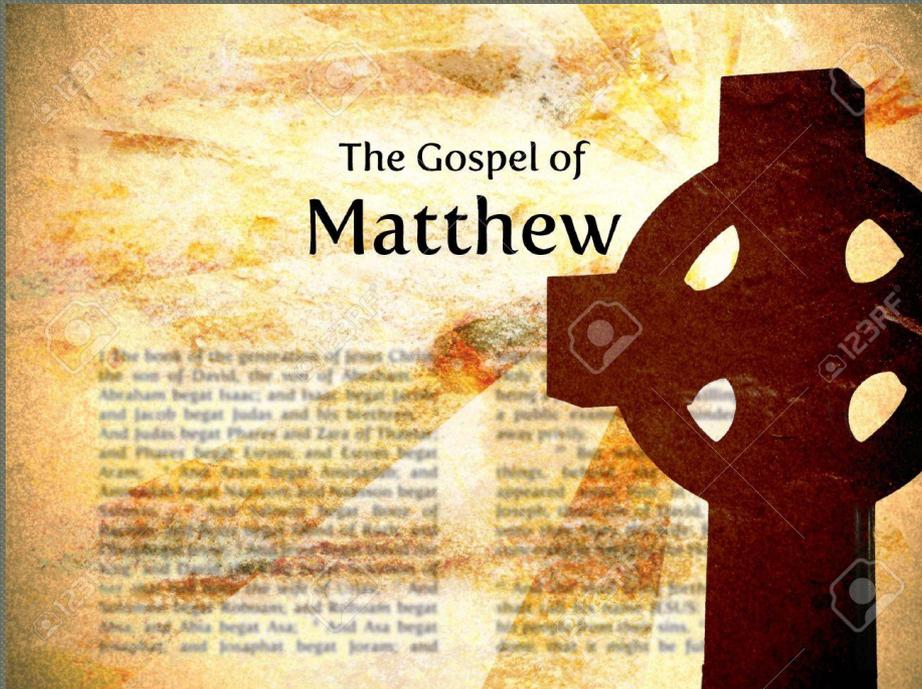


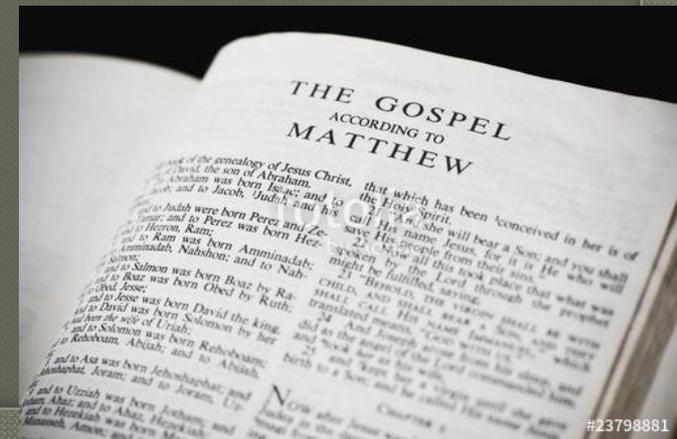
# The Gospel according to Matthew

~ An orderly and detailed Jewish  
account



# Date and Place

- Originally thought to be the first Gospel written, thus it is first in the Bible
- Written mid 80s CE
  - If Matthew uses Mark's Gospel → author writes after 70
  - After the destruction of the Temple
- Place: likely Antioch (Syrian border with Turkey)
  - An urban setting
  - Outside of Palestine
  - Large Roman city



# Author

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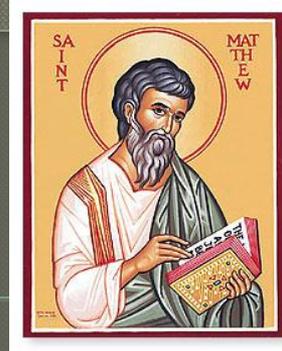
- Anonymous - later ascribed to Matthew (common practice)
- “Devout, educated Christian”
- Knows Jewish scriptures inside and out
  - Jewish scholar or scribe?
  - Synagogue leader?
- Early church leaders associated author with Matthew the tax collector
- Sources used
  - Uses and expands Mark
  - Uses a sayings source for Jesus’ teaching (hypothetical source “Q”)

# The synoptic problem

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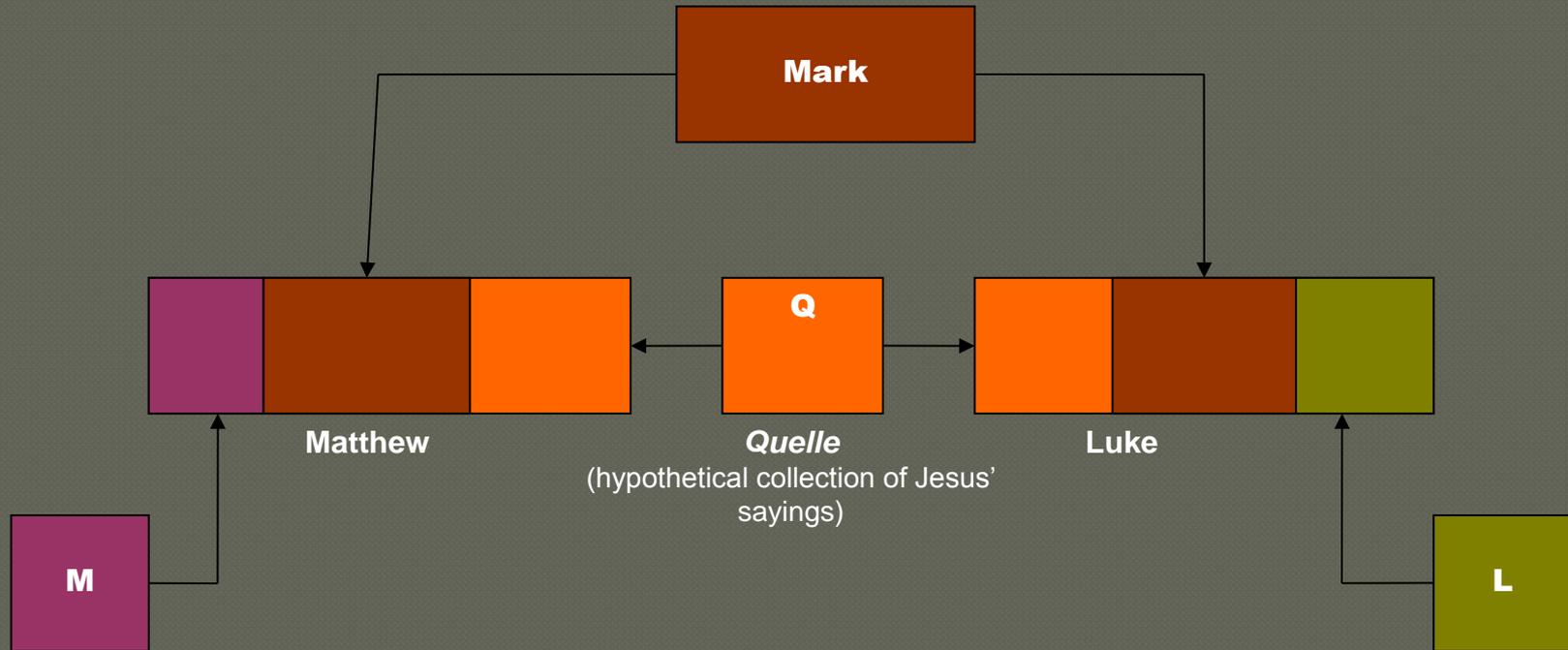
- Matthew, Mark, and Luke are so similar that they appear to have a close literary relationship.
- The vast majority of scholars believe Mark was first and Mt and Lk drew on him for their general framework.
  - When Mt or Lk differ from Mk, they never do it in the same way.
  - Mk has fewer passages, but similar episodes are longer.
- Why Q?
  - There is frequent, nearly verbatim agreement between passages in Mt and Lk, but absent in Mk. (ex. temptation in wilderness, Lord's prayer, beatitudes, golden rule)

# Sources



- ✓ **Mark** (about 80% of Mark is used by Matthew)
  - Omits passages (from Mark) that paint Jesus or the apostles in an unfavorable light
- ✓ **Q** document (a hypothetical collection of Jesus' sayings compiled between 50-70CE containing kingdom parables, instructions to disciples, and prophecies)
- ✓ **M** (Matthean source) Uses his own source of sayings and parables (20:1-6 vineyard & laborers) and many kingdom pronouncements such as in Ch 13 (24-30, 44-45, 47-52)
- ✓ Birth and post-resurrection narratives are also distinct.

# The two document theory



This theory attempts to explain the literary relationship between the synoptic gospels. Mark and Q are the major sources. In addition, both Matthew and Luke include information unique to their own accounts.

# Community

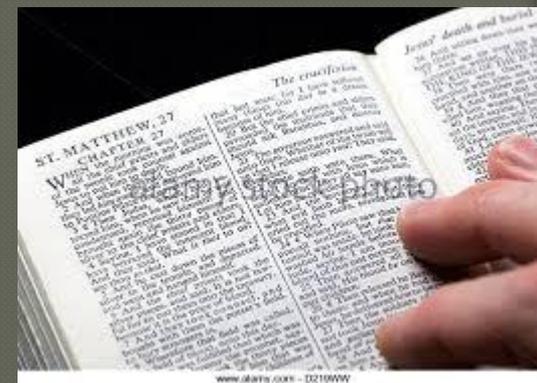


- Urban Jewish-Christian community with knowledge of Jewish customs
- Largely Gentile, with a Jewish population
- Greek speaking
- More prosperous than Jesus' disciples
- Asking questions after destruction of the Jerusalem temple
  - “How is God present with us?”
  - “What is the continuing value of Torah?”
  - “How will God fulfill God's promises to Israel if not all Jews have believed?”

# Style

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- Doubling characters and events (x2)
  - Two blind men (20:29–34)
  - Two sayings on divorce (5:31–32; 19:9)
  - Jesus sits on two donkeys (21:6–7)
- Jesus shows less human weakness
  - Compare Matt. 13:58 and Mark 6:5
- Fulfillment of Scripture citations
  - 1:22–23; 4:14–16; 12:17–21, etc.
- Five “Great Speeches” Jesus gives
  - Like five books of Torah from Moses



# Unique to Matthew

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- Visit of the Magi and flight to Egypt (2:1–21)
- Peter's example highlighted
  - Peter tries to walk on water (14:28–31)
  - Peter receives a blessing (16:17–19; cf. Mark 8:32–33)
  - Receives keys to kingdom (16:19)
- Only Gospel reference to “the church” (16:17–19; 18:15–20)



THE BOOK OF T  
of Jesus Christ,  
the son of Abra  
gat Isaac; and Isa  
Jacob begat Juda  
and Judas begat

Thamar; and Phares begat Esron  
Aram; and Aram begat Aminad  
begat Neasson; and Neasson begat

# Themes in Matthew

- Most Jewish of the four gospels in content and style, but often seen as hostile to Jewish leaders
- Most extensive coverage of Jesus' teaching – instruction manual
- Presents Jesus as the Son of God – Baptism (3:17); Transfiguration (17:5)
- Presents disciples more kindly than Mark – failures elicit gentle responses from Jesus
- Women are important from the beginning of his Gospel (genealogy). Faithful, female disciples are present for important events
- Only Gospel that explicitly uses the word “church” – non-hierarchical – shared leadership
- Thematically links the OT with the NT
  - Begins with a genealogy that highlights prominent heroes of Israel
    - Three sets of 14 generations imply God's hand
      - 14 generations from Abraham to David,
      - 14 generations from David to Babylonian exile
      - 14 generations from exile to Jesus
    - Also includes four (non-Hebrew) women (Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba)
  - Underscores Jesus' fulfillment of ancient prophecies more than the others (from conception to death and resurrection)
  - Chapter 13:51-53 concisely shows the merging of the old and new.
    - *'Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.' When Jesus had finished these parables, he left that place.*

# Structure: Formula quotations

- 14 quotations follow a similar formula to highlight the fulfillment of prophecy. (14 like generation sets in genealogy)
- 1:22-23 “And all this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet...”

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. 1:22-23: virgin birth                     | 8. 8:17: Jesus heals the sick                   |
| 2. 2:5-6: born in Bethlehem                  | 9. 12:17-21: God's servant, gentle, to Gentiles |
| 3. 2:15b: called out of Egypt                | 10. 13:14-15: People harden their hearts        |
| 4. 2:17-18: massacre of the innocents        | 11. 13:35: Parables used to reveal secrets      |
| 5. 2:23b: Jesus will come from Nazareth      | 12. 21:4-5: Jesus rides donkey into Jerusalem   |
| 6. 3:3: John prepares the way                | 13. 26:56: Disciples desert Jesus               |
| 7. 4:14-16: A light in Galilee (to Gentiles) | 14. 27:9-10: 30 pieces of silver paid to Judas  |

# Outline

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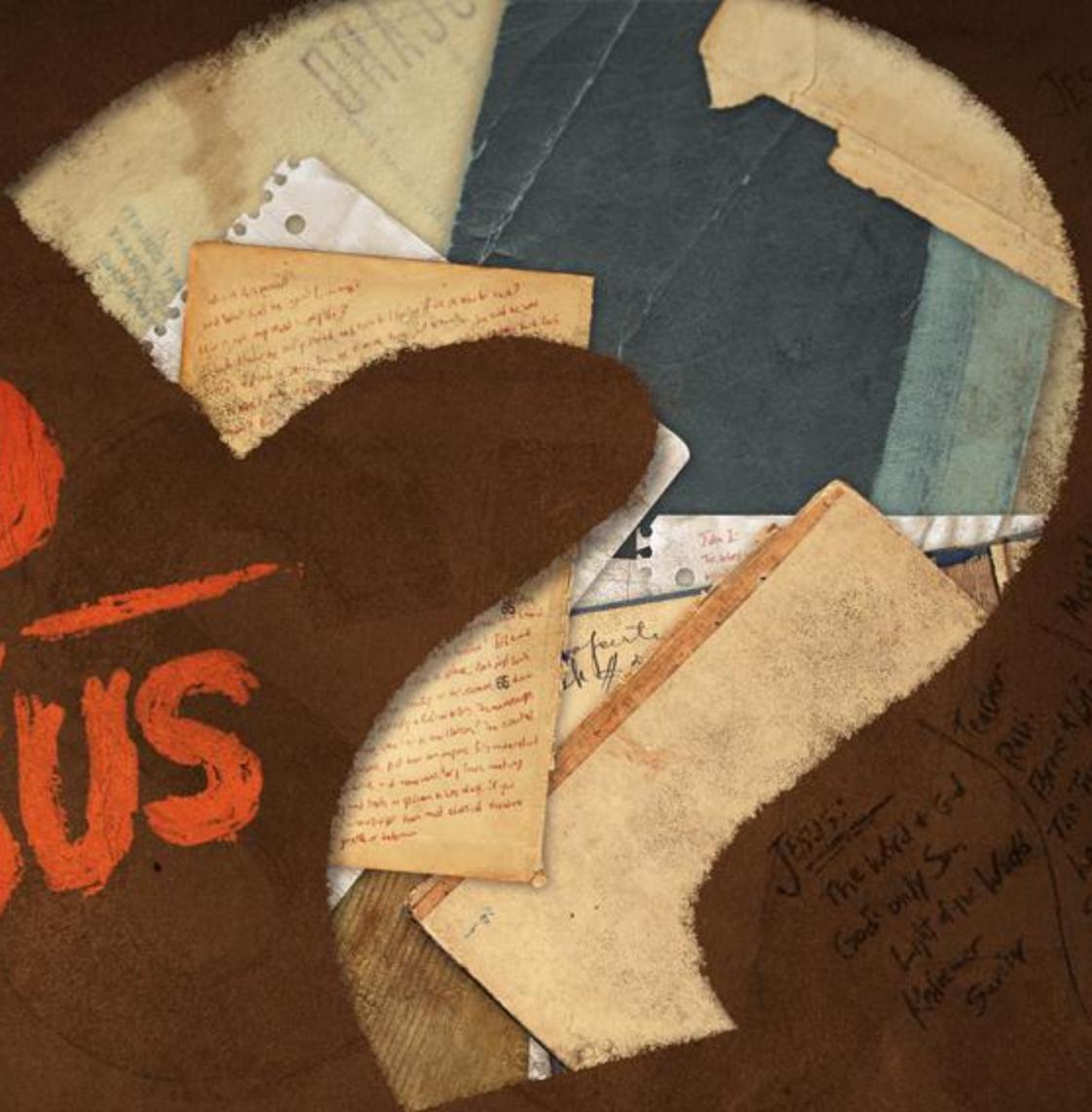
- ◉ Introduction: Who Jesus is (1:1–4:16)
- ◉ Jesus' ministry to Israel (4:17–16:20)
- ◉ Journey to Jerusalem (16:21–28:20)

Passion

Resurrection



# WHO IS JESUS



Jesus:  
The Light of the World  
God only Son  
Light of the World  
Redeemer  
Savior

Teacher  
Ruler  
Bread of Life  
The True Vine  
Lamb of God  
Son of man  
The King of the Jews  
The U...

The...

...

Morals  
I have a beard  
Seed of David



# Jesus' birth in Matthew



- Matthew and Luke are the only sources in the NT that say anything about Jesus' birth.
- In Matthew (and Luke) if the birth stories are removed it doesn't affect the rest of the Gospel.
- Begins with genealogy of Jesus, including 4 (foreign) women – Gospel will eventually be preached to all people
- Matthew emphasizes parallels between Moses and Jesus, the central figures in the Old Covenant (Testament) and New Covenant (Testament)
  - Herod's massacre of the innocents (Mt 2:16-18) like Pharaoh's slaughter of Hebrew boys
  - Jesus being called out of Egypt (Hosea 11:1; Mt 2:15)
- The visit of the wise men in Matthew foreshadows Jesus' message going to the Gentiles.

# Jesus' ministry

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- Begins at the same point as Mark, with John's baptism, but emphasizes Jesus' superiority over John.
  - *Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, 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 it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.' Then he consented. (3:13-15)*
- Temptation of the devil is filled out with three temptations (drawn from Q source)
  - The devil: Turn Stones into bread
    - *"One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." (4:4)*
  - The devil: Throw yourself down from the temple (quotes Ps 91).
    - *"Do not put the Lord your God to the test." (4:7)*
  - The devil offers the kingdoms of the world (like political Messiah)
    - *'Away with you, Satan! for it is written, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him." (4:9)*

# Structure: Jesus' speeches

▶ The most prominent structural feature is the five major discourses

1. Sermon on the Mount (Chs 5-7)
2. Instructions to 12 Disciples (Ch 10)
3. Parables of the Kingdom (Ch 13)
4. Instructions to the Church (Ch 18)
5. Warnings of Final Judgment (Chs 23-25)

- Echoes the five books of the Torah
- Each discourse ends with a similar formula:
  - “When Jesus had finished saying these things...”



# 1. Jesus' Sermon on the Mount

## Chapter 5

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- First and most important of the discourses
- The Beatitudes – summary of the New Law
  - Challenges idea of people who have a special relationship with God
  - Moses delivered Old Law on Mt Sinai; Jesus delivers the New Law on a mountain
- The Antitheses
  - A set of six. Dealing with common understanding of Mosaic (Torah) law



# Jesus' Sermon on the Mount ~ Chapter 6



- Contrasts false piety with true piety (don't be hypocritical)
  - Give secretly
  - Don't pray long-winded prayers (example of Lord's prayer)
  - Don't show off when you are fasting
- Contrast false and correct orientation toward God
  - Lay up treasures in heaven
  - The eye is the lamp of the body
  - No one can serve two masters
  - Consider the birds of the air and the lilies of the field
  - Seek first the kingdom of God

# Jesus' Sermon on the Mount

## Chapter 7

- Sayings about human conduct
  - Don't judge: Speck vs. plank
  - Don't throw pearls to swine
  - Ask, seek, knock, and you will receive
  - Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.
- A series of warnings concludes the sermon.
  - Narrow gate vs. broad road
  - Trees are known by their fruit
  - Not everyone who says Lord, Lord...
  - Build your house on the rock, not on the sand
  - Be doers, not just hearers



# Jesus' Sermon on the Mount

## (Chs 5-7)

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- Similar to Luke's "sermon on the plain" (7:17-7:1)
- Emphasizes the radical difference of Jesus' messiahship with the political conception.
- What is the kingdom?: peace, service, endurance in doing good.
- He acts like a greater Moses and offers a higher righteousness.
- The Beatitudes (blessings; happinesses)
  - Asserts that some kinds of people enjoy a unique kind of divine favor.
  - Reverses Dt. and Proverbs idea that the blessed enjoy wealth and happiness and poverty and suffering are a sign of divine punishment.
  - God takes the side of those suffering grief or loss.
  - These are the people to whom Jesus addresses his ministry.
- Jesus emphasizes the ethical core behind many of Moses' commandments.
  - The message is to fulfill the law even more strictly, not to put it aside.
- Jesus' antitheses (found only in Matthew)

# Jesus' antitheses (found only in Matthew)

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- Jesus makes an initial statement (thesis) which he then follows with an apparently opposing idea (the antithesis).
- Jesus looks beyond the literal application of a Torah command to seek a more effective way to obey the principle it embodies
- External observation of the Law is not enough

5:38-41 'You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." 39But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; 40and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; 41and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. 42Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

# Conclusion to the Sermon on the Mount

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- The Sermon on the Mt ends with a comparison between the traditional teachers and Jesus.
  - Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as their scribes. (7:28-29)



## 2. Instructions to the Twelve

(Chapter 10)

- Disciples are to go only to Jews (in other gospels, Jesus spends time among Samaritans himself.)
- The persecutions the disciples would face, seem to refer to the time the Gospel was written more than to the time when Jesus was working with his disciples.
- A strong tone of judgment and the end of the world
- Gehenna: translated as “hell” in English refers to garbage dump outside of Jerusalem where there was a fire always burning. It was also a site of human sacrifice in ancient Israel (Jeremiah 7:32, 1 Kings 11:7).



# 3. Parables of the Kingdom

## (Chapter 13)

- It is sandwiched between Jesus' alienation of his family and Jesus' rejection in his hometown (Nazareth).
- First, there is public teaching, then private.
- Jesus' disciples understand (13:16-17, 51-52), Unlike the ignorant disciples in Mark's account



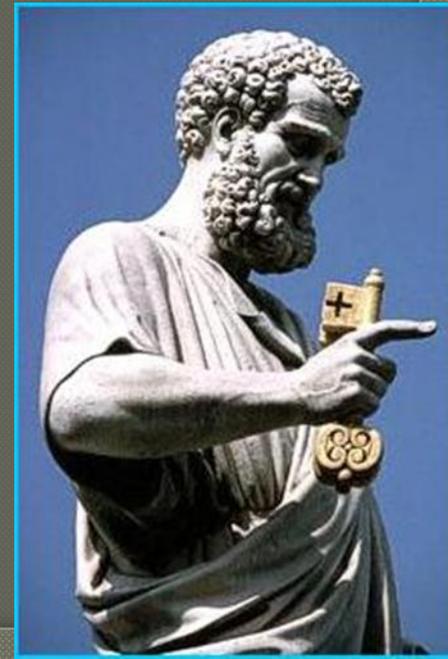
- **Parable:** a short story drawn from ordinary life that makes a comparison with a religious message
  - ✓ To confuse outsiders and to present truths about the kingdom to insiders (disciples) in ways that show how God works
  - ✓ Unbelievers do not “get” the parables because they lack the eyes and ears of faith
  - ✓ Disciples are blessed with the vision that comes with faith in Jesus
- **Allegory:** a story in which people, things, events have symbolic meanings that represent something else



# 4. Instructions to the Church

(Ch 18)

- Various sayings of Jesus are put together and applied to the Christian community of the writer's time.
- A prescription for a Christian community
- Includes many literary forms
  - Hyperbole (millstone around neck: 6-7, cut off foot:8-9)
  - Parable (lost sheep: 12-14 & unforgiving debtor: 23-35)
  - Advice on supervising troublesome people (15-17)
  - Prophetic promises (10, 18-20)
  - Direct commands (22)



# 5. Warnings of Final Judgments

(Chs 23-25)

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- ▶ According to Matthew, Jesus blames the Pharisees for everything.
- ▶ The destruction of the Jerusalem and the temple is all on their shoulders. (23:35-36)
- ▶ In the passion narrative, all four gospels place the blame on the Jewish leaders rather than on the Romans.
- ▶ The second half of this discourse seems to be based on Mark 13.

# Matthew's Passion and Resurrection Narratives



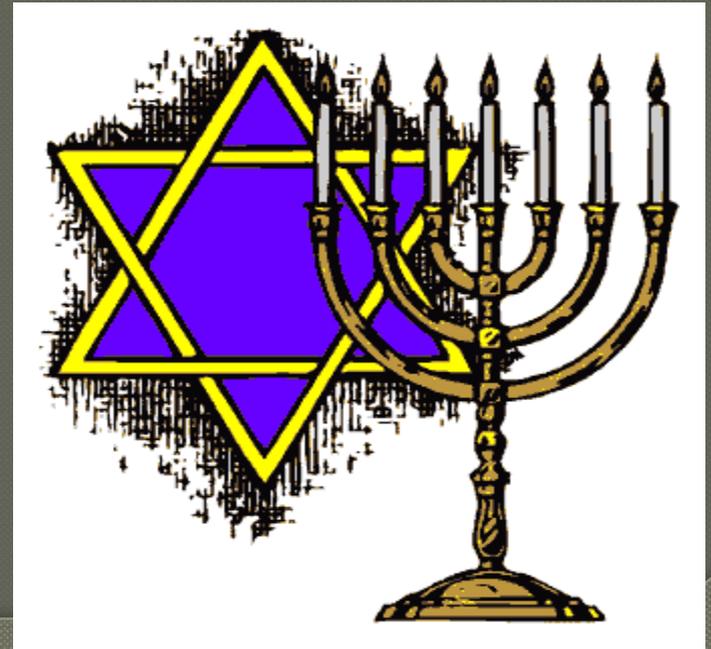
# Matthew's Passion Narrative

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- Judas is paid 30 pieces of silver, returns it and hangs himself. Money used to buy “the potter’s field.”
- Jews condemn themselves in Matthew’s version.
  - So when Pilate saw that he could do nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took some water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, ‘I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.’ Then the people as a whole answered, ‘His blood be on us and on our children!’ So he released Barabbas for them; and after flogging Jesus, he handed him over to be crucified. (27:24-36)
- Verses such as these have been used at times over the past 2,000 years to fuel anti-Semitism (persecution of Jews).

# Jesus Challenges Judaism

- **Matthew 23** critical of Judaism
- ✓ Jesus criticizes the scribes and Pharisees for their arrogance
- ✓ Strong language reflects *religious turmoil within Judaism in the 80's*
- ✓ Matthew trying to convince Jews that Jesus fulfills the promises made to Israel
- ✓ Not *anti-Semitic* language



# Matthew's Passion Narrative

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- In general, Matthew follows Mark's account, but emphasizes fulfillment of prophecy and condemnation of the Jewish leaders, especially the Pharisees.
- It's ironic that Matthew emphasizes forgiveness in the sermon on the Mt, but does not seem to apply it to the Jews who have rejected Jesus.
- Matthew adds Roman guards to the tomb scenes. Resurrection is more strongly demonstrated.
- Matthew shows the examples of women being obedient about spreading the good news that he is alive.
- Rumor that disciples stole Jesus' body refuted
- Disciples commissioned to make disciples around the world implying no immediate second return of Jesus

# Resurrection in Matthew

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- ◉ 2 resurrection appearances
- ◉ Conclusion – final instructions

