

Sent: Wednesday, September 18, 2019 8:53 PM  
Subject: Last Nite's Overview of Matthew

So why would one want to study the book of Matthew, asked John Neal, as he led us in an "overview" of the Gospel of Matthew! To answer the most important question anyone could ever ask: "Who is Jesus Christ?"

The author of Matthew (universally believed to be Matthew, the disciple of Jesus) basically gives an eye-witness account of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ! He begins his thesis with "the record of the genealogy of Jesus" whom he unabashedly called "the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham"! (Matthew 1:1) He was obviously addressing primarily the Jewish people who had been long awaiting their promised Messiah, and who could immediately relate to the "lingo"! The Greek phrase translated "book (or record) of the genealogy" is the exact same phrase used in Genesis 5:1, concerning the lineage of Adam. "Son of David" was the most common messianic title in usage in Jesus' day! And "son of Abraham" (as MacArthur notes) takes His royal lineage all the way back to the nation's inception in the Abrahamic Covenant! It was through the line of Abraham, that "all the families of the earth would be blessed"! (Genesis 12:1-3)

Though unstated, Matthew's purpose is clearly to demonstrate that Jesus Christ was the long-awaited Messiah, the King of the Jews! That He had all the "credentials" and that He fulfilled all the requirements of being the promised King, a descendant of David whose life and ministry supported the conclusion that He was the prophesied Messiah of Israel!

So, who was Matthew? Formerly a "tax collector" (a profession despised by the Jewish people! And for good reason!) Formerly known as "Levi"! Once a publican (that's not a "Republican"!), now a disciple of Christ! Called by Jesus to "follow Him," as we read in Matthew 9:9-13! What a story of how he "left everything" to follow Jesus (according to Luke's account!) And, after his conversion, he threw a party for all his "many fellow tax collectors, and sinners," which Jesus attended! And which the Pharisee and scribes had "a big problem" with! Interesting how the party was low-keyed in Matthew's account, but a "great reception" and highly grandiose, according to Luke's account! All of which tells us a lot about the person of Matthew! And of Jesus!

Matthew "bridges the gap" between the Old and New Testaments! It leads us out of the Old and into the New! The Old Testament promises "point to Christ," while the New Testament fulfills those promises! Matthew, in particular, shows how Jesus Christ fulfilled the Old Testament promises! As Dr. Constable has noted, the Gospels, beginning with Matthew, represent the most important part of the Holy Scriptures, because "all that preceded them led to them, and all that follows emerges from them"! "Shepherd's Notes" notes that the book of Matthew "has likely influenced more people than any other Christian book" (owing perhaps to its place as the first book of the New Testament)!

Among other things, Matthew gives a litany of "proof texts" to show that Jesus' life and ministry was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, beginning with an announcement to Joseph ("the son of David") in a dream that Mary would conceive a child "by the Holy Spirit" who should be called "Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins"--all of which took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "Behold the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call His name "Immanuel," which translated means, "God with us"! (Check out and highlight in your Bible at least eight other specific "fulfillments"!)

So, what's the basic content of Matthew--and how's it all laid out? It's basically all about "the King"! King Jesus! His "offer"! And His "rejection"! In a slide that we'll see every week in MOB, it's further broken down into seven divisions, all starting with the letter "P"! (1) Presentation of the King (1:1-4:11), (2) Proclamation of the King (4:12-7:29), (3) Power of the King (8:1-11:1), (4) Progressive Rejection of the King, (5) Preparation of the King's Disciples, (6) Presentation and Rejection of the King, and (7) Proof of the King! (Check it out on-line and follow it as we progress (with a "P") through our study!)

MacArthur has an interesting outline of Matthew! Beginning with a "Prologue--The King's Advent" (!:1-4:25) and ending with an "Epilogue--The King's Assignment" (28:16-20)--interspersed with five combination "discourses" (Jesus' teaching) and narratives (including Jesus' miracles)--covering (1) the King's Authority (5:1-9:38), (2) the King's Agenda (10:1-12:50), (3) the King's Adversaries (13:1-17:27), (4) the King's Administration (18:1-23:39), and (5) the King's Atonement (24:1-28:15). And each of these discourse/narrative sections ending with a transition phrase, something along the lines: "And it came about when Jesus had finished..."

Confused? Here's a simple one, included in another one of John Neal's slides! Think in terms of five basic divisions: (1) the Advent of Jesus (Chapters 1-2), (2) the Preparation for Public Ministry (Chapters 3-4), (3) the Public Ministry of Jesus (Chapters 5-25), (4) His Crucifixion (Chapters 26-27), and (5) His Resurrection and Great Commission (Chapter 28)! (Note the 21 chapters devoted to His public ministry!)

By the way, there always seems to be a connection between our lessons and something we hear from Jesse on Sunday mornings! Last Sunday? Remember how Jesse spoke about how Jesus in the first 8 chapters of Matthew demonstrated His power and authority to perform miracles and heal the sick but then (in Matthew 9) took it to another level--much to astonishment of the Scribes and Pharisees--for the first time exercising His "authority to forgive sin"! Which is something only God can do! (Watch for parallels in Jesse's sermon to our MOB study in Matthew!)

And so, who is Jesus Christ? We'll be learning so much more as we make our way through Matthew! Next week: Matthew 1--and our memory verse, Galatians 4:4-5--"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we receive the adoption as sons!"

Men, go with God this week and be a blessing!

Lowell