

READING THE NEW TESTAMENT IN 2021 Week 27 (July 5 – 9)

“Let the Word of Christ dwell in us richly” ... and bear fruit in our lives) – Colossians 3:16.

Historical Context (Paul’s third missionary trip).

59 AD Approximate date of the writing of Matthew.

Who is Matthew?

- The Babylonian Talmud (central text of rabbinical Judaism) refers to Matthew as one of the five disciples of Jesus.
- Commentaries on the Quran also list Matthew as one of Jesus’ disciples, and as one who went with Andrew to Ethiopia.
- A tax collector?

All four gospels note that there are twelve disciples in Jesus’ inner circle from the crowds of disciples that followed Jesus. However, the list of names is different; and John does not give the names of all twelve. For reflection, here are the lists.

Matthew 10:2-4	Mark 3:16-19 (2:14 for Levi)	Luke 6:13-16 (5:10 for Zebedee) (5:27 for Levi)	John 1:40-50; 6:71; 18:22; 21:2
Simon (Peter)	Simon (Peter)	Simon (Peter)	Simon (Peter)
Andrew	Andrew	Andrew	Andrew
James (son of Zebedee)	James (son of Zebedee)	James (son of Zebedee)	James (son of Zebedee)
John (son of Zebedee)	John (son of Zebedee)	John (son of Zebedee)	John (son of Zebedee)
Philip	Philip	Philip	Philip
Thomas	Thomas	Thomas	Thomas
Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot	Judas Iscariot
Bartholomew	Bartholomew	Bartholomew	
James (son of Alphaeus)	James (son of Alphaeus)	James (son of Alphaeus)	
Matthew (tax collector)	Matthew (Levi, the son of Alphaeus? A tax collector?)	Matthew (Levi?)	
Thaddaeus	Thaddaeus		
Simon (the Cananaean)	Simon (the Cananaean)	Simon (the Zealot)	Nathanael of Cana
		Judas (son of James)	Judas (not Iscariot)

Day Reading Clarification from the Greek (the original language)

Mon. Matthew 21 (:11) **Prophet** = In Greek: “Say in advance” openly and publicly the will of the gods.

The Hebrew adds that it is someone chosen by God to do so. The challenge of knowing how to respond to that person is captured in Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 18:15-22.

- Tues. Matthew 22 (:11) **Wedding Garment** = Although these were often in a person's wardrobe (cf. Judges 14:10-13), "Kings would sometimes give banquets for their subjects and invite them all, regardless of status, providing suitable clothing for those unable to afford it." (Jewish New Testament Commentary).
- Wed. Matthew 23 (:13) **Hypocrite** = In Greek theater, it is used of an actor who has not identified himself with his role; someone who assumes a role or identity – not their own – for the audience's approval; and for someone who answers / interprets what has come before on the stage. It is a word used for lying that comes from the stage.
- Thurs. Matthew 24 (:51) **"Cut him in pieces"** = "Cut in two him / Divide him." It is used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament, in use in the time of Jesus, for the cutting in half of a sacrifice. However, in the New Testament, it is used for divisions among people in a collective group (Romans 16:7, I Corinthians 3:3, Galatians 5:20), and also to divisions within the family (Matthew 10:35-36). Hence it may mean to cut the person off / divide from the business and household: lose their position.
- Fri. Matthew 25 (:) **"Members of my family"** = "My brothers." This is not to relegate women to insignificance. It does say that Jesus considers them as part of his immediate family – not simply relatives.

For reflection, does this connect at all with Matthew 46-49?

Sources: www.thebiblejourney.org; www.datingthenewtestament.com; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matthew_the_Apostle; en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Talmud; [The Interlinear NIV; Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Vols. 1-3](#); [The Jewish New Testament Commentary](#); [The Interlinear NIV, Parallel New Testament in Greek and English](#); [The New Linguistic and Exegetical Key to the Greek New Testament](#); [New Revised Standard Version Bible](#) – © 1990, Thomas Nelson. © DFN (May be printed, but not used for profit).