

## BIBLE SURVEY

### MATTHEW

**"...And on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it."** Matthew 16:18

#### Who Was Matthew?

Matthew (meaning *gift of the Lord*) was from the tribe of Levi (9:9), a tax collector who left everything to follow Christ (Luke 5:27-28). Matthew describes himself as a tax collector (10:3) who became one of the Twelve Apostles.

#### A Manual for Discipleship

The Gospel of Matthew is the fullest, most comprehensive, systematic and orderly account of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Matthew is a Manual for Discipleship.

#### The Four Gospels

Each of the four Gospels provide unique, first-hand accounts of our Lord Jesus Christ, His life and teachings.

**Mark** is the shortest and most concise, fast-moving, action-packed Gospel, mostly focussing on what Jesus **did** – focussing on His actions, miracles, death and Resurrection. Mark emphasizes Jesus Christ as the **Son of Man**.

**Matthew** and **Luke** include far more about what Jesus **said** and **taught**.

Matthew emphasizes Jesus as **King**. Luke emphasizes Jesus as **Saviour**.

Whereas Mark is plainly an Evangelist to convince unbelievers with the news of Jesus remarkable life and actions, Matthew and Luke are more teachers providing the biography and teachings of Jesus to aid in discipling new converts.

**John** is like the professor, who takes disciples even further. John is mostly concerned with the identity of Jesus – who He **is**. In John, Jesus is emphasised as the **Son of God**.

#### Actions, Teaching and Identity

**Mark**, the Evangelist aimed at reaching unbelievers with: What Jesus **did**.

**Matthew** and **Luke**, discipling new believers, focus on: What Jesus **said**.

**John**, as the teacher/professor, focuses on: Who Jesus **is**.

#### The Hinge of History

The Gospels form the hinge of history, dividing the world into Before Christ (B.C.) and In the Year of Our Lord (A.D.). The world would never be the same again.

#### Birth and Baptism

Whereas Mark starts with the baptism of Jesus, Matthew starts with the birth of Jesus and His ancestry.

#### The Genealogies of Jesus

While Luke gives the genealogy of Mary's ancestors, Matthew follows Joseph, the step-father's line. Matthew identifies Jesus as the *Son of Abraham*, the *Son of David*. He records the fourteen generations between Abraham and David and the fourteen generations between King David and the time of the Exile. Then the fourteen generations from the time of the Exile to the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus he covers the times of the prophets, the kings and the priests. Our Lord Jesus Christ is our **Prophet, Priest** and **King**.

## The Structure of Matthew

Matthew's Gospel is structured in five great discourses of the teachings of Christ and four accounts of deeds to illustrate those teachings. These five great teaching discourses parallel the five Books of the Law (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). Each section begins with: *"From that time..."* and ends with *"when Jesus had finished..."*

## The Law of the Lord is Perfect Converting the Soul

The Lord Jesus clearly stated: ***"Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfil. For assuredly, I say to you, till Heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the Law till all is fulfilled. Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven; but whoever does and teaches them, he shall be called great in the Kingdom of Heaven."*** Matthew 5:17-19. It is even more serious to teach others to break the Law of God than to actually break it ourselves. Teachers will be judged with greater strictness.

## Old Testament Prophecy Fulfilled

Matthew makes 65 references to Old Testament prophecies fulfilled by Christ. There are 29 direct Old Testament quotes and 121 references, or allusions, to Old Testament events and images. Just in the birth of Christ, Matthew quotes from 13 Old Testament prophecies in Micah, Hosea, Jeremiah and Isaiah.

## Distinctive Features of Matthew

Only in the Gospel of Matthew do we read about the visit of the Wise men from the East, the Magi (2:1), the flight into Egypt (2:13-14), the slaughter of the innocents by king Herod's soldiers in Bethlehem (2:16), and the return to Nazareth (2:19-23). Matthew alone records the coming of the pharisees and sadducees to John the Baptist (3:7), the full Sermon on the Mount (chapter 5 - 7) and the Words of Jesus: ***"Come to Me, all you who labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*** Matthew 11:28. Matthew alone records Peter walking on the sea (14:28-31).

## Kingdom of Heaven

Matthew's Gospel refers to the Kingdom of Heaven 33 times. That is a term unique to Matthew's Gospel. The other Gospels speak of the Kingdom of God. Matthew, being a Levite, was cautious in using the Name of God and so generally chose rather the term *Kingdom of Heaven*.

## The Church in Matthew

Matthew is the only Gospel which mentions **the Church**. In Matthew 16:13-19, we read: *"When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, 'Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?' So they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered and said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in Heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and **on this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it...**"* Our Lord makes clear that there is only one true Church and He is the One who is building it. As the Church advances, the gates of hell itself will not be able to prevail.

## If Your Brother Sins Against You

In Matthew 18, we receive teaching on local church discipline. In Matthew 18:15-20, our Lord teaches on the importance of going to our brother and seeking to resolve any issues. If he refuses to listen, take two or three other brothers with you to try to convince him. Only if he refuses to hear them, should you bring it before the Church.

## God Resists the Proud But He Gives Grace to the Humble

*"Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore whoever humbles himself as this little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. Whoever receives one little child like this in My Name receives Me."* Matthew 18:3-5

## Beware of Causing Little Ones to Stumble

*"Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, it would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes! If your hand or foot causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life lame or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into the everlasting fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. It is better for you to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes, to be cast into hell fire."* Matthew 18:6-9

## Seek to Bring the Lost Sheep Back Into the Fold

We are warned to take heed that we do not despise any of the little ones, **"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."** Matthew 18:11. If one of the sheep go astray, it is better to leave the 99 in the fold and go to the mountains and seek the one who is straying. **"Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish."** Matthew 18:14.

## The Observant Accountant

Matthew, showing the orderly mind of an accountant, includes the tribute money that the Lord needed to pay in tax and how He obtained the coin from a fish (17:24-27), the 30 pieces of silver, which Judas received for betraying Christ (26:15), and the return of the 30 pieces of silver to the Temple (27:3-10). Matthew, alone amongst the Gospel writers, gives the story of the hidden treasure (13:44) the pearl of great price (13:45), and the labourers in the vineyard (20:1-16). Matthew notes how much they are paid.

## Additional Details of the Crucifixion

Matthew alone records the dream of Pilate's wife warning him not to betray this innocent Man (27:19), and the appearance of the resurrected saints at the time of the Crucifixion and Resurrection (27:53). Matthew also reports a placing of the Roman guard at the Tomb of Christ (27:64-66), and the bribing of the soldiers (28:12-13). Matthew records the earthquake that accompanied the death of Christ (27:51).

## The Weeds Among the Wheat

Matthew warns about the wheat and the weeds (13:24) and the unmerciful servant, who, although he was forgiven a great debt by the king, went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a very small sum and ignored his pleas for more time, and had him thrown into prison. When the king heard about this unforgiving servant, he declared: *"You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you? And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. So My Heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses."* Matthew 18:32-35

## A Light to the Gentiles

Matthew emphasises the importance of reaching the Gentiles for Christ:

Wise men from the East travelled a great distance to come to worship the baby born in Bethlehem. They brought **gold** for the King of kings, **frankincense** for the High Priest above all high priests, and **myrrh** for the sacrifice that would end the need for any other sacrifices.

In the genealogy of Christ, Matthew includes the Gentiles, Ruth and Rahab.

Matthew tells us that Jesus ministered in "Galilee of the Gentiles" as prophesied.

### **The Faith of the Centurion**

In Capernaum, a Centurion approached Christ, pleading with Him to heal his paralysed servant, but he declared himself unworthy to have the Lord enter into his house and requested the Lord to just say the word: *"Now when Jesus had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, 'Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented.' And Jesus said to him, 'I will come and heal him.' The centurion answered and said, 'Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my servant, Do this, and he does it.' When Jesus heard it, He marvelled, and said to those who followed, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from East and West, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of Heaven. But the sons of the Kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' Then Jesus said to the centurion, 'Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.' And his servant was healed that same hour."* Matthew 8:5-13

### **The Persistence of the Canaanite Woman Rewarded**

Jesus blessed a Canaanite woman: *"O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire. And her daughter was healed from that very hour."* Matthew 15:18.

### **The Chief Cornerstone Rejected**

Matthew records that Jesus is the Chief Cornerstone which the Jews have rejected, therefore the Kingdom will be taken away from the Jews and be given to the Gentiles. *"Jesus said to them, 'have you never read in the Scriptures: The Stone which the builders rejected has become the Chief Cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes'? Therefore I say to you, the Kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. And whoever falls on this Stone will be broken; but on whomever It falls, It will grind him to powder.'* Now when the chief priests and pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them." Matthew 21:42-45

### **Cursed Cities**

During Jesus earthly ministry there were 250,000 people living on the shores in Galilee in four major cities. Today only one of those towns remains. Jesus pronounced Woes on Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum. All of those towns have disappeared and only remain as archaeological sites. Only the town Jesus never cursed, Tiberias, is still there.

### **The Two Sons**

Matthew alone gives the parable of the two sons. One son disobeyed his father and said: *"I will not!"* but afterwards he regretted it and went. Another son answered promptly: *"I go, Sir."*, but he did not go. The Lord Jesus asked: *"Which of the two did the will of his Father? Assuredly I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the Kingdom of God before you."* Matthew 21:28-31. It is not so much what we say, but what we **do** that counts. It is not only our words, but our deeds and actions which count. Another distinctive of Matthew is the parable of the Wedding Feast (21:1-14).

### **Woe to You Scribes and Pharisees**

Matthew records the relentless denunciation of the Jewish religious leaders, the scribes and pharisees in Matthew 23: *"The scribes and the pharisees sit in Moses' seat... but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do to be seen by men... They love the best places at feasts... whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted. But woe to you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the Kingdom of Heaven against*

**men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.** Woe to you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers. **Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.** Woe to you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him **twice as much a son of hell as yourselves.** Woe to you, **blind guides... Fools and blind!...** neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. **Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!** Woe to you, scribes and pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are **full of extortion and self-indulgence...** hypocrites! For you are like **whitewashed tombs** which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are **full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness.** Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but **inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness...** you are sons of those who murdered the prophets... **Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?"** Matthew 23:2-33

### **Unprepared for Judgment Day**

In Matthew 25, the Lord's return and His Judgment of both His people and the wicked are detailed: *"Then the Kingdom of Heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us!' But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'"* Matthew 25:1-13

### **The Parable of the Talents**

Here the Lord describes the Day of Judgment in terms of productivity. Those who were fruitful and productive were given more talents, and the one who had hidden his talent in the ground was rebuked: *"you wicked and lazy servant... take the talent from him and give it to him who has ten talents... for to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance, but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."* Matthew 25:14-30

### **Sins of Omission**

The Day of Judgment is described by the Lord as a separation of the sheep from the goats. To those on His left, the Lord will say: *"Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave no drink; I was a stranger and you did not take me in; naked and you did not clothe me; sick and in prison and you did not visit me."* Matthew 25:31-46. Here the Day of Judgment is described more in terms of good things that we failed to do than bad things, serious as those are.

### **Prophet, Priest and King**

Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the fulfilment of all Old Testament prophecies. He is our **Prophet, Priest and King.**

### **Son of Abraham**

Jesus Christ, as the Son of Abraham, was destined for the **Altar** of the **Cross**, the ultimate sacrifice. *"The Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world."*

## Son of David

Jesus Christ is also the Son of David, the King, destined for the **Throne** and the **crown**. He is **The Lion**, "*King of king and Lord of lords*".

## The Great Commission

*"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to Me in Heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.'"* Matthew 28:18-20

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