

Seventh-Day Adventist Bible Commentary

“The Gospel According to ST. MATTHEW”

INTRODUCTION QUESTIONS

1. What is the title of the book of Matthew according to the most ancient of the existing Greek New Testament manuscripts?
– *“According to Matthew”*
2. What is the title of the book of Matthew as it appears in the King James Version?
– *“The Gospel According to Saint Matthew”*
3. What is the title of the book of Matthew as it appears in the majority of the later manuscripts?
– *“The Gospel According to Matthew”*
4. What is the title of the book of Matthew according to the Textus Receptus?
– *“The Holy Gospel According to Matthew”*
5. What is the Greek word for the word “gospel”?
– *euaggelion*
6. What does the term “gospel” mean in the Scriptures?
– *“good tidings”*
7. What are the good tidings of the gospel about?
– *the good tidings of salvation as set forth in the life and teachings of Jesus.*
8. Who do ancient Christian writers unanimously and consistently attribute the first book of the four Gospels?
– *to Matthew the disciple*
9. What kind of person does the internal evidence indicate obviously wrote the book of Matthew?
– *a Jew converted to Christianity*
10. What was Matthew’s occupation prior to his call to become a disciple of Jesus?
– *a publican*
11. What skill did Matthew have from his job that was of great value in composing a historical narrative?
– *he was presumably accustomed to preserving written records*
12. Where did Matthew make a modest reference to himself in his gospel?
– *at the feast (Matt. 9:10)*
13. What does the reference Matthew makes about himself possibly show?
– *it may be an indirect testimony to his authorship*
14. Which other gospel writers made references to themselves?
– *John and possibly Mark*
15. Who wrote a lot about early church history, quoting various early leaders?
– *Eusebius*
16. In what language did Papias of Hierapolis (about 140 AD) and Irenaeus (about 200 AD) state Matthew wrote his oracles (sayings)?
– *in the Hebrew language (which we call Aramaic)*
17. According to Irenaeus, who were preaching and founding the church in Rome when Matthew published his gospel?
– *Peter and Paul*

18. Does the theory that Matthew originally wrote the gospel of Matthew in Aramaic, which was later translated to Greek, have wide acceptance today?
– *no*
19. What language do experts today believe Matthew was originally written in?
– *Greek*
20. What do the experts think Papias and Irenaeus may have been talking about when they said Matthew published his sayings in Aramaic?
– *those may have been referring to an oral account*
21. What evidence do experts point out makes them believe Matthew was originally written in Greek (not translated to Greek from Aramaic)?
– *1) It doesn't have any characteristics of a translated work, 2) the uniformity of language and style convey the impression the book was written in Greek, and 3) the great linguistic similarities to the Greek of Mark and Luke.*
22. Throughout the lifetime of Christ, the land of Palestine was under the jurisdiction of what nation?
– *Rome*
23. Who led the legions of Rome that subjugated the region for Rome?
– *Pompey*
24. What Roman province was Palestine annexed to after it was conquered?
– *Syria*
25. During what years was Palestine conquered and annexed?
– *64-63 B.C.*
26. How long had the Jews enjoyed political independence before the coming of the Romans?
– *about 80 years*
27. How did the Jews feel about the presence and authority of foreign civil and military representatives?
– *they profoundly resented it*
28. Who appointed Herod as king over a large part of Palestine?
– *the Roman Senate*
29. What was Herod known as?
– *Herod the Great*
30. How did Herod's appointment make a lot of the Jews feel?
– *even more bitter*
31. What did the desire for independence become to the Jews?
– *a national obsession*
32. What did the desire for independence affect in Israel?
– *practically every phase of national life*
33. What types of thinking did the desire for independence change?
– *it colored the religious thinking of the day and the interpretation of the Messianic passages of the Old Testament*
34. What was the subjugation of the Jews by Rome a direct result of?
– *disobedience to the divine requirements*
35. Who had God used to warn His people of the sufferings that would follow disobedience?
– *Moses and the prophets*
36. From what "twofold yoke" did the Jews look for deliverance from?
– *Caesar and Herod*
37. Who would repeatedly arise to champion the rights and redress the wrongs of their people?
– *would-be messiahs*

38. What did the would-be messiahs use to promote their cause?
– *the sword*
39. What did the Jews fondly believe the Messianic prophecies of the Old Testament promised?
– *a political messiah who would both deliver Israel from foreign oppression and subdue all nations*
40. What did the political aspirations of the Jews distort?
– *their Messianic hope*
41. What effectively prevented the recognition and acknowledgment of Jesus of Nazareth as the One to whom the prophets had borne witness?
– *national pride, because He did not fulfill their false expectations*
42. What is the theme of each of the Gospels?
– *1) the incarnation, 2) exemplary life, 3) public ministry, 4) vicarious death, 5) resurrection, 6) and ascension of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*
43. Was it by accident that all four Gospels became part of the sacred canon of the New Testament?
– *no*
44. Why was it impossible, even for one most closely associated with Jesus, to grasp the significance of every detail of His wonderful life?
– *because so much was involved in the mission of the Son of God to this earth*
45. Why did Inspiration lead and qualify four men to preserve a record of the Gospel narrative?
– *in order that there might be preserved for future generations as complete a picture as necessary of the life and ministry of Jesus*
46. What point of view did each of the four inspired men write their gospel?
– *one that appealed to him personally and guided by a distinct objective that he had as he wrote*
47. What is one way that the gospels turned out differently from each other?
– *each omitted certain incidents mentioned by the others and added details of his own*
48. What illustration does the Commentary give about the four gospels giving a different point of view?
– *it is as if four painters sat down to produce a portrait of Jesus*
49. What is the similarity and difference for each of the four painters?
– *with each the subject is the same, but the aspect is different*
50. What do we have when taking all four portraits together?
– *a more complete and perfect concept of Jesus than any single picture could give*
51. What does the composite picture of Jesus presented by the four evangelists enable us to see?
– *the life of Christ in true perspective*
52. How much about the Saviour has been revealed?
– *all we need to know*
53. Who guided each evangelist as they wrote?
– *Inspiration*
54. What did each evangelist do as he wrote his gospel?
– *he selected incidents and arranged them in the pattern that seemed most appropriate to the objective from his point of view*
55. What makes it difficult at times to correlate the various parts of the Gospel narrative and assign each its correct place in the sequence of events?
– *each writer often omitted incidents that were narrated by the others*
56. Is there always perfect order and apparent unity in the gospels?
– *no*
57. Are the miracles of Christ given in exact order?
– *no*

58. Who do each of the four evangelists introduce Jesus to?
– *his readers*
59. What characteristic manner does each writer keep with?
– *the objectives of his Gospel narrative*
60. In what way do Matthew and Luke present Christ?
– *with emphasis upon His role as the Son of man*
61. Upon what do Mark and John place emphasis in regards to Christ?
– *upon His true divinity and pointing to Him as the Son of God*
62. What specifically does Matthew present Jesus as?
– *the Son of Abraham, a Jew, the One who came in fulfillment of promises to the fathers*
63. What does Luke point to Christ as?
– *the Son of Adam and thus the Savior of all mankind*
64. What does Mark portray?
– *taking Christ's divinity for granted, he simply states that He is the Son of God*
65. What is John's perspective?
– *he affirms that the true humanity of Jesus in no way depreciates the fact that He is divine in the absolute sense of the word*
66. What is one distinctive characteristic of the Gospel of Matthew?
– *completeness with which he reports the sermons and other discourses of the Savior*
67. How does Matthew present Christ?
– *as the great Teacher*
68. How many major discourses of Christ does Matthew contain?
– *six*
69. How does Matthew report the major discourses of Christ?
– *at considerable length*
70. How do the other gospels report the major discourses of Christ?
– *either briefly or not at all*
71. What are the 6 major discourses of Christ as recorded in Matthew?
– *1) the Sermon on the Mount, 2) the discourse on discipleship, 3) the Sermon by the Sea, consisting entirely of parables, 4) the discourse on humility and human relations, 5) the discourse on hypocrisy, 6) the discourse on Christ's return*
72. What is the second important characteristic of the book of Matthew?
– *the aspects of the Gospel that clearly reveal the kind of reading audience Matthew primarily had in mind as he wrote*
73. What audience was Matthew writing to in his gospel?
– *an audience that consisted largely of Jewish Christians and unbelieving Jews*
74. What was evidently Matthew's purpose in his gospel?
– *to convert the unbelieving Jews to faith in Jesus as the Messiah of prophecy, and to confirm the faith of the Christian Jews*
75. What does Matthew present Jesus as more than all of the other Gospel writers combined?
– *as the One to whom the types of the Old Testament pointed forward and the One in whom they were fulfilled*
76. How does Matthew present Jesus in relation to the Law?
– *not as setting it aside, but fulfilling it*
77. Who does Matthew emphasize Jesus as Son of?
– *the Son of Abraham (father of the nation) and the Son of David (most illustrious king)*
78. What was it that led the Jews to reject Christ?
– *their false concept of the person of Messiah and the nature of His kingdom*

79. What was the Messiah of the dreams of the Jews?
– a great king who would lead the nation to independence and world supremacy
80. What kind of Messiah did the Jews have no understanding of?
– a King of righteousness, the one who would lead them to conquer sin in their own lives and to realize true spiritual freedom
81. What passages of the Old Testament were the Jews unable to reconcile?
– passages that envision a suffering Messiah with others that foretell His glorious reign
82. What were the results of their being unable to reconcile the scriptures of the suffering Messiah with the glorious Messiah?
– they ignored the texts about the suffering Messiah and misapplied the texts about the reigning Messiah
83. What did the different prophecies about the Messiah seem like to the Jews?
– an insoluble paradox
84. What did the Jews look for exclusively in the scriptures?
– for what they took to be the kingdom of Christ's glory
85. What did the Jews find no place for in their plans?
– the kingdom of Christ's grace – the necessary prerequisite to the kingdom of glory
86. What does Matthew seem to have a burden to resolve?
– the dilemma that the conquering Messiah was also a suffering Messiah
87. How does Matthew solve the problem?
– by showing that Jesus was indeed the King of Israel and the "Seed" promised to David, yet also a suffering Messiah
88. What other important fact is it important to remember when studying the book of Matthew?
– that this Gospel presents the life of Christ in essentially a logical, topical order, rather than a chronological order
89. Is there a chronological sequence in the arrangement of the major phases of Jesus' life & ministry?
– to be sure (yes)
90. How are the sequence of events within any given period shown in the book of Matthew?
– they don't necessarily follow the true chronological order
91. How does Matthew compare to the other Gospel writers as far as keeping a perfect chronological sequence of events?
– he deviates to a greater degree than the others
92. Why does Matthew not seem to be particular about the exact order of events?
– he is more concerned about his major objective in developing a concept of the life and mission of Jesus
93. Is Matthew more of a chronicler, recording events as they transpire, or a historian?
– more of a historian
94. What is the historian's purpose?
– reflecting upon the significance of the events against the larger background of their setting in the history of the chosen nation
95. What are the major events of the life of Christ that Matthew gives in his gospel, and what are the dates given for each?
- 1) Birth, Infancy, and Childhood, B.C. 4
 - 2) Preparation for Ministry, Autumn, A.D. 27
 - 3) Galilean Ministry, Passover to Passover, A.D. 29–30
 - 4) Retirement From Public Ministry, Spring to Autumn, A.D. 30
 - 5) Peraean Ministry, Autumn to Spring, A.D. 30-31
 - 6) Closing Ministry at Jerusalem, Passover, A.D. 31
 - 7) The Resurrection; Postresurrection Appearances, A.D. 31