

New Testament Literature - Introduction to Matthew

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Session 7

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Abstract

Dr. David Mathewson introduces the Gospel of Matthew as the canonical climax and fulfillment of the overarching Old Testament story rather than a discontinuous narrative. He highlights Matthew's unique five-fold structural block of discourses, the genealogical link connecting Jesus to the Davidic and Abrahamic covenants, and the pervasive theme of Gentile salvation. Furthermore, Matthew portrays Jesus as the true Israel and a new, greater Moses whose teachings, particularly in the Sermon on the Mount, represent the true goal and fulfillment of the ancient Mosaic law.

Outline

I. Introduction to the Canonical Context and Narrative Framework

- A. Reading the New Testament through the lens of Old Testament promise and fulfillment
 - 1. Continuation of the final chapter of the Old Testament storyline
 - 2. Fulfillment of Old Testament covenants through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ
- B. The historical story assumed by the Gospel writers
 - 1. Israel remaining in spiritual and political exile under Roman rule
 - 2. Anticipation of divine intervention to rescue Israel and restore covenant promises
 - 3. Extension of ultimate salvation and blessing to all nations

II. Authorship, Canonical Origins, and Structural Design of Matthew

- A. Authorial background and titling
 - 1. Written anonymously; titles added early by the historic church
 - 2. Attributed to Matthew, the tax collector called as a disciple of Jesus
- B. The unique five-fold structural plan (Five Main Discourses)
 - 1. Sermon on the Mount (Chapters 5–7)
 - 2. Parables of the Kingdom of God (Chapter 13)
 - 3. Discourse on the End Times / Olivet Discourse (Chapters 23–25)
 - 4. Formulaic transitional marker: "When Jesus finished saying these things"
 - 5. Portrayal of Jesus as an authoritative teacher and bringer of instruction

III. The Prologue and Genealogy: Jesus as the Son of David and Son of Abraham

- A. Theological significance of Matthew 1:1
 - 1. Son of David: Fulfillment of the Davidic covenant and rightful king to sit on the eternal throne
 - 2. Son of Abraham: Fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant to bless all nations of the earth
- B. Legal structure and messianic symbolism of the genealogy
 - 1. Three groupings of 14 generations emphasizing Davidic royal lineage
 - 2. Legal lineage through Joseph as the adopted legal father
 - 3. Historical references to the exile and its spiritual end through Messiah

IV. Gentile Focus and Old Testament Typology (Chapters 2–4)

- A. Prominence of Gentile response and inclusion
 - 1. The visit of the Magi/Wise Men from the East seeking and worshipping the King
 - 2. Contrast between foreign Gentile searchers and indifferent local Jewish leadership
 - 3. Messianic banquet imagery (Matthew 8) and Great Commission mandate to all nations (Matthew 28)
- B. Old Testament typological threads fulfilled in Jesus
 - 1. Jesus as the True/New Israel: Preserved in Egypt, passing the wilderness temptation where Israel failed
 - 2. Jesus as the New Moses: Rescued from a tyrannical foreign ruler killing infant boys, initiating a new Exodus
 - 3. Jesus as the Light to the Nations: Fulfillment of Isaiah 60 prophecies regarding foreign kings bringing gold and frankincense

V. The First Block of Discourse: The Sermon on the Mount (Chapters 5–7)

- A. The contextual foundation of the Sermon
 - 1. Preached in light of the presence and inauguration of God's transforming kingdom
 - 2. An ethic specifically designed for kingdom citizens, not a general societal mandate
- B. The relationship between Jesus' teaching and the Mosaic Law
 - 1. Jesus came not to abolish but to fulfill the law (Matthew 5:17)
 - 2. Fulfillment defined as the true goal, apex, and intention to which the Mosaic law pointed
 - 3. Jesus and His commands as the central authority and expression of God's will for disciples