

I & II Maccabees

By his death in 323 BC, Alexander the Great conquered the world and Seleucid is the name of the Greek dynasty that ruled in Syria following Alexander's death. There was a Jewish revolt against the Seleucid ruler, Antiochus /Pwho outlawed Judaism and tried to eradicate Judaism (165-161 BC). So, from the time of Ptolemy in 323 BC until Antiochus IV in 165 BC, the Jews faced much interference in terms of the hellinization (spread of Greek thought) of culture, politics and economy from Egypt. Some Jews eagerly accepted it while others resisted hellinization. The term "Maccabean" came to designate the period of Jewish History that witnesses the successful revolt against the Seleucids many years after hellinization. Whereas many Jews were willingly absorbed in Hellenistic society, others firmly resisted the process.

Pompey conquered Palestine for Rome in 67-63 BC. Herod the Great takes the city by force and his long reign (37 BC- 4 BC) is met with ambitious building programs- including a massive reconstruction of the Temple. Ezra and Nehemiah built in the 6th century.

A preview to the New Testament:

Politics: Herod the Great, son of Idumean Antipater, was declared King of Judea by the Roman Senate in 37 BC. He continued as King until his death in 4 BC. He was King when Jesus was born. When he died, his sons became tetrarch, or "ruler of a quarter". One of these sons, Herod Antipas became ruler over Galilee from 4 BC to 39 AD. This is Herod that Luke refers to in his gospel. Tiberius Caesar was the Emperor in Rome and he reigned from 14 AD to 37 AD. Pontius Pilate was the prefect of Judea from 26 AD —36 AD. Josephus, the Jewish Historian, recalls that Pilate was greedy and ruthless and had little regard for the Jewish population.

In 64-65 AD following a major fire in Rome, the Emperor Nero persecutes Christians there. Peter and Paul are martyred in Rome. About thirty years after Jesus' death and resurrection, the Palestinian Jews rose in armed revolt against Rome from 66-73 AD. The Romans thoroughly destroyed the Jews. Vespasian was the commander of that army. After Nero committed suicide in 68 AD, Vespasian was declared emperor leaving his son Titus in charge of the Jewish War.

So, Jesus was born during the reign of Herod the Great and was therefore born before 4 BC. Most scholars say he was born between 7-4 BC because Herod mandated the slaughter of all children under the age of two. If Jesus lived and died during the reign(s) of Herod Antipas and Pontius Pilate, as well as the high priesthood of Caiaphas, he died between 26- 37 AD.

Religion of Jesus' Time:

Annas was high priest from 4 AD- 15 AD and was succeeded by his son-in-law Caiaphas from 18 AD- 36 AD.

Pharisees- scholars of Law, preserved oral traditions in the Talmud. Completely dedicated to the Mosaic Torah and applying it to daily life. Gentiles and women were considered outside the law. They are opponents to Jesus for their interpretation of the Law. They want the law adhered to while Jesus wants faithfulness with the law.

Sadducees- Hated the Pharisees and did not accept the Talmud. They were the Jewish upper class that controlled the temple and priesthood. They cooperated with the Romans to preserve their status in the temple. Caiaphas was a Sadducee. The Sadducees made up the Sanhedrin Council that was the highest court of religious law.

Essenes- radical group. They abandoned life and went to the desert to purify the Torah. Said Pharisees and Sadducees were hypocrites. John the Baptist was probably an Essene. The Dead Sea Scrolls have provided much new information about this group in the past 60 years.

Zealots- political group interested in social justice. They plotted an overthrow of the Romans and felt God wanted them to have their own land. Simon, one of the Apostles, was labeled a Zealot.

Most Jews, however, were just like Jesus, faithful peasants who tried to live the Law.

Jesus in History Books

1) Suetonius. A Roman historian who reported that Claudius (41-54 AD) had expelled Jews from Rome because of trouble arising from "Crestus" and because of Jewish-Christian missionaries coming to Rome. Acts refers to this (18:2)

2) Flavius Josephus: 1st century Jewish historian. Says that:

"Jesus, a wise man, doer of wonderful works and teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew Jews to him and when Pilate condemned him to the cross, those that loved him first believed that he appeared to them on the third day. And the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day."

He also alludes to the Talmud (Jewish oral tradition), which condemns Jesus for sorcery, and leading Israel astray. The Talmud states that "Jesus led people astray by his apostasy. Whoever has anything to say in his defense let him come and declare it. As nothing was brought forward, he was hanged on Passover Eve."

3) Pliny the Younger. Roman governor of Bithynia (north-central Turkey) from 111-115 AD. Wrote to another emperor Trajan for advice about dealing with: "Christians who refused to participate in emperor worship." Instead they "partake of a meal and sing a hymn to Christ, as if to a God." Cities, villages and rural districts have been "thoroughly infected by this seditious cult."

4) Tacitus. Roman Historian written around 115 AD. He has a blatant distaste for Christians: "They got their name from Christ, who was executed by sentence of the procurator Pontius Pilate in the reign of Tiberius. That checked the pernicious superstition for a short time, but it broke out afresh- not only in

Judea, where the plague first arose, but in Rome itself, where all the shameful and horrible things in the world collect and find a home."

The Canon of the New Testament

Canon- "measuring stick". An established rule for guidance, a standard, or a list of rules. In biblical use it is the catalogue of inspired writings known as the Old and New Testaments, identified by the Church. Determined, in part, by usage and habit. In the act of canonization, the Church declares that certain books are divinely enabled testimony to a divinely given revelation. Bishop Athanasius issued a definitive NT canon in 367 AD.

Four Criteria for NT Canonicity (why certain books were eventually accepted into the NT Canon, but others were rejected):

1. Apostolic Origin — attributed to and/or based on the preaching/teaching of the first-generation apostles (or their closest companions).
2. Universal Acceptance — acknowledged by all major Christian communities in the Mediterranean world (by the end of the fourth century).
3. Liturgical Use — read publicly along with the OT when early Christians gathered for the Lord's Supper (their weekly worship services).
4. Consistent Message — containing theological ideas compatible with other accepted Christian writings (including the divinity and humanity of Jesus). Is the life, death and resurrection of Jesus central?

The act of canonization was a unique act of coming to self-awareness on the part of the primitive church. Because the early Christians were dying and because uneven accounts of the identity of Jesus arose quite

early, the church, in order to safeguard revelation, was eager to identify and believe in the books of primary witnesses. It enabled the church to define herself once and for all as the church of these scriptures- a church of the New Testament. These 27 books are the Church of the New Testament. They wrote not to communicate theological principles, but rather their experience of the risen Lord. From the early centuries until Trent, the assembled writings of Paul and the 4 gospels always remained constant. From the beginning, the church saw herself and her identity in these books not by inference of factual data, but rather through the identity of the church. It is canonizing a canon based on an intuitive inner canon- The Paschal Mystery. Although our official canon was formally pronounced by the Council of Trent in 1546, local councils (not ecumenical) dating back to the fifth century in North Africa and the writings of early Popes affirmed canons.

Some terms to know:

The Gospel of Thomas- a collection of 114 sayings of Jesus discovered in Egypt in 1945. Most of the sayings appear in the 4 Gospels. Thomas is an example of "collection of sayings" documents that circulated after Jesus.

"Q"- The most famous collection source. This source is called Q from the German word "quelle" which means source. Because of the verbal overlap of the three synoptic Gospels, a hypothetical Q is basically all the sayings of Jesus found in the three synoptic Gospels. Many scholars believed this source was composed by Christian missionaries who traveled from village to village announcing the KOG is at hand. Because lots of people were aware of Christ's death and resurrection, this source was meant to nourish the beginner's faith by showing Jesus' power in word and deed.

Dead Sea Scrolls- found in 1948 in the ancient Qumran community close to the Dead Sea in Palestine. Written between 170 BC and 68 AD. Contain no trace of any of the principal doctrines of Christianity. Rather, the Dead Sea Scrolls reveal the existence of an ascetical community, the Essenes, in first century Palestine.

Didache- the Teachings of the Twelve Apostles. A first century document written before 100 AD. It is a two-part volume that preserves a manual of primitive church disciplines perhaps dating back to apostolic times. It was considered scripture for many centuries and hovered on the fringe of NT canon. The didache and other writings of the time became what are known as the "Apostolic Fathers" along with the Epistle of Barnabas, Shepherd of Hermes, Epistles of Clement and Ignatius and Polycarp. In fact Ignatius wrote many letters to several early church communities in the early 2nd century. Specifically, the didache contained the following: 1) Way of Life and Way of Death, 2) liturgical meaning of baptism, fasting, confession and Holy Communion, 3) how to do ministry.

Talmud- a collection of laws, regulations and other materials that, after the Hebrew Scriptures, is the authoritative religious document of Judaism. It includes Mishnah, a collection of legal interpretations and practices from the Pharisees and other respected teachers. The Gemara is a commentary on the Mishnah. Finally collected and arranged during the fourth century AD.

3 Stages of Gospel Formation

- 1) Historical Ministry of Jesus of Nazareth- approximately 30-33 AD. What Jesus said and did and what the apostles saw and heard.
- 2) Oral Preaching Stage- 33-70 AD. After Pentecost, the Apostles spread the message of Jesus- Acts 1:8. Stories of people converting to the faith and the start of early Christian communities.
- 3) Writing Stage- 70-125 AD.

Jesus did not leave behind any writings (except in sand). After the resurrection and Pentecost, there was very little pressure to write because in Jerusalem the presence of the twelve apostles teaching by word of mouth was sufficient. So, why did the early Christians start writing?

- A) In 49 AD, the Church decided to accept Gentile converts directly without first requiring them to become Jews. St. Paul's relationship with the Galatians is a prime example of this.
- B) An increasing distance, in space and time, from the Jesus experience and early preaching. Eventually the 12 would die and the finer points of the Jesus story would be lost. There was a natural impulse to write down what they saw and heard before they died.
- C) An increase in heresy. Individuals choosing an interpretation of Jesus that was not consistent or taught by the whole church
- D) A desire to encourage those facing persecution.

Synoptic Gospels

This refers to the similarities of the Matthew Mark and Luke. Synoptic means "to look through one eye" or "to see together". Side by side, Matthew, Mark and Luke are very similar in terms of chronology, order, sequence and selection of stories. There are many overlaps, but many of the stories are the same and word for word. Did they all have the same source? Did they write together? If a story appears in these three gospels does that make it truer than the other stories? Examples of this are 1) The Confession of Peter, 2) The Transfiguration of Jesus, 3) The Healing of Jarius' Daughter.

Synoptic Problem

The synoptic problem is a way to explain the differences and similarities that exist among the three gospels. In the 19th century, German scholars came up with a "source theory" that is widely accepted as true Biblical scholarship. While many source theories are around and have much evidence to support them, the German source theory seems to carry the most weight.

What is it?

- 1) Matthew and Luke always agree with each other in order of events only when they agree with Mark. This is called triple tradition because it is in all three gospels.

Example: The Confession of Peter Mark 8:27-33, Matt 16:13-23, Luke 9:18-22. Example: Picking Grain on the Sabbath Mark 2: 23-28, Matt 12: 1-8, Luke 6:1-5.

- 2) When Matthew and Luke do not follow Mark, they do not agree with each other. This is called double tradition because it appears in two gospels.

- 3) Therefore, Matthew and Luke had access to another source besides Mark when writing their respective gospels. This other hypothetical source is known as "Q" which is German for Quelle, which means "source." Some scholars believe that the Gospel of Thomas is an example of a source Matthew and Luke could have used.

4) Mark, therefore, was the first to write an orderly account of Jesus. He gathered parables, miracles and the passion stories and strung them together like beads of a necklace. When Matthew and Luke's communities received a copy of Mark, they synthesized it with their copy of the "Q".

5) Finally, Matthew and Luke also put in selections that are unique only to that particular gospel.

And Finally...

1) The Gospels are not so much what Jesus said and did (like a current biography), but rather who he is now-the risen Lord. Everyone knew that Jesus of Nazareth existed and was crucified and died, but what did that mean to him or her? Therefore, the gospels contain what is necessary to know about salvation, not biographical info about Jesus.

2) The Gospels are written through the lens of the resurrection and the joy of Pentecost. Without the experiences of these two things, nothing would have happened in the first place. The writers had a post-resurrection insight about Jesus, an insight not found while he was alive. Therefore, a selection and synthesis of apostolic tradition result in a non-literal account of what Jesus said and did. For example, the birth narrative prove not so much the time and place of the birth of the Messiah, but rather the birth as directly related to his death and resurrection

3) The Gospels (and New Testament) are products of an established Church (or separate communities). The earliest writings of this church are actually the letters attributed to St. Paul in the early 50's AD. The early Christian church was not a church of the book. St. Paul never mentions Jesus' birth, his deeds or miracles, but rather that Jesus had a Last Supper and mentions the body and blood, died and rose from the dead and appeared to his followers, Paul included.

4) The Gospels were written to communities that had different needs. We must know the community that each gospel was written to and how it addressed their needs. Once we know that, the discovery of the author's intent and style will also help us understand the theological in tent of the author.

The Gospel of Mark 65- 70 AD "Why Do You Say That I Am?"

1:1 "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ...,

1) Good News which Jesus brings

2) Jesus is the Good News

MK wants us to understand both. As readers, MK lets us in on the special insight that is unavailable to characters in the gospel. These moments of special insight tell us Jesus really was. "... the Son of God"

A son just like the Davidic King

Literally the son of God

MK understands it as both. Even though Jesus was consistent between "my" and "your" Father, he was not inviting the disciples to share with him his sonship. The disciples' sonship depended upon Jesus and his Paschal Mystery, which in the Gospel they have not yet seen or experienced.

Mark's Community

MK writes to Gentile Christian community probably in Rome. These people are not Jews and thus considered outside the Law and have just recently come to Christianity. In Rome, they suffer persecution, just as Jesus in MK will suffer persecution. The Gospel centers around (or rather leads up to) the event at the cross that symbolizes pain and suffering. Just as Jesus suffered, so to the readers are suffering. However, MK makes it very clear that discipleship or "picking up your cross" like Jesus is what is needed.

Mark's Style

MK prefers quick action to long speeches. Mark has constant scene changes and Jesus never sits down to rest. MK is so focused on the cross that everything prior to that is secondary. MK prefers his action in 3's

- 1) Three boat scenes 4:35-41, 6:45-52, and 8:14-21.
- 2) Three passion predictions more detailed than the next (8:31, 9:31, 10:32).
- 3) Three commands to "keep watch" by sleeping disciples.
- 4) Three times Peter denies Jesus.
- 5) Three times Pilate asks the crowd questions.
- 6) Three fold pattern of called, chosen and sent that happens three times
- 7) Three time intervals on cross of the 3rd, 6th, and 9th hours.

Why does MK do this? To keep action going and keep a frantic pace to the cross.

1:10-11 No people hear the voice from heaven except Jesus- shhhhhh!! special insight. 1:12-13 Jesus is tempted in the desert

1:15 Jesus' first words and his central theme to his preaching and teaching once again stressing the need of urgency and discipleship.

1: 16-20 Call of first disciples- they are very willing and leave their nets. Do you think Jesus knew them before this?

Chapters 2 and 3 The Plot Thickens

Five stories on controversy

- 1) 2:1-12 forgiveness of sins, 2) 2:13-17 Jesus eats with sinners 3) 2: 18-22 concern about fasting 4) 2:23-28 Sabbath law violation 5) 3:1-6 healing on the Sabbath What is the point of these stories? In 2:

21-22 Jesus says that their brains are like wine skins- that new information cannot be poured in or their heads may explode. IE- Jesus' new teaching is not accepted by the old leaders of faith.

3:6 First Turning Point of the Gospel

Shhhh!!!! Special Insight. The plot to kill Jesus comes very early in his ministry.

3:14-19 An announcement of the coming passion. More special insight because we know we will turn him over. Now the gospel is under the shadow of the cross because a sure death is to follow.

3 Great Miracles

- 1) Calming of the Storm 4:35-41. In vs. 40-41, the apostles do not even know who he is.
- 2) Gerasene Demoniac 5: 1-20.
- 3) Jarius* Daughter and Woman With Hemorrhage 5: 21-43. These are stories of faith.

Result of the Miracles? REJECTION

6: 1-6 Second Turning Point of the Gospel

People reject Jesus in his own hometown. They think they know who he is, but really have no idea about his identity. The question of Jesus' identity is crucial to MK because MK wants the reader to know that Jesus' true identity is found on the cross- something that humans in his story cannot comprehend.

Bread and Misunderstanding in 6: 51-52 and 8: 14-21.

Bread is broken just as Jesus will be broken. The apostles do not understand this. 8: 22-26 Healing of the Blind Man

The irony here is that the blind man can see with the eyes of faith, but the apostles, who can see, do not recognize Jesus' identity. The man's physical blindness=Apostles' spiritual blindness.

8: 27-33 Third Turning Point of the Gospel- "Who do you say that I am?" Peter's Confession

Peter is correct in his response, but his answer is not sufficient because he has not seen and experienced the entire story. Peter does not understand that for Jesus to be the messiah, the messiah must suffer and die. Peter's messiah does not involve death. The secret is out! However, the secret does not stay out long because Jesus tells the apostles to keep quiet. Just as he ordered the demons in chapters 2&3 to keep quiet, he tells the apostles the same thing.

Discipleship

Discipleship is the central paradox of MK's gospel. In order to save your life, you must lose it. Jesus refuses to save his own life and instead make the hasty journey to the cross. By dying, he actually saves his life. The apostles do not want a suffering, beaten messiah. And because of this, they misunderstand his identity throughout the entire gospel. The demons know more than the apostles. Discipleship followed by misunderstanding is theme in MK. Jesus' family (3:21-35), the crowds (4:10-12), the Gerasenes (5:17), his home town (6:1-6) and the religious leaders (7:6, 8: 11-12) all misunderstand him.

So, Jesus teaches them what true discipleship is: 3 Passion Predictions 8:31, 9:31, 10:32-34

After the second prediction in 9:31, the disciples are afraid to ask Jesus what he meant. They do not even discuss it. Instead they want to know who among them is the greatest. They do not realize that the greatness Jesus is talking about will be when he reigns from the cross. After the third prediction, the apostles continue to misunderstand him. Instead, James and John are more concerned about their place in heaven. They wonder who gets the best seat. Jesus reteaches that he reigns from the cross.

Chapters 11-13 The Final Week of Jesus' Life

Apocalypse now or later. These chapters are strings on continuous teaching aimed at the suffering of the early church in Rome. Knowing that the Romans destroyed the temple in 70 AD and now Christians are openly persecuted throughout the kingdom, MK addresses this issue and interjects some advice. In 11:7-11, MK introduces the theme "Son of David". People are hoping that Jesus will overthrow the Roman government and rule forever. The messiah would reestablish the rule of David. But, how does Jesus enter into Jerusalem? In 11: 27-33, the Jewish leaders plot to kill him because of the disturbance he made in the temple.

Chapter 14-16 Formal Passion Account

The passion account of MK includes the betrayal of Judas, the Last Supper, and the Mount of Olives. It is a very dark scene the whole gospel has been leading up to. Many themes build the climax such as power/conflict, discipleship/abandonment, and identity/authority. In 14:46-50, MK has the apostles all fleeing showing their complete failure in understanding his rule from the cross. The Gentile Christians reading this already know that Peter died a martyr's death in Rome. So, as Peter fails at times following Jesus, he eventually redeems himself by dying for Christ.

In the passion, Jesus is a passive and beaten messiah. Others control his fate and the only words he speaks are "I am" to the high priest that is met by his clothes being ripped off. They hand him from one to the next-Judas to the Jewish leaders to Pilate- all showing that Jesus' death is coming.

On the cross, Jesus, after suffering abandonment even calls out to God wondering if He is there- "My God , my God, why have you forsaken me?"

The crucifixion is the central paradox to MK. Jesus is true messiah because he loses his life to save it. He is mocked as being the "King of the Jews", but in actuality he is the king. If he comes down from the cross, he would be admitting that death IS more powerful than life. Just as the heavens opening for him in 1:11, they close at his death. It is a very grueling death full of emotion and humanness.

Climax of the Gospel 15:39

The Roman Centurion's statement is why we have been reading 15 chapters. Finally someone other than the demons in 2&3 recognize Jesus for who he is- the Son of God who must suffer and die. For people reading this being persecuted for their faith, it speaks volumes. If a Roman Centurion can get it- so can I. Jesus is messiah because he suffered and died. I, too, must take up my cross and follow him recognizing that suffering is part of life.

Resurrection

16:1-8 Jesus promises to meet them in Galilee. Gospel probably ended here. Why no resurrection stories? Remember the theme of MK is discipleship and the cross. The community already knew he rose from the dead, but what got him to his passion will strike a cord with these people. They know he died, but why did he die?

16: 9-20 Jesus appears to Mary Magdalene and two unnamed women who are filled with terror and unable to speak and cope with the resurrection. Most scholars agree that these verses were added much later in the 2nd century.

v. 20 say that we must spread the Good News.

The Gospel of Matthew 85 AD "Emmanuel"

About 90% of MK is repeated in MT. MT takes most of MK and develops it into a fuller narrative.
Matthew's Community

Jewish Christians who know the Old Law and all of scripture. These people still practice Jewish feasts and customs. Unfortunately, the Jews at temple do not accept them because they follow Jesus. They are also not accepted by some Gentile-Christians because they still go to the temple.

Salvation History

This is the way we see God's activity in history through words and deeds in the light of faith. MT reads the OT from a Christian perspective and reinterprets OT passages. The theological theme of Deuteronomy- Kings is fulfilled in Matthew. To MT, Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT prophecy. That is

why there are over 60 references to the OT and MT in intentional at looking at OT with new faith and understanding.

Why did MT write when MK was around?

MK's gospel, although complete was not adequate enough the answer the questions that MT's community was facing. Each Christian community, like a local parish, has different needs and disputes that need to be settled. So, MT rewrites MK for a new situation and new community.

The Genealogy of Matthew 1:1-17

MT wants to show that Jesus is the true Jewish messiah and true Davidic king by tracing his lineage back to that first covenant associated with salvation history- Abraham. Jesus is a fulfillment of salvation history because he is a purebred Jew. Jesus' name is the Greek form of Joshua that means "God is salvation."

MT, unlike MK, does not have special insight for readers. The apostles know who he is in MT and even call him "lord". There is no secret to the messiah in MT. Besides that, the apostles get a much better review.

[1:23/28:20] is the Climax of the Gospel. Emmanuel, which means "God is with us", is the main theme of Matthew. Why? We shall see.

While MK has women fleeing in terror unable to speak about the resurrection, Matthew commissioned the Apostles on a mountain as teachers and keepers of the faith. To MT, Jesus is present in the Church-, which is a lived reality for those worshipping in 85 AD.

The Birth of Jesus

The birth of Jesus is told from the viewpoint of Joseph. Three basic observations:

1. In Joseph's annunciation, Matthew follows the pattern of the typical birth announcement of Isaac (Gn 17:15-21 and of Samson (Jgs 13).
2. Matthew's portrayal of Joseph who receives revelation in dreams (1:20; 2:13, 19) and who goes down to Egypt (2:14) resemble Joseph from Genesis and who went to Egypt to escape an attempt on his life (Gn 37:28).
3. Matthew's account of Herod is remarkably similar to that of Moses' escape from the Pharaoh- the Moses who, like Jesus, come out of Egypt to which Joseph had gone.

What are themes Matthew is trying to tell us? It leaves no doubt the identity of Jesus, it lets the reader know that his birth has brought him a death sentence and sets us up to better identify the tension that he will later face. Moreover, this story is the gospel (the good news of salvation) in a nutshell.

3:17 Unlike MK, MT has the voice being heard by everyone, not just Jesus. There is no special insight like MK. The genealogy and birth story have already unveiled his identity to the reader.

Backwards Christology

Titles for Jesus so far- Son of David, Abraham, God, Emmanuel, king, ruler, Nazorean, mightier one, beloved son, Christ, New Abraham, New Moses, teacher. Jesus has done no teaching preaching or healing, but we as readers know his identity, background and mission. MT also lets us know that Jesus is born in a world filled with unrest and conflict and Jesus' life is in danger even before he starts his mission. While MK tackled the issue of Jesus' identity for 16 chapters, MT tells his readers who Jesus is before the story starts.

Chapter 4 Temptation in the Desert

MK has this story in two verses, but MT includes the whole story. Jesus does not need to prove to the devil or the reader who he is by given into the Devil's request.

4:15-16 Jesus first words. His identity is fully established leaving no doubt who he is. Chapters 5-7 Sermon on the Mount

Just like Moses went up the mountain in Exodus to get the Law from God, Jesus goes up a mountain to give the Law in MT. In these 3 chapters, Jesus lays out the Kingdom of God but updating, not voiding the Law of Moses. Jesus is setting himself above (not apart) to Pharisees who see themselves as above the Law they did not create. To MT, salvation is attained by faithfulness to Jesus' teaching, not by picking up our cross, like in MK, and following him.

7:28-29 The crowds respond with astonishment.

Jesus sets forth the fact that faith is not just the law, but rather the action associated with the law. It is about inner conversion. 5:17-48 lays out his new idea of law. 7:1-27 lays out the way one should act towards others.

Jesus

Jesus comes to the Jordan 3:1-3 Jesus is called "my son" 3:13 Wilderness/testing 40/40 4:1-2 Saved from evil king 2:16-18 Grows up in another land 2:13-14

Moses

Moses comes to Red Sea Ex4:21-22 Moses is firstborn son to God Ex4:22 tested 40 years in desert Dt. 8:2 saved from evil king grows up in another land

The comparisons between Jesus and Moses are meant to show in the minds of the Jewish Christians reading/hearing the gospel that Jesus is just as good, if not better than their hero Moses. Jesus is the Great Teacher and lawgiver in MT and his miracles are secondary to his words.

Chapters 8-9

Just as Jesus showed power in word in the Sermon on the Mount, now he shows he is power in deed with ten successive miracles.

1) Leper 8:1-4, 2) Centurion's son 8:5-13, 3) Peter's mother in law 8:14-17, 4) Stilling the Storm 8:23-27, 5) Two Demoniacs 8:28-34, 6) Paralytic 9:1-8, 7) Jarius' Daughter 9:18-26, 8) Woman in Hemorrhage 9:20-22, 9) Blind Man 9:27-31, 10) Demoniac 9:31-34

Chapter 10 Calling. Commissioning. Courage. Rewards

After the words and deeds of Jesus, the 12 apostles out to drive away unclean spirits and cure disease and illness. They are not instructed to say anything because they have not witnessed the resurrection and been commissioned to teach (28:20). This is the first listing of the 12 apostles.

Chapters 11-13 Reflection. Conflict, Exclusion

11:2-19 John misunderstands who Jesus is.

11:20-24 The towns ignore him where he did most of his works

12:1-8 Picking grain on the Sabbath

12:9-14 Healing on the Sabbath

13:11-13 The parables are misunderstood.

Jesus turns his back on Israel and will now focus his time and energy on the 12 apostles. Chapter 14-16

MT follows the order of Mark with:

1) Feeding 5,000- 14:13-21, 2) Stilling the Storm- 14:22-33, 3) Healing the Daughter- 15:21-28, 4) Clean vs. Unclean- 16:5-12, 5) Peter's Confession 16:13-20

Compare with MK. In MT, Jesus still calls Peter Satan but Peter also gets the keys to the Kingdom of God. Jesus acknowledges that God has revealed all this to him. Also, compare MK 6:51-52 and MT 14:32-33- worship vs. doubt

3 Passion Predictions in 16:21, 17:22-23, and 20:17-19

Note that in the second one, the disciples do understand who Jesus is because they are upset.

19:3-9 Divorce Law. Although Jesus is great teacher and the fulfillment of the Law, he uses the Law to include Gentiles because in 85 AD, there is no temple and Jews and Gentiles were worshipping together.

Chapter 21 & 22

2 parables not in MK

1) Two Sons 21:28-31, 2) The Wedding Feast 22:1-14 God's new chosen people are the Church 21:32,43. MT acknowledges the frustrations of a community made up of Jews and Gentiles who are both Christians.

Chapter 23- rebukes/warning to Jews for lack of faith Chapter 24- second coming and judgment

Chapter 25- church parables preparing them for life without him Chapter 26-28 The Passion of Jesus Christ

MT includes: Judas hangs himself 27:3-5, Pilate's wife dream 27:19, Pilate washes his hands 27:22-24, Cry of the Jews 27:25-26

MT's passion is also dark like MK's, but Jesus' human identity and heavenly identity are fully established- therefore there is no climactic statement with the Centurion.

The Resurrection

MK had women fleeing in terror unable to cope with the resurrection. 28:1-10 has the same women, but instead they see and believe and are overjoyed.

28:16-20

Jesus finally commissions the 12 as teachers, preachers and healers because now they have seen the resurrection. They are also on a mountain signifying a major event and moment. Like any human encountering God on a mountain, they still hesitate. This not an ending but rather a beginning- "go to all the nations...I am with you until the end of the age." Emmanuel- "God is with us" With who? The Church as a lived reality in 85 AD and beyond till now. The apostles are now given the power to preach and teach as Jesus did.

MT is more than a collection of traditions about Jesus gathered together in a framework of the ministry and the passion of Jesus. MT has shaped the traditions about Jesus to address the situation of Christians who must find their way outside the original confines of Judaism. MT assures them that Jesus and his teaching bring salvation history to fulfillment. They can now go out and preach with an understanding of the old and new.

The Gospel of Luke 85 AD "Universal Messiah"

1/3 new material not found in MK or MT. Luke was a physician who followed Paul on journeys. 1:1-4 Prologue

- 1) Written to Theophilus, "dear to God". Luke is also writing to Greeks who do not know the Old Law. Therefore, Luke uses lots of Greek literary forms and styles.
- 2) 3rd generations Christians based on original eyewitnesses.
- 3) An orderly account and connected narrative. "And it came to pass" is stated 50 times. LK lets us know he has done his homework. LK lets us know that his action will be slow and deliberate. LK assures us that his account is true and authentic to the events of the past.

LK's narrative also includes the Acts of the Apostles. In Acts 1:1-2 LK starts it with, "In my first account, Theophilus..." So, the gospel and Acts were originally one long narrative of the life of Christ and the early church.

The Birth of Jesus

Luke's infancy narrative plays like an overture of themes to be used later in his story. Like MT, LK has Herod, Mary, Joseph, baby conceived by the Holy Spirit, Bethlehem and Galilee. However, LK does not have Magi, the flight to Egypt and the massacre of the infants. Why?

What does Luke have? Elizabeth and Zechariah, Simeon and Anna, hymns and canticles (Miriam?), shepherds keeping watch, no room in the inn, manger, swaddling clothes (Solomon?), and a tender portrait of the holy family, and also the boy Jesus in the Temple.

It is interesting to note that in MT has the holy family living in Bethlehem, going to Egypt and finally settling in Nazareth. In LK, the family is from Nazareth and only goes to Bethlehem for the census.

Luke's story is from the viewpoint of Mary. Mary says "yes" to the Holy Spirit and also sings a Canticle of praise and thanksgiving to God. Elizabeth is barren yet produces a child. Mary, however, as Luke tells us, is a virgin and that there is no human way she could have had a child without the work of God. Luke is adamant about this fact. Her uniqueness both physically (virgin) and spiritually (by saying yes) sets her above us in the plan of salvation. Mary is the only person to be present at the birth and death of Jesus. LK also lets the reader know that Mary knows more than you and I (and even Luke himself) in 2:19.

What are themes Luke is trying to tell us? It lets the reader know that God works in ways you know but are not used to like Isaiah 11, it lets the reader know Jesus' identity as defined by the unlikeliest of people. Luke's story is like Mary Poppins (literally)

Chapters 3 & 4

Very similar to MK and MT except for the following:

- 1) 3:1-3 LK sets Jesus in history
- 2) 3:4-6 Universal aspect of salvation
- 3) 3:23-28 Genealogy comes after John- LK goes all the way back to Adam to show the universality of the messiah-hood of Jesus. Adam is a race less man and therefore is for the whole human race.

Throughout the first part of Jesus ministry, LK, like MK, raises the question of the identity of Jesus. The worshippers in the synagogue (4:22), the worshippers in Capernaum (4:36), the scribes and Pharisees (5:21), John the Baptist (7:19), the disciples (8:25) all pose the question. So, according to LK, who is Jesus?

- 1) Prophet- both those around Herod (9:8) and the disciples suggest Jesus is a prophet (9:19). Jesus compares himself to Jonah (19:9-10) and the rejection of the prophets (11:47-52) and finally on the Road to Emmaus.
- 2) Savior- the angel announces Jesus as savior (2:11) and Mary sings about it (1:47). Salvation comes to Zacchaeus (19:9-10) and Jesus tells certain people that their faith has saved them (7:50, 17:19, 18:42).
- 3) Lord- Jesus quotes Isaiah by saying the "lord has anointed me", rather "Christ-ed" me. LK uses the term Lord 14 times.

Universalism

Universalism is probably the major thread and theme consistent in LK. It shows that Jesus is an inclusive messiah by reaches out to the dirtv, the poor, prostitutes, and women outside the Law to show that no one is beyond the mercy of God. One of the ways he shows universalism is through table fellowship. Jesus sits down to eat (a little too often- that's why it takes so long to get to Jerusalem!) with the sick, unclean, women, dirty, lepers, tax collectors. Another way Jesus shows he is universal messiah is by speaking to women in public and showing intense love for the women in his life like Mary Magdalene, his mother Mary and the women who support the men who support him in 8:1-3. LK is the only writer to tell us that women were among the followers of Jesus.

4:14- 9:50 The Galilean Ministry

In 4:14-30, Jesus begins his public ministry. The plot of Jesus in the gospel of LK is one of 1) Announcing a program, and 2) Facing rejection. Rejection in LK happens immediately. Jesus is coming to announce a program of salvation right here and now that foreshadows the rest of the Gospel. The message is urgent, but Jesus is not urgent.

Jesus' program of miracles makes concrete this immediate salvation.

- 1) 4:31-37 Unclean spirits
- 2) 4:38 Peter's mother in law- it even converts Peter!
- 3) 4:40-44 Summary statement of Jesus' activity

5:1-11 The call of the first disciples chosen out of a group of many (6:13). Jesus calls 70 later. 5:12-26 LK has a very positive attitude towards miracles- they lead to faith. 5:27-32 The Call of Levi (Matthew)- Universalism and table fellowship 6:20-26 Sermon on the Plain

This section is likened to the Sermon on the Mount from MT 5-7. A mountain is not mentioned because mountains mean nothing Greeks. In LK, Jesus only addresses the 12 apostles, not the crowds.

7:36-50 "A Two for One Deal"

Universalism and table fellowship. Jesus is messiah to the highest and lowest person in society at the same time. Simon the Pharisee questions the action. Jesus addresses a parable specifically to Simon about forgiveness noting that forgiveness is for all. What Simon fails to understand is the fact that Jesus has come specifically for people like the woman.

8:1-3 Galilean Women. Only Luke tells us of the women who followed Jesus. They also follow him to Jerusalem and are witnesses to his resurrection.

9:7-9 Herod has questions about Jesus

9: 51 Major Turning Point of the Gospel

Two points to the verse:

1) "to be taken up"

refers to the ascension (already known). Jesus' goal is to back to Father, but he knows and communicates to all around him that he must suffer and die first.

2) "resolutely determined" or set his face.

The implied necessity to go to Jerusalem so he must suffer and die. To LK, Jerusalem equals death, but Jesus goes freely and full of purpose. He is not a passive victim like in MK, but he is a messiah ready to suffer and die. As he turns his face to Jerusalem, he knows Jerusalem will hit back.

9:57-62. 3 would-be followers of Jesus cannot make the journey to Jerusalem because they do not understand what the journey entails. As followers, we need to calculate what it will cost us to follow Jesus. True discipleship is leaving everything behind.

Chapter 10 Mission of the Seventy

10: 1-2, 8-11 the seventy will experience rejection just as Jesus experiences rejection. Now, the followers of Jesus will see and experience 1) program and 2) rejection. If we are faithful followers, rejection will come.

The Good Samaritan- Universalism

Jesus explains his divine necessity to die in Jerusalem. By doing this, he forecasts doom for Jerusalem and links himself to all of the prophets. One must keep in mind that the writer has seen and experienced already to destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Parable of the Lost Coin

The Prodigal Son

The Persistent Widow

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector

Zacchaeus the Tax Collector

All five of these stories are particular to LK to further expand his idea of universalism.

19:28- 21:38 The Entry into Jerusalem and Ministry in Jerusalem Remember what Jesus said to Mary in 2:41-51? Student/teacher

Upon entry, Jesus is called King and the angels sing once again like they did at his birth. Like MK and MT, the event that signifies his pending doom is the Cleansing of the Temple.

Chapters 22-24 Passion Narrative

Jesus is fully conscious of the suffering he is to undergo. He provides a symbolic interpretation of the cup before and after the meal, as well as the bread. The new covenant is made in the death of Jesus, not with the blood of animal sacrifices (like Passover). As the Jews had been told to remember Passover and Exodus, Jesus tells his disciples to remember this event as the focal point for new salvation.

23:1-5 The charges against Jesus are like the charges brought against Socrates. Pilate declares Jesus innocent three times. Jesus is once again passive, but full of purpose by saying "it is necessary". LK still lets the reader know that Jesus was an innocent sufferer.

Things only in LK

- 1) Bloody sweat in the garden 22:33-44
- 2) Healing the injured servant 22:51
- 3) Trial before Herod 23:6-16
- 4) Meeting the woman of Jerusalem while carrying the cross- universalism 23:26-32

- 5) Simon of Cyrene- universalism 23:36
- 6) The good thief next to him on the cross- salvation now, universalism 23:39-43
- 7) Disciples watch at a distance 23:49

Things not in LK

- 1) no sleeping disciples in garden (MK used this as abandonment)
- 2) no silence of Jesus. Jesus has a mission
- 3) no mockery of soldiers and passer-bys. Only lament.

In MK, Jesus died a violent death crying Psalm 22, "My God, my God..." In LK, Jesus quotes Psalm 31:7, "Father, into your hands I commend my Spirit." Showing his complete trust and confidence in the Father. There is no abandonment. The centurion claims he was innocent, not the Son of God (because we already knew that!). Jesus is praying even until his death.

Climax of the Gospel

The Empty Tomb and Resurrection

- 1) 23: 56- 24:12 Women appear at the tomb. Just as the angels appeared to Mary to announce her conception, they also announce his resurrection. The women are reminder of what Jesus said and did culminating at his death.
- 2) 24:13-35 The Road to Emmaus. The messiah suffered, entered into glory, and now renews his presence to the disciples at a meal. Confusion/Insight.
- 3) 24:36-43 Jesus Appears to his Disciples. The resurrection was not some near-death experience , a ghost, or simply some psychic experience. It really happened because we saw it- he showed us his wounds and ate in front of us.

The Gospel of John 90-100 AD "Incarnation of Logos"

John is very different in content/style/chronology from the Synoptics. Therefore, the two-source theory does not apply to John. John has a very high Christology as opposed to the low Christology of the other three. John emphasizes Jesus' divinity more so than his humanity.

John's Community

The gospel alludes to Christians being expelled from the synagogue- a process that did not happen until at least 90 AD- showing a definite break between Christianity and Judaism. Also, scholars agree that

John's audience was disgruntled that Jesus had not yet returned. Therefore, John explains that Jesus' second coming was actually his incarnation. He also includes the story of Thomas, who did not believe until he saw for his own eyes. John wanted his audience to know that Jesus is present hence the strong theme of the Advocate or Holy Spirit.

Authorship

Beloved Disciple or John, the Son of Zebedee?

The author is an unnamed apostle who achieves an intimacy and rapport unmatched by any of the other 11 apostles. He does not appear until the Last Supper when he "lying on his friend's chest" (13:23). He is shown to be in competition with others which may explain why his communities' understanding of Jesus is so different from other churches of the time. The author is an intermediary between Jesus and Peter at the Last Supper about Judas' betrayal. He is acquainted with the High Priest that allows him access to the court (18:15-18). At the crucifixion, he takes Jesus' mother into his home and is hence a "brother" (19:26-27). He is first to the tomb at the resurrection and first to believe that Jesus has risen from the dead (20:1-10). How do we know of all of this? John 21:20-25. It does not mean that he wrote the gospel but rather his testimony gave rise to the gospel.

John and the Synoptics 1) The Beginning

There is no genealogy, no infancy narrative, no virgin birth, no baptism. Rather, Jesus is the Word made flesh that has always existed. 1:1-4 says that Jesus is the word incarnate (made meat) and this word has become human but has always existed. Just as creation in Genesis happened because of God's word, so too Jesus is that same word made flesh. Jesus is the "spiritual logos (word)" become physically human, so an infancy narrative or virgin birth is irrelevant. Both Genesis and John start with, "In the beginning..." One tells about creation, the other tells about the creator.

2) Chronology

In John, Jesus goes to Jerusalem four times for four Passovers (2:13, 5:1, 7:10, 12:12). Hence his ministry is three years long culminating with his death on the last Passover. MK is about 5-6 weeks long and MT and LK are about 6-9 months long. They only refer to one Passover. John mentions Jesus present at many feasts and holidays- and being Jewish it makes sense.

Example- In MK, MT, LK, the cleansing of the temple is the act at the end of the gospel that solidifies his death. In John, it happens right away (2:13-22).

Example- Synoptics agree that Jesus began his ministry after John the Baptist. John says that Jesus and John the Baptist preached concurrently and even was competition for each other (3:23- 4:3).

3) Jesus' Preaching

While the synoptics are centered on Jesus' and the Reign of God or Kingdom of God, John is more focused on Jesus himself. Jesus' ministry is about Jesus. There are no parables in John, but rather long

discourses with "I am" statements attached to them. A discourse is a long theological lesson for the reader.

The "I am" statements are the bread of life (6:35) that takes place during the Bread of Life discourse in 6:16-59, light of the world (8:12), sheep gate (10:7), good shepherd (10:11), resurrection and the life (11:25), the way the truth and the life (14:6), and the true vine (15:1-5). These statements call to mind the sacred name of Yahweh that Moses learned back in Exodus 3. However, Jesus uses the same language to refer to him and how we should relate to him- he is our shepherd, our life, our bread, etc.

4) Jesus' Style

In John, Jesus speaks, as mentioned, in long discourse. However, his language is one of dualistic distinctions. He uses language comparing light/dark, life/death, above/below, and true/false like in 3:1, 3:19 and 3:30.

John uses simple words loaded with a double meaning such as birth (3:3), water (4:7), bread (6:25) and sight (9:1) and makes them easy to understand but spiritually complex and symbols to deeper realities. For example, he uses the phrase "lifted up" in 3:14, 8:28, 12:32 to make it sound like a hoisting of something up, which it is, but it is ironic in the fact that Jesus will return to the Father. It is both at the same time.

The Gospel of John is broken up into to parts:

- 1) The Book of Signs 1:19- 12:50 directed towards to world.
- 2) The Book of Glory 13:1- 20:31 directed towards the 12 apostles and the "hour" because the world will understand his passion and ascension.

5) Christology

As stated, John stresses Jesus' divinity over his humanity. Jesus is the word made flesh come to humor us humans with his divine presence. All his actions reveal the glory of the Father. He descends from heaven (because he has always been there), carries out his divine mission (by dying and rising), and ascends back to the Father (where he belonged in the first place). Jesus is not a suffering, beaten messiah surrounded by apostles who misunderstand him. There is no agony, no brutal death- nothing that says that Jesus was not in control the whole time. Rather, Jesus is an exalted, majestic messiah who controls his fate up to the very end. To John, all of Jesus' actions and words lead up to the hour in the Book of Glory.

The Christology of John is laid out in the Passion:

10:17-18 sets the tone for upcoming events

13:21-32 Jesus gives Judas permission to betray him

13:1-20 Last Supper with no Eucharist (it happened in John 6)- instead Jesus washes' the

apostles feet to show an example of servanthood.

18:1-14 The unnamed garden scene. Once again, there is no agony, no struggle, no prayer for deliverance, no bloody sweat- too human. This is the hour of glory not a grueling death scene.

18:3 Romans soldiers and Jews come to arrest him. They bring lanterns and torches (unlike synoptics) to find the true light of the world. Jesus steps up and identifies himself and is in complete control.

18:4-6 They fall to the ground because he said the sacred name of God. In synoptics, Judas kisses Jesus. In John, Jesus asks the questions to the authorities.

18:19-23 Jesus is in control

18:29-40 Jesus controls his trial. Pilate is actually the one left with the question- What is truth?

19:1-6 The irony is that Jesus really is the king. "Noon" is the hour to sacrifice the lamb for Passover for the next day's feast. Jesus is the new sacrificial lamb.

19:17 Jesus carries the cross himself- no human help.

19:18-22 Pilate acknowledges truth even though he had no answer for it before.

19:26-27 Some scholars argue that since "John" took the mother of Jesus into his home, he had special insight into the true identity of Jesus because of his mother.

19:28-30 "It is finished"- Jesus has control of his death till the end.

19:31-34 The lamb gives life beyond hunger. Water and blood flow through him to show that he has given everything he had. Also a connection between baptism and the Eucharist.

19: 38-42 Jesus, unlike the synoptic's hasty burial, gets a burial like a king in a tomb never used before. Jesus was king during his passion, before Pilate, at death and at his burial.

Just as sin entered the world in a peaceful garden, so to it is taken away in a garden. As God names Adam in Eden (the Garden of God), so to Jesus Christ names "I am" in the Garden. In Genesis, the garden symbolizes a time and place of innocence where no suffering takes place. Man and God and man and woman were in right relationship in Genesis. This is the beginning of the "hour" that Jesus referred to in contrast to the

"Day of the Lord" in prophetic OT writing. The "hour" is the time when God will take away the sin that entered through a garden- thus to put humans and God in right relationship. In Genesis, eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge is synonymous with sin. In other words, we become what we eat. Sin changes our original nature as created in Genesis. The Last Supper is the sharp contrast to the tree of fruit. Because we are sinful, we can eat of the one who takes away the sin of the world. The hope is that we will become what we eat- however, we still have knowledge of good and evil.

6) Signs

Jesus performs no miracles in John- rather, he performs seven signs. There is no messianic secret or special insight to the signs. Jesus is explicit in his motive- the reveal the glory of himself in union with the father. Theologically, the signs are not so much about the physical and natural elements being manipulated, but rather the sign is to bring about faith.

1) 2:1-11 Wedding at Cana 2) 4:46-54 Official's Son 3) 5:2-9 Crippled Man 4) 6:1-15 Feeding 5,000 5) 6:16-25 Walking on Water 6) 9:1-8 The Man Born Blind 7) 11:1-45 The Raising of Lazarus

Note #1- Just as the cleansing of the temple in the synoptics sealed the fate of Jesus, in John it was the raising of Lazarus 11:1-45 that informed the authorities that he must die. Irony- By raising someone back to life, the giver of life must die.

Note #2 — "On the third day," at the Wedding at Cana, the "woman" (Mary) is a mediator to the new spiritual order just as Eve, the woman, was a mediator for good (and evil). As a mediator of the new spiritual order, Mary is the catalyst for Jesus to turn water into wine- a connection with Eucharist. A wedding is a symbol for covenant- likened to the covenants in the Old Testament. Just as a wedding, or marriage, is a complete self-giving and self-emptying of to another, Eucharist operates the same way between Jesus and the Church. Hence, Mary is always the model of Church because she gives birth to new life. An obvious connection is a statue of Mary standing on a snake. Just as evil entered through a garden through a snake, the sin taken away through a woman through a garden.

7) Things only in John

The Wedding At Cana, Nicodemus, The Woman at the Well, Raising of Lazarus, Washing Disciples' Feet, Inquiry before Annas, Inscription written in Hebrew, Latin and Greek, Blood and Water at crucifixion, The Woman at the Well, Appearance only to Mary Magdalene, Doubting Thomas, Mary never called by name,

Not in John- Last Supper, Transfiguration, Peter's Confession In all four Gospels- Multiplication of Loaves

8) Intent and Purpose

John lets the reader know why he wrote the gospel and included the things he did in 20: 30-31 and 21: 24-25.

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