

Class 3
THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW

1

Outline

- Narrative Probes
 - Matthew's Infancy Narrative
 - The Narrative Structure of Matthew's Gospel
- Social Context: Roman Imperial Theology
- Redactional Probes: How Matthew Edits Mark
- Matthew's Themes
 - The Kingdom of God & the Kingdom of Caesar
 - The Loss of the Temple & the Sacrifice of Christ
- Next Week's Exercise: Using *New Testament Abstracts*

Other Bible Tools
Theological Reflection:
Christian Anti-Semitism

2

USING BIBLICAL RESEARCH TOOLS

3

Using Biblical Research Tools:

The Elijah Project (*Workbook* pp. 83-85)

- Everyone receives the Concordance excerpt
- Tonight: Choose a facilitator and divide the following tools:
 - Biblical Apparatus
 - Commentary
 - Bible Dictionary
 - *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT)*
- Review your tool and report out at start of our next class

4

Bias in Our Scholarly Sources

Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament (TWNT/TDNT)



Gerhard Kittel



Karl Georg Kuhn

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The Blood Libel Plaque at the Cathedral of Sandomierz, Poland

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MATTHEW'S INFANCY NARRATIVE

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Infancy Narratives



- Mark did not have one; he starts the story at Jesus' baptism
- Matthew is the first to add one (1:1-2:23)
- Luke has one too, but it's entirely different (1:5-2:52 + 3:23-38)
- The tradition grows in subsequent centuries, with entire gospels dedicated to the birth and infancy of Jesus
 - ❖ The Infancy Gospel of James
 - ❖ Arabic Infancy Gospel
 - ❖ Gospel of Pseudo-Matthew
 - ❖ Infancy Gospel of Thomas

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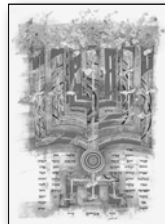
Matthew's Infancy Narrative Plotting in the Genealogy (1:1-17)

Groupings	Numbers	
Abraham to David	14	1
David to the Exile	14	2
Exile to Messiah	14	3
		4
		5
		6

What do all these groups share in common? What do these numbers signify?

Jesus is the fulfillment of Jewish history and of God's promises to the Jews
 Jesus is the promised heir of David
14 = DVD in Hebrew

ד ו ד
 d w d
 4 + 6 + 4



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Matthew's Infancy Narrative Plotting in the Larger Narrative (1:18–2:23)

- Joseph's dream 1:18-25
Isaiah 7:14 (1:22-23)
- The magoi and the king 2:1-12
Micah 5:1 (2:5-6)
- Flight into exile 2:13-15
Hosea 11:1 (2:15)
- Slaughter of infants 2:16-18
Jeremiah 31:15 (2:17-18)
- Exodus from Egypt 2:19-23
Unknown prophecy (2:23)

What themes or motifs repeat across these scenes?

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Matthew's Infancy Narrative Plotting in the Larger Narrative (1:18–2:23)

Do any of these episodes' themes parallel the themes of the genealogy?

- Joseph's dream • Jesus is the fulfillment of Jewish history and of God's promises to the Jews
- The magoi and the king • Jesus is the promised heir of David
- Flight into exile • Jesus' birth is the beginning of the day of the Lord
- Slaughter of infants
- Exodus from Egypt

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THE NARRATIVE STRUCTURE OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL

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Two Critical Approaches

Returning to Narrative Criticism

Redaction Criticism

Study how the later editor (Matthew) edited his source (Mark).

This will yield some sense of the gospel's core themes.

Narrative Criticism

Study episode plotting for clues about the design of the narrative.

This too will yield some sense of the gospel's core themes.

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Narrative Criticism

Plotting in Matthew

Infancy Narrative	1:1–2:23
Proclamation of the Kingdom	3:1–7:29
Ministry & Mission in Galilee	8:1–10:42
Questioning of/Opposition to Jesus	11:1–13:52
Christology & Ecclesiology	13:53–18:35
Proclamation of the Kingdom	19:1–25:46
Passion / Resurrection Narrative	26:1–28:20

Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 1997.

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Narrative Criticism

Plotting in Matthew: Identifying Large Narrative Blocks

1. Proclamation of the Kingdom	3:1–7:29 <small>Sermon on the Mount 5:1–7:29</small>
2. Ministry & Mission in Galilee	8:1–10:42 <small>Mission discourse 10:1–42</small>
3. Questioning of/Opposition to Jesus	11:1–13:52 <small>Parable discourse 13:1–52</small>
4. Christology & Ecclesiology	13:53–18:35 <small>Discourse on the church 18:1–35</small>
5. Proclamation of the Kingdom	19:1–25:46 <small>Eschatological discourse 24:1–25:46</small>

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Narrative Criticism

Defining a Chiasmic Pattern

Definition

A chiasm is a plotting technique whereby the author arranges information in a particular order and then reverses that order. It can be done on the level of single words or phrases or on the level of larger narrative units.

Examples

- Matt 12:22-23
- Matt 13:13-15
- gospel structure

} *at the level of words/phrases*
} *at the structural level*

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Narrative Criticism

Chiasm on the Level of Words/Motifs

Matt 12:22-23

Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute; and he cured him, so that the one who had been mute could speak and see. All the crowds were amazed and said, "Can this be the Son of David?"

a
b
b'
a'

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Narrative Criticism

Chiasm on the Level of Phrases

Matt 13:13-15

"The reason I speak to them in parables is that **seeing** they do not perceive, and **hearing** they do not listen, nor do they understand.' With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says: 'You will indeed **listen**, but never understand, and you will indeed **look**, but never perceive.'"

a
b
c
d
c'
d'
a'
b'

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Narrative Criticism

The Discourse Structure in Matthew: A Chiastic Pattern

{	1. Sermon on the Mount	(5:1-7:29)	a
	2. Mission discourse	(10:1-42)	b
	3. Parable discourse	(13:1-52)	c
	4. Discourse on community	(18:1-35)	b'
	5. Eschatological / apocalyptic discourse	(24:1-25:46)	a'

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Narrative Criticism

The Discourse Structure in Matthew: A Chiastic Pattern

{	1. Sermon on the Mount	(5:1-7:29)	a
	2. Mission discourse	(10:1-42)	b
	3. Parable discourse	(13:1-52)	c
	4. Discourse on community	(18:1-35)	b'
	5. Eschatological / apocalyptic discourse	(24:1-25:46)	a'

In groups of 2, use the handout to identify "links" (shared words and motifs) in discourses 1 and 5.

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Narrative Criticism

The Discourse Structure in Matthew: A Chiastic Pattern

Sermon on the Mount

Eschatological discourse

5:1-6

When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up the mountain; and after he sat down, his disciples came to him. Then he began to speak, and taught them, saying:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

"Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

25:31-34

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink....'"

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Narrative Criticism

The Discourse Structure in Matthew: A Chiastic Pattern

Sermon on the Mount

7:21-23
 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name? Did we not drive out demons in your name? Did we not do mighty deeds in your name?' Then I will declare to them solemnly, 'I never knew you. Depart from me, you evildoers.'"

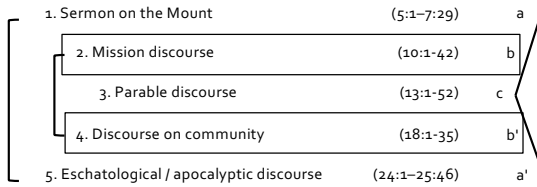
Eschatological discourse

25:44-46
 "For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me.' Then they will answer and say, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?' He will answer them, 'Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.' And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

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Narrative Criticism

The Discourse Structure in Matthew: A Chiastic Pattern



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Narrative Criticism

The Discourse Structure in Matthew: A Chiastic Pattern

Mission Discourse

10:1-4
 Then Jesus summoned his twelve disciples and gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to cure every disease and every sickness. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew, James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddaeus; Simon the Cananaean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

Discourse on Community

18:1-5
 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me."

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Narrative Criticism

The Discourse Structure in Matthew: A Chiastic Pattern

Mission Discourse

10:16-18

"See, I am sending you out like sheep into the midst of wolves; so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves. Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles.

Discourse on Community

18:6-7

"If any of you put a stumbling block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of stumbling blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling block comes!

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Narrative Criticism

The Discourse Structure in Matthew: A Chiastic Pattern

1. Sermon on the Mount	(5:1-7:29)	a
2. Mission discourse	(10:1-42)	b
3. Parable discourse	(13:1-52)	c
4. Discourse on community	(18:1-35)	b'
5. Eschatological / apocalyptic discourse	(24:1-25:46)	a'

The center of the chiasm functions as a plot "pivot"

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Narrative Criticism

The Discourse Structure in Matthew: A Chiastic Pattern

Parable Discourse

13:10-14

Then the disciples came and asked him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?" He answered, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given. For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance, but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.

"The reason I speak to them in parables is that 'seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.' With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says:

"You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive."

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Narrative Criticism

The Discourse Structure in Matthew: A Chiastic Pattern

1. Sermon on the Mount	(5:1-7:29)	a
2. Mission discourse	(10:1-42)	b
3. Parable discourse	(13:1-52)	c
4. Discourse on community	(18:1-35)	b'
5. Eschatological / apocalyptic discourse	(24:1-25:46)	a'

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Narrative Criticism

Chiasm on the Level of the Entire Gospel: A Narrative *Inclusio*

A narrative *inclusio* is a literary device based on a concentric principle, also known as bracketing or an envelope structure, which consists of creating a frame by placing similar material at the beginning and end of a section.

Wikipedia, "Inclusio"

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Narrative Criticism

Chiasm on the Level of the Entire Gospel: A Narrative *Inclusio*

Infancy Narrative	1:1-2:23
Proclamation of the Kingdom	3:1-7:29
Ministry & Mission in Galilee	8:1-10:42
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Passion / Resurrection Narrative	26:1-28:20

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Narrative Criticism

Chiasm on the Level of the Entire Gospel: A Narrative *Inclusio*

Infancy Narrative (1:1–2:23)

- a "Emmanuel: God with us" (1:24)
- b Birth of ruler prophesied for Israel (2:1-6)
- c Escape from death (2:1-15)
- d Massacre of infants (2:16-18)
- e Return to Israel (2:19-23)

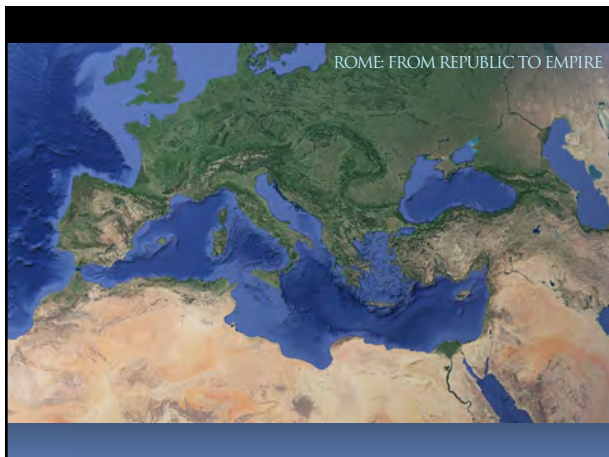
- e' Journey to Jerusalem (21–25)
- d' Betrayal, arrest, execution (26–27)
- c' Escape from death via resurrection (28:1-8)
- b' Jesus assumes "all authority on heaven and earth" (28:16-20)
- a' "I am with you always" (28:20)

Passion / Resurrection Narrative (21:1–28:20)

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ROMAN IMPERIAL THEOLOGY

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Roman Political Theology

1. Augustus presented himself as an agent of restoration, not innovation
 - stability
 - prosperity
 - moral renewal
2. His poets and propaganda praised him as a kind of heaven-sent agent
 - Virgil's *Aeneid* aligns Augustus with the founder of Rome
 - Augustus aligns himself with gods of peace, victory, abundance on coins and statues
3. In fact this propaganda was meant to offset the radical innovation that Augustus represented: breaking from republican traditions and establishing himself as the sole ruler

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Octavian denarius



Winged victory on ship's prow holding wreath/crown of victory

Emperor on chariot, holding olive branch
Inscription: Imperator Caesar

38

Octavian denarius, 19-18 BCE



Caesar Augustus

"Caesar's Comet"
7-day comet that appeared during the Last Will of Caesar a few months after Julius Caesar was assassinated, taken as a symbol of his deification by Octavian
Inscription: Divvs Ivlivs

39

Octavian denarius, 32-29 BCE

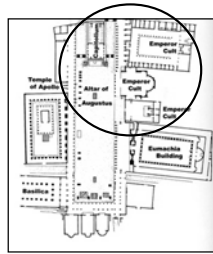
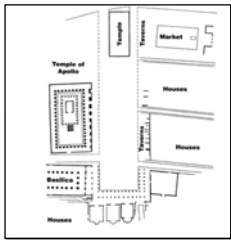


Bust of Octavian
(Augustus Caesar)

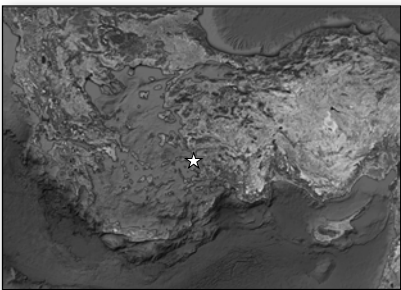
Pax, holding olive branch and cornucopia
Inscription: Caesar Divi F

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The Augustan Building Program in Pompeii



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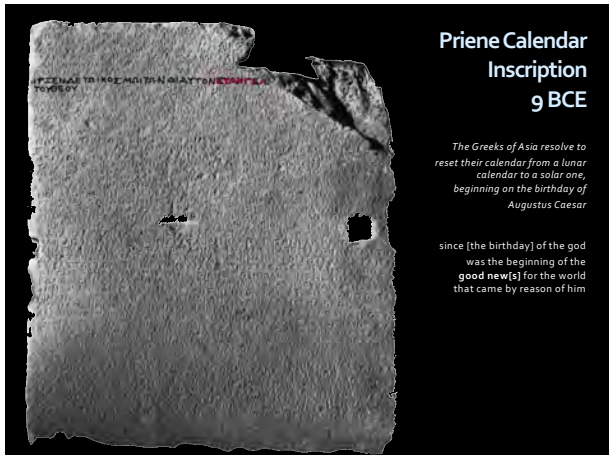
Further East, in Turkey

Priene Calendar Inscription 9 BCE



Octavian, later
"Caesar Augustus"
Roman Emperor
37 BCE-14 CE

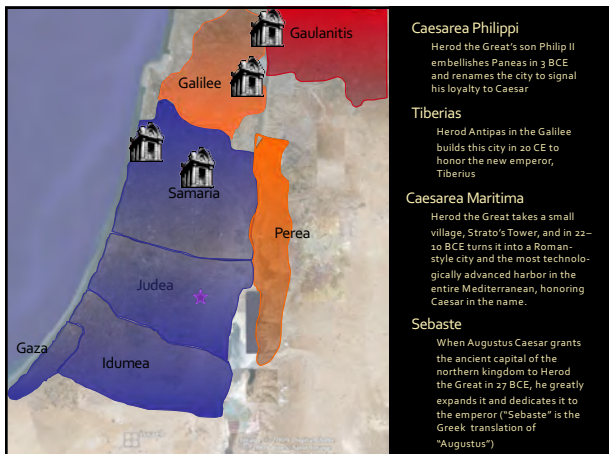
42



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The Pax Romana

The Roman Peace

Those who celebrate Rome's peace in poems, narratives, inscriptions, coins, and buildings are the ruling elite. They view its accomplishment "from above" as its beneficiaries and are keen to preserve it. Claims of "peace," then, are propaganda claims. Peace is a construct from the ruling elite that denotes the status quo, the way life is ordered under the empire for the elite's benefit.

The cry of "peace" masks the strategies and structures of empire. It covers over the military basis for Rome's rule. It disguises the fundamental inequities in the Roman system that exists for the economic benefit of the elite. It lays a veneer over the bloodshed and human misery experienced by the vast majority of the empire's subjects....

Warren Carter, "Roman Imperial Theology," in *Monks and Empire: Initial Explorations* (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 2001) 32.

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HOW MATTHEW EDITS MARK

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Practicing Redaction Criticism

§ 18 The Baptism (p.16)

The Steps

1. Identify source and editor
2. Describe the changes
3. Select the most significant difference
4. Explain the change

<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Matthew 3:13-17</p> <p>Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."</p>	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Mark 1:9-11</p> <p>In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And when he came up out of the water, immediately he saw the heavens opened and the Spirit descending upon him like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "Thou art my beloved Son; with thee I am well pleased."</p>
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Practicing Redaction Criticism

§ 38 The Sick Healed at Evening (p.36)

The Steps

1. Identify source and editor
2. Describe the changes
3. Select the most significant difference
4. Explain the change

<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Matthew 8:16-17</p> <p>That evening they brought to him many who were possessed with demons; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick.</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah, "He took our infirmities and bore our diseases."</p>	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Mark 1:32-34</p> <p>That evening, at sundown, they brought to him all who were sick or possessed with demons. And the whole city was gathered together about the door. And he healed many who were sick with various diseases, and cast out many demons; and he would not permit the demons to speak, because they knew him.</p>
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Practicing Redaction Criticism

§ 147 Walking on Water (p.138)

The Steps

1. Identify source and editor
2. Describe the changes
3. Select the most significant difference
4. Explain the change

<p style="text-align: center;">Matthew 14:26-33</p> <p>But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out for fear.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">But immediately he spoke to them, saying, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear." And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water." He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus; but when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, "O man of little faith, why did you doubt?" And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mark 6:49-52</p> <p>But when they saw him walking on the sea they thought it was a ghost, and cried out; for they all saw him, and were terrified. But immediately he spoke to them and said, "Take heart, it is I; have no fear."</p> <p style="text-align: right; padding-right: 20px;">And he got into the boat with them and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded, for they did not understand about the loaves, but their hearts were hardened</p>
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Practicing Redaction Criticism

§ 188 The Beelzebul Controversy (p.172)

The Steps

1. Identify source and editor
2. Describe the changes
3. Select the most significant difference
4. Explain the change


<p style="text-align: center;">Matthew 12:22-25ff</p> <p>Then a blind and dumb demoniac was brought to him, and he healed him, so that the dumb man spoke and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, "Can this be the Son of David?" But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, "It is only by Beelzebul, the prince of demons, that this man casts out demons." Knowing their thoughts, he said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste...."</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Mark 3:22-23ff</p> <p style="text-align: right; padding-right: 20px;">And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He is possessed by Beelzebul, and by the prince of demons he casts out the demons." And he called them to him, and said to them in parables, "How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand...."</p>
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Matthew's Themes

Re-presenting Jesus

- God's commissioned agent
 - the fulfillment of Jewish history and prophecy
 - disciples identify him as Son of God
 - "unflattering" scenes removed
- God with us
 - "Emmanuel"
 - in community (see next slide)
 - through corporal works of mercy
- Teacher or Revealer
 - a prophet like Moses
 - doesn't abrogate but fulfills the law/ethics
- Source of release/forgiveness
 - announced by angel to Joseph in infancy dream (ἡγοουσις = 3110' = "God saves")
 - not John the Baptist's baptism (that's for repentance or confession, but not forgiveness)
 - through healings
 - cup/death are "for the forgiveness of sins"



Sermon on the Mount
Laura James

With the Temple destroyed, Jesus takes over this key function

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Matthew's Themes

Re-presenting the Disciples

- The disciples understand
- They may have little faith, but they have *some*
- Inappropriate motives and actions are improved
- The effect is to improve on the portrait of Jesus as teacher



Statue of Peter
St. Peter's Basilica

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Matthew's Themes

Re-presenting the Jerusalem Leaders

- keeps sources' negative presentation
- associates leaders with devil
- increases hostile references to scribes
- the Pharisees in particular will be targeted, blamed for Jesus' death and the fall of the Temple
- "Rabbi" becomes a term used by the faithless for Jesus
- more negative references to temple and synagogues than Mark or Q



The Passion of the Christ
Dir. Mel Gibson, 2004

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Two Critical Approaches

Returning to Narrative Criticism

Redaction Criticism

Study how the later editor (Matthew) edited his source (Mark).

This will yield some sense of the gospel's core themes.

Narrative Criticism

Study episode plotting for clues about the design of the narrative.

This too will yield some sense of the gospel's core themes.

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Kernels & Satellites in the Plot of Matthew Carter's Outline

Kernels

major branching points or hinges that advance the plot

Satellites

minor events that elaborate or flesh in the plot; outtakes that can be removed without damaging the plot's outcome

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Kernels & Satellites in the Plot of Matthew Carter's Outline

Kernels

Satellites

1:18-25	God initiates Jesus' story and commission	1:1-4:16	genealogy, birth, baptism, temptation, Capernaum
4:17-25	Jesus begins his mission and community	4:17-11:1	2 teaching blocks, healings - the kingdom enacted
11:2-6	John the Baptist asks, are you the messiah?	11:2-16:20	opposition: Pharisees, Herod Antipas kills JBap
16:21-28	Jesus begins to predict death and resurrection	16:21-20:34	crucifixion predicted; the cost of discipleship
21:1-27	Temple tables overturned	21-27	passion and death
28:1-10	resurrection	28:1-28	leaders reject; disciples believe, Jesus commissions

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Two Critical Approaches Returning to Narrative Criticism

Redaction Criticism

Study how the later editor (Matthew) edited his source (Mark).

This will yield some sense of the gospel's core themes.

Narrative Criticism

Study episode plotting for clues about the design of the narrative.

This too will yield some sense of the gospel's core themes.

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Topics to Look For

The *theme* is the meaning Matthew assigns, the answer he offers

- **Christology**
How Matthew defines the significance of the Christ
- **Ecclesiology**
How Matthew describes the followers of Jesus and their life together
- **Eschatology**
How Matthew understands the "end times" and the place of Jesus' life, death and resurrection within them

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Christology

The Significance of the Christ

	Narrative Critical Clues	Redaction Critical Clues
▪ Jesus represents the fulfillment of scripture	40+ allusions to prophecy	§ 38, 111, 113
▪ Messiah, Son of the living God, Son of Man, Immanuel (God with us), Jesus (God saves)	Structure of genealogy; chiasmic infancy/passion	§ 158, 254
▪ David Christology	1-2; 21:1-11; 27:11-31	§ 117, 151
▪ Moses Christology	2:13-23; 5-7; 17:1-9	§ 161, 284
▪ Jesus as divine Wisdom	11:19-27	Discourses, O
▪ Earliest Trinitarian formulation (28:19)		

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Ecclesiology

The Nature of the Church

	Narrative Critical Clues	Redaction Critical Clues
▪ Jewish law is fulfilled, but Gentiles are also included	2:1-12; 25:31-46	§ 85, 339
▪ Church is founded; Peter is rock on which it's built		§ 158, 147
▪ Characteristics of community life are described	Discourses 2 & 4 (mission and community)	§ 219
▪ The kingdom ≠ the church, but the church is where Jesus is confessed as Lord	7:21-23; 25:31-46 chiasmic pattern of the 5 discourses	
▪ The kingdom of heaven is transferred to a people who will bear fruit	Matthew's unique framing of Jesus' crucifixion as a permanent sacrifice effecting atonement in place of the lost temple	§ 341

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Eschatology

Jesus' Role in the End Times


	Narrative Critical Clues	Redaction Critical Clues
▪ Natural phenomena signal the decisive change that Jesus' life and death inaugurate	2:2	§ 347, 352
▪ Many precepts are MORE difficult than Jewish law = an end-time ethics?	See M and Q material added at § 57-59	§ 55-56

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THE KINGDOM OF GOD & THE KINGDOM OF CAESAR

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A Social-Scientific Project The Kingdom of God & the Kingdom of Caesar

- 
- 1. Focus** Social System
Politics: ideologies of power
 - 2. Scope** Macro
Imperial ideology
 - 3. Entry Point** Context
Roman world
 - 4. Direction of Inquiry** Deductive
Model → text
 - 5. Temporal Range** Synchronic
one moment in time

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A Social-Scientific Project

The Kingdom of God & the Kingdom of Caesar



- Describe and explain a model of Roman imperial theology
 - Use description to “read” Matthew’s presentation of the Kingdom of God/heaven

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Our Model of Roman Imperial Theology

In the ancient world, religion and politics were fused; there was a single continuum of power that ran hierarchically from god(s) to rulers to lower officials

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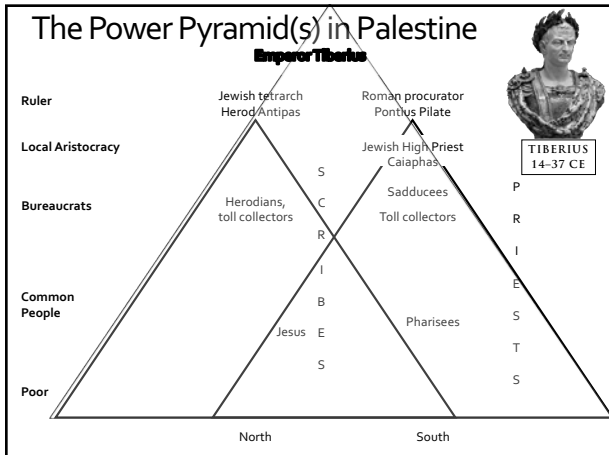


Our Model of Roman Imperial Theology

In the ancient world, religion and politics were fused; there was a single continuum of power that ran hierarchically from god(s) to rulers to lower officials

- If you were in power, it meant that god(s) willed you to rule
- The gods direct history, and signs of their direction are apparent in nature
- Rulers mediate divine benefits to their subjects (victory, peace, food, health, safety)
- In the hierarchy of power, a ruler is son of god and father of his people

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Applying Our Model to Matthew

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you were in power, it meant that god(s) willed you to rule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immanuel, authority over heaven and earth Divine voice at baptism and transfiguration True King of the Jews (infancy, passion) Son of Man who will judge the nations (25:31-46)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The gods direct history, and signs of their direction are apparent in nature 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Genealogy with "David" built in to history (14) Magi from east follow star in the heavens Prophecies of the past are fulfilled in the present Earthquake at Jesus' death
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rulers mediate divine benefits to their subjects (victory, peace, food, health, safety) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jesus = "God saves" (by blood; not called Savior here) Sick are healed, hungry are fed, poor are lifted Power over Satan (temptation, resurrection) "Gospel" (εὐαγγέλιον) or good news = political term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the hierarchy of power, a ruler is son of god and father of his people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peter's confession: Messiah, son of the living God Abba vs. <i>pater patriae</i> Jesus in Gethsemane: "Not as I will, but as you will"

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THE LOSS OF THE TEMPLE & THE SACRIFICE OF CHRIST

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The Question

How does Matthew explain the loss of the Jewish Temple in the Jewish War, and the death of the messiah 40 years before?

Our Path to an Answer

- Identify who the historical Jesus' opponents were, and why he was killed
- Identify how and why the gospels CHANGE that
- Identify Matthew's particular explanation

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Who Were Jesus' Opponents?

	What the Gospels say	What is historically plausible
Roman authorities		<input type="checkbox"/>
Sadducees, Jewish aristocracy, elders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
scribes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pharisees	<input type="checkbox"/>	
"Jews" (the crowds)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
his family		
his followers	Judas	Judas

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Why Was Jesus Killed?

Historical Evidence

He was perceived as a threat

- Rome executed him
- Rome *crucified* him
- but Jerusalem, especially during Passover, was more populous and volatile
- his central message was a "reign of God" that challenged Rome's rule

He was not perceived as a threat

- the gospels say Pilate didn't want to
- the gospels say Jesus Barabbas was the violent criminal, the one Rome *should* have crucified
- Herod Antipas never "took him out" up in the Galilee
- but was that reign of God a direct threat?
 - Jesus supported Roman taxes
 - he healed a centurion's slave
 - at trial, he said kingdom is not of this world

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Why Was Jesus Killed?

The Most Historical Plausible Answer

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He was not perceived as a threat

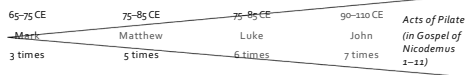
- Herod Antipas never "took him out" up in the Galilee

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Why Was Jesus Killed?

How the Gospel authors change the answer

- The Synoptics create a Jewish "trial"
- All four exonerate Pilate, having Pilate say Jesus is innocent



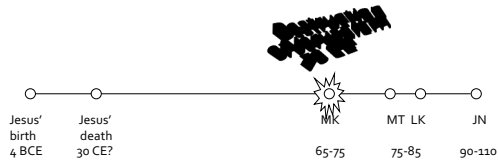
- All four increasingly blame Jewish figures instead
 - especially chief priests, elders, scribes, first men
 - Matthew makes the Jewish crowd indict itself (27:25)
 - John makes "the Jews" the culprits
- All four use the Barabbas scene to paint Jesus as non-violent
- All four make his "kingdom" less "of this world"

Eusebius & Augustine

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Why Was Jesus Killed?

Why the Gospel authors change the answer



- ✓ Jews had just revolted against Rome and been crushed
- ✓ Jews around the empire were paying the price
- ✓ The Romans didn't differentiate between Jews and Christians
- ✓ Except they knew Christians were following a man they crucified

Christians needed to protect selves and differentiate selves from "rebellious Jews"

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Why Was Jesus a Political Threat?

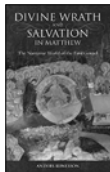
- Because of his message, perhaps
 - "kingdom of God" challenges kingdoms of this world, and their allies
 - healings and acts of power challenge the evil that rules the world
- But even more likely, because of the CROWD
 - The gospels make it sound like the crowd WANTED Jesus dead
 - But this isn't plausible
 - Crucifixion's target is that crowd
 - The message is for THEM
 - You don't need to crucify someone the crowd already despises
 - So why would the gospel authors MAKE the crowd guilty?
 - to align selves with Rome as victims of Jews
 - to explain why Jerusalem had been destroyed
 - to explain why the Jews hadn't embraced Jesus since his death

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Matthew's Particular Explanation

Anders Runesson, *Divine Wrath & Salvation in Matthew* (2016)

- Jesus is the legitimate heir of David, born in Bethlehem, baptized in Judea
- He brings his messianic movement to Jerusalem
- the illegitimate leaders, allied with Rome, continue the unatoned transgressions of past leaders (killing prophets)
- The defilement of the Temple is so severe that God abandons it and prepares to unleash apocalyptic calamities in judgment
- Jesus is executed, but God brings him out of Hades and bestows on him universal power on heaven and earth
- The disciples are sent out to all the nations to turn them to the covenant before it is too late



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Matthew's Particular Explanation

Anders Runesson, *Divine Wrath & Salvation in Matthew* (2016)

Why must Jesus die?

- Matthew 1:21:
 - "She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."



How will atonement happen without the Temple?

- Jesus will offer a true teaching of the law
- He will offer himself as a sacrifice, substituting for the atonement that is otherwise no longer available
 - Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins." (26:27-28)
- This provides the opportunity for atonement for the Jewish people before the final judgment



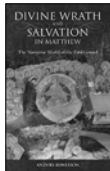
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Matthew's Particular Explanation

Anders Runesson, *Divine Wrath & Salvation in Matthew* (2016)

Who is to blame?

- Look not to who "kills Jesus" (chief priests, scribes, elders)
 - The priests are simply doing their sacrificial duty
 - Pilate washing his hands of Jesus' blood points to the priests' role as the (proper) sacrificial agents
 - Matthew will also say that Rome's power is from Satan, not God (3:8-10)
- But to who is responsible for the defilement and loss of the Temple (the Pharisees and their scribes)
 - They are excluded from the kingdom (5:20; 25:12-23; 23:23) – the only group condemned in this way
 - They are inserted into the parables of judgment which are otherwise directed against the chief priests and elders: two sons (21:28-32), wicked tenants (21:33-44), [PHARISEES] wedding banquet (22:1-14)
 - Woes against them (ch. 23) are followed immediately by lament over Jerusalem and prediction of Temple's destruction



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The Historical Pharisees

How their "yoke" stacks up against Jesus'

The Pharisees are blamed in the gospels (especially in Matthew) for being too legalistic and rigid in their interpretation of Jewish law. But who, really, was more strict?

	Jesus	Pharisees
Purity		
• which foods to eat, and with whom		<input type="checkbox"/>
• washing hands and handling things		<input type="checkbox"/>
Voluntary fasting		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other commands		
• tithing		<input type="checkbox"/>
• observance of fasts and holy days		<input type="checkbox"/>
• marriage and divorce	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• murder and anger	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• adultery and lust	<input type="checkbox"/>	
• love of neighbor and enemy	<input type="checkbox"/>	

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We need to keep in mind what is at stake



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USING NEW TESTAMENT ABSTRACTS

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Exercise for Next Class

Workbook pp. 95-99

- *New Testament Abstracts*
 - "Abstract" in this context is not "vague," but "a summary"
 - What's in *NTA*
 - Where you can find *NTA*
- Directions for assignment
 - Pick a pericope for your final paper
 - Find 5 relevant sources in English
 - Type up 1 page identifying your pericope and sources, using our course style sheet (not the format in *NTA*)

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MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE FOR MATTHEW

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Gospel of Matthew Manuscript Evidence



There are 1,812 manuscripts of Matthew;
27 of these date to the first 600 years of Christian history

Matthew 23:34-37
P104 / pOxy 4404

Century	Manuscript	Extent
1005	P104	8 verses in chapter 21
100-2005	3 papyri	parts of chapters 3, 5, 13, 14, 26
2005	5 papyri	parts of chapters 1-4, 20-21, 24-26
200-3005	3 papyri	parts of chapters 4, 10, 26
3005	6 papyri	parts of chapters 5, 10-11, 18-19, 25
	01	all
	03	all
	05B, 0231, 0242	parts of chapters 8-9, 13, 18, 26-27
c.400	05	most
4005	02	only 25:7 on
	04	most
5005	032	all

D. C. Parker, *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts*
(New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008) 317-19.

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