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OF  
MATTHEW

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***THE GOSPEL  
OF  
MATTHEW***

Volume I

by

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## PREFACE

It is predictably a constant feature of commentaries that they do not explain everything one might wish to know. This BIBLE STUDY TEXTBOOK on the Gospel of Matthew is no exception. As problems and questions have arisen in preparing this study, the author would search through other books for help—often in vain. Therefore, if some of the problems one might imagine are not dealt with in this brief study, the reason is that the present author perhaps did not see the problems, or having seen them, saluted them from afar and admitted he was a disciple with much more to learn, or else, having tried to deal with them, failed. As study continued, more material was constantly being uncovered that would have helped clarify the meaning of a passage already touched upon. But in the press of life and ministry it has not always been possible to return to those passages to rewrite.

Grateful acknowledgement is hereby given to Seth Wilson, a student of the life of Jesus, whose helpful teaching has encouraged this study. Notes and attitudes reflected herein are sometimes his and are gratefully passed on to bless other lives. Other sources of information will be documented with just a word in the text; the full reference may be found in the bibliography.

Studying at the feet of the Apostle Matthew has blessed my ministry and personal life manifold. Trying to plumb the depths of his meaning has convinced me that there is yet more down there to enrich the life for as long as one chooses to meditate upon Matthew's independent testimony to the Lord's message contained therein. Therefore, relatively speaking, this first volume of MATTHEW is a putting together of some notes to stimulate the reader to begin his own life-long appreciation of the mind of the Master revealed in the words of His publican-Apostle.

The aim of this study is to state in popular language the timeless testimony of Matthew, to indicate some appropriate applications of each truth and to suggest correlations with other commands and explanations made by the Apostles elsewhere in the NT. The THOUGHT QUESTIONS are intended to engage the mind in a lively discussion which should evoke vivid curiosity and opinions about what Jesus actually said or what Matthew actually meant. The FACT QUESTIONS attempt to review the knowledge of the materials from which buildings of understanding are constructed. The PARAPHRASE AND HARMONY is the author's attempt to harmonize all of the available information given in the four Gospels into one coordinated

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story or discourse so as to reveal connections not seen in the reading of a single Gospel alone. Often a word, phrase or incident recorded by another Evangelist throws light on something that Matthew records without comment or explanation. All words printed in *italics* type in the TEXT are words added by the American Revision Committee to the American Standard Version in order to render a smoother translation, although these words are not in the original Greek. All words printed in **bold-face** type in the NOTES are citations of words or phrases in the ASV text upon which comment is being made.

My prayer is that the God of all truth will forgive what is mistaken or misleading about what is said about His Word herein, bless what is true and graciously accept what I offer to Him as my service over the past years of study and putting together these notes. Further, it is my prayer that these notes will do something to help us better to understand the will of Jesus and move us to enthrone Him more fully as King of our lives.



## INTRODUCTION

### TO WHOM DID MATTHEW DIRECT HIS BOOK?

The observation has often been urged that this gospel is addressed particularly to the Jews. Its Jewish destination appears, for instance, in the emphasis given to the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy in the events of Jesus' life. This, of course, could be overemphasized since all of the other three gospels record fulfillments of the ancient prophecies. Further, this record of Matthew is not Jewish in the sense that its message contradicts the mission of the Church to the Gentile world. If the gospel of Matthew could be said to be answering Jewish attacks upon the Christian message, then it should also be observed that Matthew does not disturb his narration with obtrusive answers to the supposed Jewish attacks. The differences between Matthew's record and that of Mark, Luke and John are not all as clean-cut in this area of deciding to what audience the writer aimed his material, as would be supposed. There are subtle differences of treatment and emphasis, to be sure; a certain special Jewish flavor cannot be denied. But to dogmatize that Matthew did not intend his message for Gentile minds as well as Jewish is to ignore several definite matthaean emphases upon the Gentiles' interest in Jesus, His interest in them and their need of conversion.

The evidences which point to the Jewish reading public as the aim of Matthew's message, are the following considerations:

1. The genealogy of Jesus is traced back only to David and Abraham whereas Luke traces his genealogical table clear back to Adam.
2. The matthaean account of the Sermon on the Mount reveals the true meaning of righteousness as contrasted with the ideals of the Law and demonstrates the true blessing of citizenship in the Kingdom of God but only hints at the gospel of grace. Its aim is to contrast the superficial views of current Pharisaism with the ultimate goal of driving man to the necessities of faith and salvation by grace. The non-Jewish reader could certainly arrive at the same point by reading the Sermon but probably with less understanding than would one trained in Old Testament religion and hopes for a glorious messianic kingdom.
3. The fulfillments of some 40 Old Testament passages in the life of Jesus is a matter for which a gentile reader would

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have perhaps some appreciation, if he knew something of the prophetic literature, whereas it would strike instantly to the heart of Jewish messianic interest and hopes. This must not be pushed too far inasmuch as, even today, the gentile mind can be impressed by the concurrence of hundreds of detailed prophecies in the life and ministry of one man. Matthew gives ample evidence that Jesus is the kind of Messiah actually predicted by the prophets and not the Messiah of popular expectation and mistaken rabbinic concept.

Matthew's history of Jesus, while written from the Jewish standpoint for readers trained in the Old Testament religion, is primarily history. It would be unnecessary to call the Gospel by Matthew a defence, and Matthew's purpose chiefly apologetic, except as any historical and objective presentation carries with it its own convincing force. Matthew does not direct his message to the Jewish nation in the sense of upholding current national ideals, or by exalting Jesus as a Jewish political hero capable of fulfilling their materialistic messianic expectations. Rather, he draws Israel's true picture painted in the dark colors of national unbelief that rejected its Messiah. From the adoration of the Magi to the all-inclusive commission given by Jesus to evangelize the entire world, Matthew pictures Jesus as Him in whom the Gentiles may hope. He presents Jesus as Him to whom all unconverted Jews must turn in true repentance.

### WHAT IS MATTHEW'S ORDER OR PLAN OF PRESENTATION?

His plan must be deduced from what he actually wrote rather than from any explicit statement that declares whether he intended to follow a strict chronological order or a more generally topical one, since he left no such statement. It seems clear, however, that while arranging his materials, Matthew chose not to be guided by chronological considerations so much as by the desire to present larger sections of Jesus' teaching. To this supposed end he seems to have collected into one place the teachings on a specific subject which may or may not have all been presented on one given occasion, although all were probably set forth by Jesus during a given period of His ministry. Though Matthew does not declare this intent, it may be deduced by checking the following list of topical examples of Jesus' preaching, for material that Mark and Luke sometimes describe as having been given on other occasions.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Sermon on the Mount .....	chs. 5, 6, 7
2. Sermon on Evangelism .....	ch. 10
3. Sermon on John the Baptist .....	11:1-19
4. Sermon on Unforgiveable Sin .....	12:22-45
5. Sermon in Parables .....	ch. 13
6. Sermon on Human Traditions .....	15:1-20
7. Sermon on Stumbling-blocks and Forgiveness .....	ch. 18
8. Sermon on Eleventh-hour Laborers .....	20:1-16
9. Three Parables on Rejected Opportunity .....	21:28—22:14
10. Four Answers to Attackers .....	22:15-46
11. Sermon Against Religious Leaders .....	ch. 23
12. Sermon on End of the Jewish State and of the World ...	ch. 24
13. Sermon on Personal Preparation .....	ch. 25

Considering the live probability that the Evangelists summarize Jesus' teaching to provide their readers with the maximum information in the minimum space without losing the heart and power of His message, it should not be surprising to find the same nuggets, that Matthew places at one point, placed on another occasion by Mark or Luke. It is quite probable that Jesus did repeatedly address the same lessons, parables and sermons in equivalent language to men of various localities who had the same sins, identical prejudices and copybook concepts of righteousness and the Kingdom of God. Further, similar events may be confounded by the modern reader, whereas they were actually separate, however closely they might resemble each other.

The plan to be followed in this MATTHEW Study Textbook will be that which follows the order of materials as Matthew himself arranged them. It is not a small temptation to rearrange his material along chronological lines seen most often in Luke's Gospel. Such a rearrangement, with a view to harmonizing the four Gospels, is of great value for showing the coincidence of independent testimony. In addition it would capture more exactly the succession of events as well as provide to the student a sense of progressive continuity from the beginning of Jesus' preaching as it moves toward His glorification. For instance, it may be confusing to some to learn that, chronologically speaking, Matthew's chapters 8, 9, 10, 12 all contain events which probably precede the Sermon on the Mount, recorded in chapters 5, 6, 7. However, if it will be remembered that Matthew does not either claim or strive for exact chronological order, then the seemingly contradictory placement of certain events and doctrines will cause no consternation.

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For all the advantages to be gained by shifting Matthew's material and reorganizing it according to clearer chronological sequences of Luke, yet there is no little merit in letting Matthew tell his own story. As Apostle of Jesus Christ and inspired by His Holy Spirit, Matthew should be allowed to arrange the Gospel as he deems best. He intended that his systematic collection of the various discourses and events carry to the reader with its own convincing force the sure conviction that "this Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified and raised from the dead, is God's Messianic King." Let those who would criticize Matthew's "anachronisms and lack of ordinary historical judgment" realise that, after all, Matthew is writing the book and he should be permitted the ordinary literary liberties to group some details according to their nature and import. Matthew is master of his own work: let us hear him tell us about the Lord.

Therefore, in dealing with a specific passage in Matthew which has close verbal parallels that were also spoken on other occasions, primary attention will be given to get at Jesus' meaning, rather than to decide upon what occasion He said it. Wherever possible to harmonize parallel passages of Mark, Luke or John with the text of Matthew, the PARAPHRASE-HARMONY presents one version of an event, interweaving the various information derived from the parallels. Since other statements made by other eyewitnesses tend to modify, clarify or extend the declarations of the one eyewitness, it is a very desirable goal to have all available testimony in hand before proceeding to interpret any part of it.

### SECTIONAL OUTLINE OF MATTHEW

1. Genealogy of Jesus ..... (1:1-17)
2. Annunciation to Joseph ..... (1:18-25)
3. Visit of the Wisemen ..... (2:1-12)
4. Flight into Egypt and Return ..... (2:13-23)
5. Preaching of John the Baptist ..... (3:1-12)
6. Jesus Is Baptized by John ..... (3:13-17)
7. Jesus Is Tempted by the Devil ..... (4:1-11)
8. Jesus Preaches in Galilee ..... (4:12-17)
9. Jesus Calls Four Fishermen ..... (4:18-22)
10. Jesus Preaches and Heals in Galilee ..... (4:23-25)
11. Jesus Preaches the Sermon on the Mount ..... (5:1—8:1)
12. Jesus Heals a Leper ..... (8:1-4)
13. Jesus Heals a Centurion's Servant ..... (8:5-13)

## INTRODUCTION

14.	Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-law .....	(8:14-17)
15.	Jesus Calls Others to Discipleship .....	(8:18-22)
16.	Jesus Stills a Tempest .....	(8:23-27)
17.	Jesus Frees the Gadarene Demoniacs .....	(8:28—9:1)
18.	Jesus Forgives and Heals a Paralytic .....	(9:2-8)
19.	Jesus Calls Matthew Levi .....	(9:9-17)
20.	Jesus Raises Jairus' Daughter .....	(9:18-26)
21.	Jesus Heals Two Blind Men .....	(9:27-34)
22.	Jesus Evangelizes Galilee .....	(9:35-38)
23.	Jesus Commissions the Twelve Apostles to Evangelize (10:1—11:1)	
24.	Jesus Questioned by John, Sermon on John .....	(11:2-19)
25.	Jesus Condemns Unbelieving Cities and Invites "Babes" to Come to Him .....	(11:20-30)
26.	Jesus Answers Charges of Sabbath Breaking .....	(12:1-14)
27.	Jesus Heals Many .....	(12:15-21)
28.	Jesus Is Attacked for Casting Out Demon and Charged with Being in League with Satan .....	(12:22-37)
29.	Jesus Gives the Sign of Jonah .....	(12:38-45)
30.	Jesus Refuses to Let Fleshly Ties Bind Him .....	(12:46-50)
31.	Jesus Preaches Great Sermon in Parables .....	(13:1-53)
32.	Jesus Is Refused by His Own at Nazareth .....	(13:54-58)
33.	Jesus Hears of the Foul Murder of John the Baptist ....	(14:1-13a)
34.	Jesus Feeds the 5000 and Walks on the Sea .....	(14:13b-33)
35.	Jesus Heals Some Sick at Gennesaret .....	(14:34-36)
36.	Jesus Argues with Jerusalem Pharisees about the Traditions .....	(15:1-20)
37.	Jesus Heals the Syrophenician Woman's Daughter .....	(15:21-28)
38.	Jesus Feeds 4000 and Heals Many in Decapolis .....	(15:29-39a)
39.	Jesus Refuses to Give Additional Signs from Heaven .....	(15:39b—16:4)
40.	Jesus Warns Disciples Against Influence of Popular Leaders and Parties .....	(16:5-12)
41.	Jesus Tests Apostles: Peter's Confession .....	(16:13-28)
42.	Jesus Shows Peter, James and John His Glory .....	(17:1-13)
43.	Jesus Heals and Frees Demonized Boy .....	(17:14-21)
44.	Jesus Makes Third Passion Prediction .....	(17:22, 23)
45.	Jesus Quizzes Peter About Temple Taxes .....	(17:24-27)
46.	Jesus Teaches True Greatness, Temptations, Concern for Least of God's Loved Ones, and Forgiveness .....	(18:1-35)
47.	Jesus Teaches on Divorce .....	(19:1-12)

## INTRODUCTION

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|-----|---|---------------|
| 48. | Jesus Blesses the Little Children .....   | (19:13-15)    |
| 49. | Jesus Tests Rich Young Ruler and Encourages Apostles .....                                    | (19:16-30)    |
| 50. | Jesus Teaches Parable of the Eleventh Hour Servants ....                                      | (20:1-16)     |
| 51. | Jesus Predicts His Passion Fourth Time .....  | (20:17-19)    |
| 52. | Jesus Refuses to Establish Hierarchy .....  | (20:20-28)    |
| 53. | Jesus Heals Two Blind Men at Jericho .....  | (20:29-34)    |
| 54. | Jesus Enters in Earthly Triumph into Jerusalem .....  | (21:1-11)     |
| 55. | Jesus Cleanses Temple a Last Time and<br>Receives Worship .....                               | (21:12-17)    |
| 56. | Jesus Curses Fig Tree and Teaches Disciples .....   | (21:18-22)    |
| 57. | Jesus Meets Challenges of Authority: Parable of Vineyard<br>Let Out to Unworthy Tenants ..... | (21:23-45)    |
|     | Parable of Slighted Marriage Invitations .....  | (22:1-14)     |
| 58. | Jesus Answers Captious Questions .....  | (22:15-46)    |
| 59. | Jesus Attacks the Sins of the "Righteous" .....   | (23:1-39)     |
| 60. | Jesus Describes the Last Days of the Jewish State and<br>His Second Coming .....              | (24:1—25:46)  |
| 61. | Jesus Predicts His Own Death a Fifth Time .....   | (26:1, 2)     |
| 62. | Jesus Is Plotted Against by the Rulers .....  | (26:3-5)      |
| 63. | Jesus Is Anointed by Mary of Bethany .....  | (26:6-13)     |
| 64. | Judas Agrees with Jesus' Enemies to Betray Him .....  | (26:14-16)    |
| 65. | Jesus Celebrates His Last Passover Feast and<br>Institutes the Lord's Supper .....            | (26:17-30)    |
| 66. | Jesus Predicts Peter's Denials .....  | (26:31-35)    |
| 67. | Jesus Prays in Gethsemane .....   | (26:36-46)    |
| 68. | Jesus Is Arrested .....   | (26:47-56)    |
| 69. | Jesus Is Tried Before Caiaphas .....  | (26:57-68)    |
| 70. | Jesus Is Denied by Peter .....  | (26:69-75)    |
| 71. | Jesus Is Condemned by Sanhedrin .....   | (27:1)        |
| 72. | Jesus' Betrayer Commits Suicide .....   | (27:3-10)     |
| 73. | Jesus Tried Before Pilate .....   | (27:2, 11-31) |
| 74. | Jesus Is Taken Out, Crucified and Buried .....  | (27:32-61)    |
| 75. | Pharisees Set Roman Guard to Watch Tomb .....   | (27:62-66)    |
| 76. | Jesus Arose! .....  | (28:1-10)     |
| 77. | Jesus' Guards Testify to His Resurrection .....   | (28:11-15)    |
| 78. | Jesus Appears and Commissions His Disciples .....   | (28:16-20)    |

The Gospel  
of  
Matthew