

# The Gospel of Matthew

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Slide 06 of 12 slide sets



No. 93

# What about The Gospel of Matthew?

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## Matthew - a gospel about relationship

"..... and they all fled"

No. 95

# The Gospel of Matthew

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Slide 06 of 12 slide sets



Page 24

No. 96

# The Gospel of Matthew

- ▶ The Three gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke are called the synoptic gospels because they are similar to each other
- ▶ Matthew and Luke's gospels (85CE) largely base their text upon the gospel of Mark (70CE).

No. 97.

Thus,  
 Jesus was teaching in the early 30's CE,  
 Paul was teaching and writing in the 50's CE  
 Mark wrote his gospel around 70 CE  
 Matthew and Luke wrote around 85CE  
 The gospel of John was later, possibly 100 CE

No. 99

▶ According to a sociological analysis cf. *Five Pivotal Texts* available in [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au)

▶ Matthew's gospel was structured around the sense of **time**.

▶ **How so?**

No. 98

Both Matthew and Luke's gospels were written around 85 CE.

However, Matthew's gospel was written for a Jewish readership/audience

Luke's gospel was written for a Gentile (Greek) readership/audience

Consider Matthew

No. 100

- ▶ Each major section of the text finishes with "*After Jesus had said these things*"
- ▶ The Gospel finishes with the promise of Jesus "*I will be with you until the end of TIME*"

Matthew has a focus on law (cf. cause and effect which happens over time)

No. 101

The paragraphs of Matthew's Sections B and C are structured around a play on verbs (cf. time) –

- ▶ Section B paragraphs begin with an exhortation:
- ▶ Blessed are the poor
- ▶ You are the salt of the earth
- ▶ Do not think I have come to destroy the law or the prophets
- ▶ Be wary of your righteousness
- ▶ Do not accumulate treasure
- ▶ Do not judge
- ▶ Enter through the narrow gate
- ▶ The Section B paragraph themselves are a challenge to **go beyond the law** i.e.
- ▶ Sin
- ▶ Being average
- ▶ Being literal
- ▶ Show
- ▶ Treasure
- ▶ Judging
- ▶ The easy

No. 103

No. 102

Section C paragraph “hooks” are present participles, (cf. verbs and time) that begin or focus the paragraphs e.g.

- ▶ Coming, entering, seeing, approaching, embarking, coming, passing, going, calling
- ▶ Section C paragraphs are about
- ▶ **Internalising the Law**
  - ▶ that is,
- ▶ Ask for help
- ▶ Recognise authority
- ▶ Accept touch
- ▶ Accept healing
- ▶ Be independent of the crowd
- ▶ Be ready to move
- ▶ Leave excuses
- ▶ Follow
- ▶ Trust
- ▶ Prioritise
- ▶ Forgive etc.

No. 104

There are obvious and also subtle links with Mark's structure e.g.

- ▶ Matthew's Section C has 21 paragraphs.
- ▶ The middle one of these, no 11, is about people letting a man down through a roof. Jesus forgives the man's sins then cures him.
- ▶ People challenge his ability to forgive.
- ▶ This incident matches the middle paragraph (No. 9) of the concentric circle of Mark's Section B.
- ▶ Here forgiveness is also being stressed



Mark



Matthew

No. 105.

Matthew's Sections D also begins with a statement about time, made or implied

- ▶ But (when) John hearing
- ▶ Then
- ▶ At that time
- ▶ Yet (while) he was speaking
- ▶ On the day
- ▶ When he ended
- ▶ Now in the 4<sup>th</sup> watch etc.



No. 107

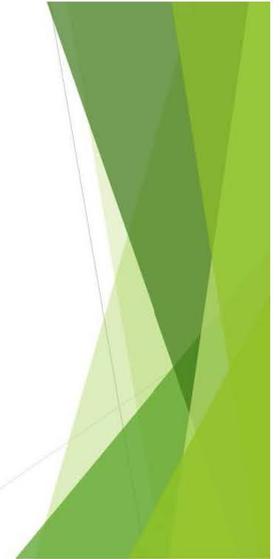
No. 106

The Opening Paragraph in Section D says "Wisdom is justified by her works"

Then, all the 31 paragraphs to follow fit in with "what Wisdom does" e.g.

Proves  
Excuses  
Believes  
Prophecies  
Brings hope

Justifies  
Judges  
Predicts  
Relates cf. God's will  
Bears fruit etc.



No. 108

Again there is a subtle link here, with Mark's structure

- ▶ The **middle** paragraph here in Matthew's Section D, matches the **middle** paragraph of Mark's concentric circle in his Section B



This is about Jesus walking on water .

And, the theme of forgiveness is repeated in the last paragraph in Matthew's Section D



No. 109.

Paragraphs in Matthew's Section E also begin with time statements made or implied.

A semiotic, sociological analysis of this section shows that Matthew is not only showing positive aspects of a society based upon Judaism with its reliance on the sense of TIME

He is also WEIGHING UP **negative** aspects that can come from an over-reliance on the sense of time and an over-stress on law externals.

### Matthew's Section E

- Avoid
- Selfish use of law
- Belittling of children
- Many possessions
- Making demands
- Condemnation
- Ambition
- Controls
- Vestiges of Greatness etc.

No. 110



No. 111

What about Matthew's Section A?  
This is about the birth and early life of Jesus.

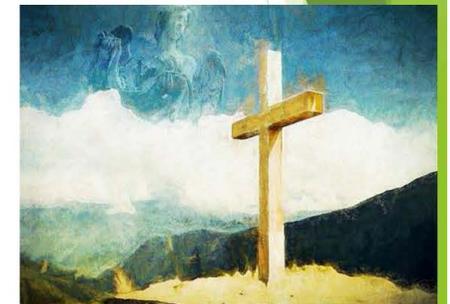


And, like Mark's Section C, the text here does not appear to be organized into some sort of paragraph pattern.

No. 112

There is a parallel here with Luke's Section A as well. In the overall context of the sociological analysis mentioned above, there is the inference made here, that both Judaism (cf. time) and Hellenism (cf. place) meet in the "still point" of the person of Jesus.

It is in Jesus that a balance can be found, within each society and between the two.



Matthew's Section F is about the forgiveness of Jesus' disciples after they had all flee and leave him to face the crucifixion.

Again, this shows that a key theme of the gospel is **forgiveness**.

Forgiveness is about relationship.

Relationship develops over **time**.

The sociological analysis of [www.realitysearch.com.au](http://www.realitysearch.com.au) shows how Matthew's gospel structure sets out the good and weak points of a society based upon time.

Would you reason yourself about whether or not a society based on the sense of time would have both good and weak points?

Have you ever reflected about the connection between relationship and time?

For instance have you reflected on the "special" connection you have with old school chums and of course the connection with family members, even in the extended family?

In fact, the gospel of Matthew, written in and for a community of Jewish Christians, is permeated with the sense of time and the search for balance

**What About the gospel of Luke ??**

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