring to the *logia*

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## Gospel Sources Reviewed

Early Disciples  
and Witnesses

Jesus Christ

Family Members

*Kērygma*

Sayings

Hymns  
(including canticles)

REVELATION  
(See John 14:26; Galatians 1:12)

- Traditions antedating the written documents of the New Testament
  - The “proclamation” or *kērygma* of who Jesus was and what he did
    - speeches of Peter and Paul in Acts; much of the teaching of Paul in his letters; Mark
  - The sayings and teachings of Jesus
    - Discourses and sayings in Matthew and Luke; teachings in James
  - Hymns and prayers of the early church
    - “Christ hymns,” such as those preserved by Paul in Philippians 2:6–11 and Colossians 1:15–20; canticles in Luke 1-2; John’s *Logos* Hymn (John 1:1–18)
- Spiritual sources
  - The Comforter “bringing all things to remembrance” (John 14:26)
  - Direct revelation of Christ or his message, as in the case of Paul (Road to Damascus; 1 Corinthians 11:23; Galatians 1:12)

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## Gospel Sources: Matthew

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and Witnesses

**Jesus Christ**

Family Members

**Kerygma**

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REVELATION  
(See John 14:26; Galatians 1:12)

Peter ← Matthew

Gospel of Mark

Gospel of Matthew

- The Gospel of Matthew follows closely **the geographic and thematic progression of the Marcan narrative, weaving into it longer blocks of discourse**, including extended sermons of Jesus
- Why follow Mark?
  - Mark may have innovated the idea of writing the story of Jesus in a narrative
  - Matthew respected the authority of Peter that was behind Mark

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## The Synoptic Problem

Gospel	Exclusive	Common
Mark	7%	93%
Matthew	42%	58%
Luke	59%	41%
John	92%	8%

*See Millet SS5, 49 (packet)*

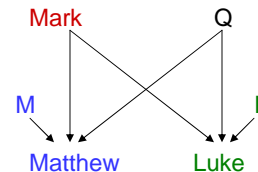
- **Mark** has very little unique material, **John** a great deal
- **Matthew** and **Luke** share much of **Mark's** material, particularly narrative description of the deeds of Jesus, and generally follow his basic outline
- **Matthew** and **Luke** have some material, mostly extended sayings of Jesus, in common with each other, but this material is lacking in **Mark**
- **Matthew** and **Luke** each have some unique material
- **The Synoptic Problem:** What is the relationship of **Mark**, **Matthew**, and **Luke** to each other? Which came first? Where did they each get the narrative material, the miracle stories, the parables, the sermons, and the other sayings of Jesus?

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## Composing Matthew

- **Matthew and Luke largely follow Mark's order of events, but both include "sayings," large passages of discourse, not found in Mark**
  - **Two-Source Theory** suggests that Matthew and Luke both used Mark and another, now-lost, body of sayings of Jesus called "Q" (from the German *Quelle* for "source")
    - This is only a theory!
- Matthew and Luke each have some unique material, called "M" and "L" respectively
  - **Matthew = Mark + Q + M**
  - **Luke = Mark + Q + L**
  - But why in particular would Matthew wait for Mark to publish his gospel in



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## Matthew the Publican

- The Matthew of the patristic evidence is assumed to be **Matthew the tax collector (publican)** who was called as **one of the Twelve**
  - Matthew 9:9, 10:3
  - This figure is identified with Levi of Mark 2:14 and Luke 5:27
  - Levi may be a tribal designation, not a name; hence "**Matthew the Levite**"
- Levites were usually Pharisees, well-educated, and orthodox
  - There were too many Levites to be employed by the temple, so many were forced to seek other occupations
  - The concerns of the First Gospel with **the Jewish scriptures, the oral law, lawyers and Pharisees, and the Kingdom of God** could be explained by Matthew's background
    - Nevertheless, **the gospel of Matthew reflects sharp anti-Pharisaism**
- **Scribe prepared for the kingdom (13:51–52)**
  - Autobiographical reference to Matthew?
- Matthew and the "Sayings" (logia)
  - **Perhaps either Q or M could be the logia** compiled in Hebrew (or Aramaic) mentioned by Papias
  - He could then have **later written a full-fledged gospel in Greek**, using his earlier works, the now-circulating Gospel of Mark, and perhaps other sayings of Jesus (written or unwritten)

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## Audience and Date

- Probably a mixed Jewish and Gentile audience
  - Jewish interests, particularly the use of Jewish scriptures and the fulfillment of OT prophecies dominate
    - Role of *Jesus as Lawgiver*
  - Gentiles are frequently included and symbolized (as with the *Magi* or the centurion at the foot of the cross)
    - *Jesus as Bringer of Salvation* (important theme in Hellenistic and Roman period)
- Use of Greek suggests an audience in the Diaspora
  - Matthew adds references to Syria in the spread of Jesus' activities
  - Earliest patristic traditions connect Matthew with Antioch, capital of the province of Syria, the early center of Hellenized Jewish Christians and the Gentile mission (see Acts)
- Date: probably post A.D. 70
  - Matthew has a clearer idea of how Christ's prophecies of the destruction were played out than Mark (see Matthew 21:13 and 22:7)
  - Focus on conflict with the Pharisees points to the emergence of Pharisee-rooted rabbinism in the post-temple period

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## Matthean Christology: The Person of Jesus

- Son of God
  - By the inclusion of an "Infancy Narrative," Matthew's gospel more fully answered what it meant that Jesus was
    - *Jesus was the Son of God because of his divine conception and miraculous birth*
- Messiah
  - Royal Son of David
  - The anointed one, or "Christ"
- "Son of Man"
  - the most common title of Jesus for himself
    - 81 times in the gospel and not used elsewhere in the NT
  - In Ezekiel it is used repeatedly to refer to the prophet as a mortal
    - *Jesus was able to suffer and die for mankind*
  - Daniel 7:13–14 for a heavenly eschatological figure entrusted with authority, power, and glory by God
    - *Jesus had authority both to teach and to act (not "as the scribes")*
  - Cf. "Man of Holiness" of Moses 6:57, 7:35 (also "Son of Man" of D&C 78:20, 95:17)
    - *Jesus is Son of the Father*

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## Matthean Christology: The Work of Jesus

- **Fulfiller of prophecy**
  - Fourteen “**formula quotations**”
  - **Fulfillment of God's purposes in the person of Jesus**
    - **Jesus a New Moses**, a lawgiver, a teacher
      - To this end Matthew includes lengthy sermons
  - This fulfillment find expression in **Jesus' Church**
    - Only Matthew uses the Greek *ekklesia* (church)
- **Suffering and death of Jesus**
- **More developed account of the resurrection**

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## Structure of Matthew

- Generally follows the **geographical outline of Mark**
  - Galilee > road to Jerusalem > Jerusalem
- **Infancy Narrative** and **Passion/Resurrection Narratives** frame the body, answering the christological questions of **who Jesus is** and **what he did**
- **Body divided into five parts** on analogy to the the five books of Moses (Torah)
  - Each part consists of a section of **narrative** followed by block of **discourse**

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## Outline of Matthew

- **Prologue: Infancy Narrative (1:1–2:23)**
- **Part 1: Proclamation of the Kingdom (3:1–7:29)**
  - **Discourse:** Sermon on the Mount (5:1–7:29)
- **Part 2: Galilean Ministry (8:1–10:42)**
  - **Discourse:** Mission Sermon (10:1–42)
- **Part 3: Opposition to Jesus (11:1–13:52)**
  - **Discourse:** Sermon in Parables (13:1–52)
- **Part 4: Rejection by Israel (13:53–18:25)**
  - **Discourse:** Sermon on the Church (18:1–35)
- **Part 5: Journey to and Ministry in Jerusalem (19:1–25:46)**
  - **Discourse:** Eschatological Sermon (24:1–25:46)
- **Climax: Passion, Death, and Resurrection (26:1–28:20)**