

Matthew: Search the Scriptures (John 5:39)

Matthew 7:7 “Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”

Matthew 13:44 “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”

Matthew 13:45-46 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls. When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it.”

John 5:39-40 “Search the scriptures, because you think you have eternal life through them; even they testify on my behalf. But you do not want to come to me to have life.”

Unique Matthew Signatures in His Gospel

Matthew 13:52 “Jesus replied, ‘Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old.’

Matthew sits at the head of the New Testament. He quotes the Old Testament more than any other gospel (over 60 times). There is scholarly debate about whether Matthew was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic (spoken language of Jesus).

Compare the Lord’s Prayer

Matthew 6: 11-12 “Give us today our daily bread; and forgive us our debts.....”

Luke 11: 3-4 “Give us each day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins....”

Why does Matthew use ‘debt’ while Luke uses ‘sins’? Matthew knows a thing or two about debts and debt collections!

Compare description of those not yet accepting of or practicing Christianity:

Luke 6: 32-33 “For if you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even **sinner**s love those who love them. And if you do good to those who do good to you, what credit is that to you? Even **sinner**s do the same.”

Matthew 5: 46 “For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have? Do not the **tax collectors** do the same? And if you greet your brothers only, what is unusual about that? Do not the pagans do the same?”

It could go either way, but might Matthew be saying, “some of my best friends are tax collectors” or “I know some good hearted tax collectors”!

Truly, Matthew is humble about his sinful past. This is reflected in his list of the apostles that names his occupation only to highlight his ‘despised previous way of life’

Matthew lists only his occupation when placing himself among the apostles.

Matthew 10:2-4 “The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James, the son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew, Thomas and **Matthew the tax collector**; James, the son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus; Simon the Cananean, & Judas Iscariot who betrayed him.

Word for Tax collector occurs nine times in Matthew, three in Mark, and ten in Luke!

Matthew can be especially hard on SCRIBES, see condemnations in Matthew 23:1-33

Repeatedly Matthew lists abuses of scribes and Pharisees—the Woes

Matthew 23:27 ““Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You are like whitewashed tombs...”

OR how about this one? Matt 23:33 “**You serpents, you brood of vipers,**”

Wailing and Grinding of teeth

Meditation: Why does Matthew fixate on this phrase? Used most in NT only in Matt

Is it a favorite phrase of Matthew? If so, what could be behind it?

Found in (Matthew 8:12; 13:42,50, 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28)

Sometimes it says “wailing and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 13:42, 50), related to Old Testament passages describing ‘teeth on edge’.

Jeremiah 31:29 “In those days they will not say again, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children's teeth are set on edge.”

Ezekiel 18:1-4 “The word of the LORD came to me: Son of man, what is the meaning of this proverb you recite in the land of Israel: “Parents eat sour grapes, but the children’s teeth are set on edge”? As I live—oracle of the Lord GOD: I swear that none of you will ever repeat this proverb in Israel. For all life is mine: the life of the parent is like the life of the child, both are mine. Only the one who sins shall die!”

Curious Action: Gnashing would seem to be self-destructive lamentation, yet these passages below have people, “They” gnash teeth at person “they” are mocking

Psalms 35:15-16 “Yet when I stumbled they gathered with glee, gathered against me and I did not know it. They slandered me without ceasing; without respect they mocked me, gnashed their teeth against me.”

Job 16:9-10 “His wrath tears and assails me, he gnashes his teeth against me; My enemy looks daggers at me. They gape at me with their mouths;”

Acts 7:54 “When they heard this, they were infuriated, and they ground their teeth at him.”

Matthew 8:12 “but the children of the kingdom will be driven out into the outer darkness, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.”

Classic sound of fingernails scratching down a chalkboard; screeching; gritting, clinching

Is it a sound of regret, anger, bitterness, inconsolable grief, complete loss of hope?