

# Matthew

Although he does not identify himself as the author, Matthew is recognized by the early church as the author of this gospel. Matthew was one of the original twelve disciples chosen by Jesus (Matt. 9:9; 10:3).

Before Jesus called him, Matthew served as a tax collector for Rome. The publicans as they were known, often collected excessive taxes from the people and took the extra for themselves. Needless to say, the profession was considered sinful by the Jews and those serving as such were despised.

Matthew was no doubt different by the time Jesus called him since his life was touched by the ministry of John the Baptist (Acts 1:21-22). Matthew was immediately ready to follow Jesus when he called him (Mk 2:14-17). In the gospel of Mark, he is referred to as Levi, but in both gospels he is called Matthew in their respective lists of the twelve (Matt. 10:3; Mk 3:18).

Matthew uses the term *kingdom of heaven* 32 times, thus the kingdom of heaven is his main theme. In conjunction with that theme he presents Jesus as King who is destined to reign over all the earth.

## I. Major Elements of Matthew's Gospel

- A. The Baptism of Jesus – 3:13-17
- B. The Temptation of Jesus – 4:1-11
- C. The Sermon on the Mount – 5:1-7:29
- D. The Lord's Prayer – 6:9-13
- E. The Parable of the Sower – 13:1-23
- F. The Promise of the Church – 16:13-20

- G. The Transfiguration of Christ – 17:1-8
- H. The Rejection of Israel by Jesus – 21:23-46
- I. The Crucifixion – 27:1-61
- J. The Resurrection – 28:1-20

## **II. Three main teachings of Matthew's gospel**

- A. Matthew 5:17: Jesus came to fulfill the law and prophets; Matthew used prophecy to prove Jesus is the Messiah.
- B. Matthew 4:17: The promised kingdom was near if the nation repented! Now the kingdom is postponed until the King returns.
- C. Matthew 6:24: Jesus says one cannot serve God and riches (we cannot serve two masters); Jesus teaches us to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

### Conclusion

Matthew's gospel also contains the well-known passage in chapter 24 concerning details of the return of Christ. The prophecies of Jesus in that chapter predict the major characteristics of the present age, along with a confirmation of Daniel's famous prophecy of 70 weeks determined upon the nation of Israel,

As well, Jesus predicts a time yet to come known as the *great tribulation* (24:21). He goes on to warn of false Christs and false prophets who shall deceive many with great signs and wonders (24:24). The climax of this great chapter is the prediction Jesus will immediately appear following the tribulation of those days (24:29).

Upon his return the Lord Jesus will re-gather his elect (Israel) and proceed to establish his kingdom centered in the city of the great King—Jerusalem.