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Matthew as EIRENOPOIOS

Milton P. Brown

μακάριοι οἱ εἰρηνοποιοί, ὅτι αὐτοὶ υἱοὶ θεοῦ κληθήσονται  
"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the  
children of God".

Students of the first Gospel have long since recognized in Matthew 13.52, Jesus' reference to the "scribe trained for the kingdom of heaven", a caption appropriate to the whole gospel and a succinct characterization of the evangelist himself. B.W. Bacon called it "an unconscious portrait". /1 Bacon may have been influenced by the earlier remark of James Moffatt, that the evangelist "is unconsciously self-portrayed in xiii.52." /2 In any case the writer - let us use the conventional designation, Matthew - did perform, in many respects, the task of a "scribe of the kingdom" whether conscious of his self-portraiture or not. /3 In his care for "every jot and tittle" of the Law, his emphasis in Jesus' teachings on the old traditions, and his pervasive concern to show the Lord's "fulfilment" of the scriptures, one can see this Christian grammateus at work, setting before the church of his day "things new and things old", as the situation demanded. Like the well-supplied householder Matthew has at his disposal a rich thesauros and is well-trained in the use of it.

In much the same spirit this essay proposes another term which might serve as a caption for the gospel, if not a portrait of the evangelist: Matthew as "peacemaker", one of the groups called "blessed" (or "fortunate") by Jesus (Mt 5.9, quoted in the heading above). Only Matthew, of all the gospels, has Jesus pronounce blessing on the peacemakers, and the more we study the work of the evangelist and reconstruct his probable Sitz im Leben (life-situation), the more appropriate the epithet seems. Matthew himself seems to fulfil the role of a peacemaker in the church of his day. /4 If he has the mind and hands of a grammateus, he has the heart of an eirēnopoios; he goes about his scribal duties, not as a mere collector of traditions or as an impartial redactor of his sources, but as a churchman sensitive to the varying winds of doctrine blowing among his fellows and as one

eager to reconcile the factious and to preserve the peace and unity of the church. /5

Matthew's peacemaking efforts appear remarkable in view of the character of the community and the nature of the issues which we may reasonably suppose for the background of this gospel. It seems reasonable to locate the composition of Matthew somewhere in the years AD 70 to 90, and to assume that he has made use of the Gospel of Mark, a sayings-source also used by Luke (Q), and material from another source peculiar to Matthew. /6 This essay will not attempt to present all the supporting evidence for this date nor for the assumption that the provenance of Matthew is the region of Syrian Antioch. /7 Even if, following Kirkpatrick, /8 we favour the coastal region of Phoenicia as a more likely geographical setting, we have to do with a writer whose temper and tendencies suggest that his audience or first readers were a mixed Jewish-Gentile community. Antioch, we may be sure, would not be the only city of the time where such conditions obtained - certainly not after AD 70 and the dispersion of both Jews and Christians from Jerusalem. Fleeing Jewish Christians would probably have found places to settle alongside refugee Essenes and other Jews, as well as among the more numerous Gentile residents of the Syrian coastal area. It requires no extravagance of imagination or distortion of our meagre evidence to find among one of these mixed communities (a) People with very strong devotion to Torah and prophets, (b) others with no ties at all to Judaism, and (c) still others of varying positions in-between. /9 For such a community as this controversy would be indigenous, and the need for skilful arbitration, for those rare souls who know the things that make for peace, would be pressing.

In the following discussion we propose to consider three aspects of this controversial background, as we find it reflected in the gospel, and to show in each case how the evangelist attempts to exercise his peacemaking skills.

#### I

To begin with one of the more obvious interests of Matthew, there is his remarkable treatment of the Christian's relation to law and liberty. Both in volume

of material and in his handling of it Matthew betrays a preoccupation with these matters which cannot be matched in Mark or in Luke. In fact, in the intensity of his concern, as in terms used, /10 our evangelist stands close to Paul (cf. Galatians, Romans, Philipians).

It is obvious that during the ministry of Paul the question of the Torah's value or importance for the Christian life was a crucial issue. "Judaizers" has become for us a convenient label for one side of the controversy, but it is an unfortunate term to the degree that it obscures a questionable presupposition that the other side - Paul's position - was normative. To keep this in perspective we need to recall that primitive (especially Jerusalem-based) Christians continued for some time to consider themselves Jews, and that it was only later - after the Pauline version of justification gained some currency - that "Judaizing" became a meaningful term for describing Paul's opposition. And even then it must have seemed to those branded with it a curious twist, that they should be considered the meddlers and trouble-makers rather than the late-comers (and innovators?) like Paul. To these people, devoted to the Law of Moses and yet persuaded that Jesus was the Messiah, their "humble King" (Zech.9.9), it was unthinkable that any true believer should question the eternal validity of God's holy law and prophets.

It is not hard to understand, in this light, their antipathy for Paul and his work among the Gentiles. We need to remember that what offended them about Paul's mission was not so much the fact that uncircumcised men were being attracted and welcomed into the church, as that after being received they were allowed to continue in ignorance of, and indifference toward, the law. It was anomia, a basic "lawlessness", which these Jewish brethren deplored and which they felt must necessarily follow upon Paul's preaching of righteousness "apart from the law" (Romans 3.21). That this was a real danger, not merely alarmist tactics, the letters of Paul himself testify: "You were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh.... .." (Gal.5.13); "What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! (Romans 6.15).

The possibility of mistaking Paul's "liberty" for license was there from the start, and it seems fair to suppose that this possibility only increased with the passing of Paul and his direct pastoral influence from the scene. It is quite likely that we catch a glimpse of a perverted Paulinism, perhaps from a decade or two after Paul's death, in James 2.14-26; the "foolish fellow" of that diatribe surely represents, not Christians who understood and followed the teachings of Paul, but those who had misunderstood him and had seized upon "faith" (though in a non-pauline sense) as a substitute for "works". In such extreme "freedom from the law" the worst fears of Paul's Judaizing opponents would begin to be realized.

On first considering Matthew's position in relation to the two parties in the debate one might naturally assume that our evangelist sides unequivocally with the conservatives against the anomic liberals. The prominence given to Jesus' ethical teaching, presented as a call to a "higher righteousness", and the explicit repudiation of "workers of anomia" /11 do indeed suggest as much. It has been pointed out, too, how close Matthew and James stand on the matter of faith and works or on hearing and doing. /12 Many signs point to Matthew's sympathy with a Judaizing type of Christianity, but nothing indicates even a remote connection with the Pauline type, let alone the extremists or perverters of Paul's thought. /13

And yet a careful reading of the gospel with special attention to certain statements about the law and about Jesus' fulfilment of scripture will show our evangelist to be not nearly so "Judaizing" as he at first seems. The words of Jesus quoted in 5.17-20 are a notable case in point. They begin, "Think not that I have come to abolish the law and the prophets" - which, without prejudice to the question of their authenticity, sound like a denial of an actual (though in the context unspoken) charge, similar to that which could have been made against the anomic (or - antinomian?) element. /14 Matthew thus brings to the arbitration table, as it were, dominical words certain to console the brethren who had viewed Pauline teaching with alarm. Jesus' words support the authority of Torah in no uncertain terms:

"For truly I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the law until all is accomplished." (v18). This would give little comfort to anyone who believed that obedience to the law was only a temporary stage, now to be left behind in the newness of Christian life and liberty.

But notice the serious qualifications represented by the rest of that statement: "I have not come to abolish them (the law and the prophets) but to fulfil them.... For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds /15 that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven" (vv17b,20). Without this the other would indeed have been one-sided and misleading. The tenor of Jesus' attitude and action in regard to the Mosaic law was too well-known to be represented in such partisan (not to say pharisaical) language. But beyond that there was need to hold before the would-be Christian Pharisee of Matthew's day the reminder that in Christ it was not Mosaic Torah (including scribal interpretations) to which he was bound, but rather the "perfect" law (cf. v48) and the "exceeding" righteousness of the kingdom. The six antitheses of chapter 5 then serve to show how the Christian ethic can both "fulfil" the law and "exceed" its requirements. Thus in the rigorous demands of love the follower of Christ found no place to rest content with obedience to the letter of the law; if the words of the Lord gave no comfort to the libertine or lawless, neither did they soothe the legalistic and self-righteous. If there is to be a resolution of the issue of law and liberty, Matthew seems to say, it must be found in Jesus' radical reinterpretation of "obedience" - an obedience grounded in grace, in the new relation to God, which is given in Christ.

No doubt Matthew did not sense the tension which the modern reader might find between what Jesus was saying in the antitheses (5.21-48) and the saying in 5.19, "Whoever then relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven."

/16 For Matthew it was inconceivable that the higher righteousness demanded by Jesus was really an abrogation of any part of the law; it was rather the fulfilment (or "completion") of it that he heard in Jesus' word "but I

say to you." The newness of Jesus' interpretation was in reality the fulness of the old law's meaning, intent or "spirit". That the obedience Jesus required of his disciples was to be correspondingly full or complete (see 5.48, "you must be teleioi....") meant tacit affirmation of Torah's continuing validity, not abrogation of it as a temporary and lately obsolete code. So in Christ and his word the old law has been perfected, and is still therefore operative, in the new. Or perhaps more accurately to typify Matthew's view, in Christ and the higher law God's will for men - his kingdom and his righteousness - were being done, being actualized on earth as in heaven, even as the scriptures had promised. /17

In this approach to the question of law and liberty Matthew differs somewhat from the apostle Paul, who maintained that for all the "advantage" (Romans 3.1-4) the Jew had in Torah, it could not save a man and was best regarded by Christians as a "pedagogue", a restrictive tutor to be dismissed now that the maturity of "faith" had come (Gal. 3.23-36). And yet Paul was not without moments of equivocation in this matter. While holding "that a man is justified by faith apart from works of law" (Rom.3.28), almost in the same breath he asked, "Do we then overthrow the law by faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law" (Rom.3.31). Though proclaiming that the Christian had died (in Christ) to the law (Rom 7.4-6), Paul resisted any insinuation that the law itself was at fault: "the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good" (7.7,11). But even more telling is the idea of Christ as "the end (telos, not eschaton) of the law" (Rom 10.4); Paul here uses a figure that approaches Matthaean thought. That Christ was in a sense "the goal" of the law and the revealer of a better "righteousness" (in Romans 10.3, "the righteousness that comes from God") is common ground for Paul and Matthew though approached from different routes. /18 Furthermore, when we consider such summaries of the law as Paul made in Galatians 5.14 and Romans 13.8-10 ("...love is the fulfilling of the law"), and compare the sixth and climactic antithesis of Matthew 5 (Jesus' commandment of inclusive love), it is hard to deny that the common ground is broader than a casual

glance discloses.

Study of Matthew's distinctive view of Jesus' fulfilment of prophecy also points to an affinity with Pauline thought. While it is likely that the evangelist had among his sources a collection of testimonia from Jewish-Christian circles, the extensive use of them, with his characteristic formula (This took place in order to fulfil.....), sets Matthew apart; this probably stems from the same premise as we saw behind statements of the law; one, continuous divine will has been at work from the beginning (or, at least, from Abraham), /19 and now with Jesus has come the consummation. Just as his work and word "complete" the giving of the law, so they also "fulfil" or bring to actuality the whole plan of God as found in scripture. Once again we find in this emphatic reminder of Matthew a gentle reproof for those in the church who tended to overplay the discontinuity, the novelty, or the separateness of Christianity from its Jewish roots. Matthew serves to remind believers of whatever background that what they have found in Christ is no freak of history but rather the One for whom all ages have waited. The effect of this appeal to OT texts, of course, would not be the same for those of Gentile origin as for those of Jewish background who already respected the authority of the law and prophets. Yet something more than "proof-texting" is involved here, and something which again underscores Matthew's peacemaking proclivity - i.e., Matthew is introducing his non-Jewish constituency to the Bible, reassuring them that it truly belongs to them as well as to the Jews. As with the law, so with the prophets (and the rest?), Matthew begins with Christ and looks back from that point, not the reverse. He does not say to the Gentile believer that he cannot have Christ unless he has the scriptures first; rather, he says, because we both have Christ, the scriptures belong to us.

## II

Another element of controversy apparent in the church of Matthew's day is the matter of leadership and discipline. Direct firsthand witnesses to the situation in AD 70-100 are notoriously scarce and fragmentary, and we are often compelled to draw inferences from material of a slightly later stage, such as that of Ignatius of Antioch or the



writer of the Didache. /20 It seems clear that these "obscure decades" were also crucial decades /21 in the development of ecclesiastical policy and discipline. One reason why they are crucial is the fact that first-generation leaders were passing from the scene, leaving questions of succession. Another would be the growth of the Christian movement, both in numbers and in geographical distribution of communities, together with the diversity of membership already noted. Scattered as they were over the eastern and middle sections of the Roman Empire, churches would naturally develop various forms of government according to local need, personnel available, special gifts etc. Quarrels over the chain of command, or over proper disciplinary procedure, must have been frequent in such a transitional situation before the emergence of anything like the later monarchical episcopate and the primacy of the Roman bishopric.

Matthew reflects something of this unsettled period, and like the peacemaker and church statesman he is, he tries to indicate a unifying principle. To some extent, of course, simply lifting up the dominical words, systematically arranged for catechizing, would serve such a purpose. But Matthew goes beyond that in trying to spell out the locus of ecclesiastical order. We refer to his much-noticed concern for Simon Peter as the foremost apostle. /22 Peter figures prominently, it is true, in the Markan source, but even more so in peculiarly Matthaean sections or redactions: e.g., in 14.28-31 (Peter's walking on the water); 17.14-27 (The temple-tax saying); and the famous 16.17-19 ("on this rock..."). /23 To account for this special prominence of Peter in Matthew has taxed the ingenuity of many scholars through the centuries, but one which cannot be explored here, as it has been elsewhere. /24

Apparently the tendency that only barely surfaces in Mark, to make Simon the spokesman for the entire body of the Twelve, reaches in Matthew its peak. But in many of Matthew's pericopes - especially the three just mentioned - it is hard to avoid the impression that Simon has become the spokesman or representative for more than the "original" Twelve. He seems to have taken on the aspect of a symbol for the whole church of Matthew's day. Thus

in the walking on the water (14.28-31) he may be seen as embodying all those Christians who on their way "toward Jesus", get distracted by "the wind" and give way to doubts. The church, like Peter, must look to Jesus for its salvation - this, surely, lies near the centre of Matthew's purpose here. Again, in 17.24-27 Peter is important to the story not so much in his own right, but as the personification of "the sons (of the king)" - Christians generally - who are declared "free" from the temple-tax and yet graciously pay it so as "not to give offence."

On the third of these passages - the "rock" saying - we would only reiterate and emphasize what many others have said regarding the peculiarly Matthaean interpolation. It falls into three parts, and there is reason to suspect that each represents a separate saying of Jesus. First, Simon's confession elicits from Jesus a congratulation: "Blessed are you....for flesh and blood has not revealed this (that Jesus is the Christ) to you but my Father who is in heaven." Second, with a play on the epithet "Rock" (in Aramaic cepha; Greek, petros) - perhaps originally an aetiology to show how Simon got his famous "nickname" - Jesus promises to build his church /25 on bed-rock (petra), so that "the powers of death" (literally "the gates of Hades") shall not prevail against it." And third, Jesus promises to give to Peter "the keys of the kingdom," an expression which seems to be explained as the power "to bind" and "to loose" on earth whatever has been "bound" or "loosed" in heaven. /26 The power to bind and loose is best understood in the light of the rabbinical use of these terms, meaning to forbid or to permit certain practices, although in 18.18 where Jesus promises the same power to disciples in the plural, it is apparently the authority of the church to grant or withhold forgiveness that is meant.

Matthew has bound these sayings together in such a way as to underline the function of the ekklesia as the agency of God's kingdom on earth and the mediator of Christ's own authority in heaven. In this interpretation Simon Peter's heaven-prompted confession becomes a sign of the church's "heavenly" authority, against which "hell" (to resort to the King James Version) cannot prevail, and in turn Peter's "keys" become a reassurance for the church that its discipline of members is part of its stewardship to the heavenly

King. It is both an exalted honour and an awesome responsibility to which Peter - and through him, the church - has been called.

Running through all three of these sections which focus on Simon Peter is a concern, not so much to delineate the personal character of Peter or to describe past events, however momentous, but rather to insist on the "heavenly" mandate in the continuing existence of the church, now storm-tossed in an increasingly hostile world, now facing new problems within and without, and desperately needing to maintain its unity and its vital ties with the Founder himself. Recognition of the "primacy" of Peter, then, was not so much an exalting of one apostle's authority over that of others as it was a way of emphasizing the oneness of the apostolic mission and, perhaps above all, the oneness of the church's foundation in Christ. This is also a way of making "peace" in the church, for surely "peace" (shalom) is more than a matter of reconciling opposing forces or factions; it is also the will to be one, the desire to be whole.

Matthew, alone of all the gospels, records in 18.15-20 a very detailed prescription for dealing with the wayward brother. A good example of Matthew's scribal activity, this pericope brings out something new and something old - new in that the words are surely Matthew's own, but old in the sense that they derive from the authentic teaching of the Lord on repentance and forgiveness. The saying is carefully placed between the parable of the Lost Sheep and that of the Unmerciful Servant, and the whole cluster closes, "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Thus, once more, Matthew insists on the dynamic continuity between Christ's "law" and the later church's interpretation and application of it to present problems. What the church does now in Jesus' name, even in reproving or expelling a member, is guided not merely by appeal to the living Lord present in their midst. In the final analysis the authority granted to "Peter" - and through him to the ekklesia - is never the absolute, unlimited or infallible power that some in times past have claimed; it must be understood as forever subject to the One to whom "all authority

in heaven and on earth" was given (Matt. 28.18)

III

A third area of controversy in the background of our gospel is the question of the church's mission in the world: how should the church understand itself in relation to the outside world? What should be its task while awaiting the Parousia? Such questions must have animated many a Christian conversation in Matthew's day. Underlying them, we may suppose, were rather widely different opinions among the devout, corresponding somewhat to the spectrum of attitudes on the law which were noted above. It is likely that those who held on most tenaciously to their Jewish heritage would look with least favour on a vigorous evangelistic mission among the Gentiles, such as Paul's. By the same token those whose relation to Judaism was only tenuous, or who were themselves Gentile converts to the faith, would have the greatest enthusiasm for evangelistic outreach. At least, in general, this is the pattern that one would expect to find.

Yet, at this point, Matthew seems to defy the pattern. If, with a long train of interpreters, we take Matthew as "the most Jewish" of the Gospels, we should expect little enthusiasm for the mission to the Gentiles. But on the contrary, it is Matthew who boldly presents the Great Commission: "Go and make disciples of all the nations..." (28.19). Like the good scribe he is, Matthew recalls how Jesus had sent the Twelve out only "to the lost sheep of the house of Israel," after his own example, /27 and yet he is aware of what new wine does to old wine-skins. In many teachings of Jesus he seems to recognize that a post-resurrection mission to "the nations" was implicit. /28 Could it be that Matthew found it implicit even in the visit of the Magi? Here these men of the East, no doubt regarded by Matthew as Gentiles, serve as a kind of foreshadowing of the worship that will one day be given Christ by non-Jews of north, south, east and west.

Readers of Matthew have long noted in this gospel a strong "Gentile bias" running alongside the more obviously "Jewish" elements. /29 Some have even branded the writer as "anti-jewish" in view of his version of the

Parable of the Wicked Tenants, where he adds to his Marcan source the pointed conclusion, "Therefore, I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation producing the fruits of it" (21.43). It is only in Matthew that we are told, when Pilate washed his hands of responsibility for Jesus' death, "all the people (laos) answered, 'His blood be upon us and on our children!' " (27.25) /30 Clearly there is in Matthew an undercurrent of disappointment, not unlike that of Paul in Romans 9-11, over the recalcitrance of the Jewish nation, but it is not so clear that Matthew had given up on the old Israel altogether, when we keep in view what has already been said about his handling of such issues as law and liberty, and in particular his concern for the church's continuity with the old covenant.

Once more Matthew demonstrates his moderating, peace-making influence in his efforts to keep a balanced view of Christian-Jewish relations. For him the church can be neither an entirely new departure, radically severed from Judaism nor a narrowly constricted, pharisaical wing of Judaism. What has appeared in Jesus Christ, springs from the loins of Abraham, yet is meant as blessing for all the nations. No less than John (4.22), Matthew could have affirmed that "salvation is of the Jews." And yet, as many of the Matthaean parables show, it is what one does, not what one says or was, that proves him or her true children of the King. Teachings like that of the Last Judgment (25.31-43) surely point to a criterion far beyond allegiance or non-allegiance to the Torah, and even beyond professed allegiance or conscious devotion to Christ!

Also, in the whole eschatological outlook of the gospel there is the effect of Matthew's moderation. For him the Parousia has not been indefinitely postponed; he has retained much more of the Marcan outlook than did Luke. But, even so, Matthew will not yield to the temptation to speculate as to the day or the hour of his coming, nor to encourage others to do so. Though the bridegroom be delayed, all the more imperative is constant vigilance and complete investment of resources on the part of those who await his coming. Nor is Matthew willing to equate the "elect" with the visible church, for it is only at the end,

in the final judgment of God, that the ultimate differentiation of God's elect can be made. The church, it must be admitted, will attract a mixture of good, bad and indifferent (22.10), until such time as God himself makes division among them. /31 In the Parable of the Weeds (13.36-43), where that mixture is implied, Matthew may have seen an answer to certain Christians of his day who still resented the influx of Gentiles into the church, or who perhaps on other grounds desired to purge their membership. In any case, Matthew offers them the Lord's own warning, his call to patience, and an appeal for peace among the disparate and diverse parties of the day.

In so many ways Matthew served in his gospel to make peace, and this is a time when the easier way would have been to take sides and drift toward the extremes. Instead, he made the effort to find a middle course, which in any age is suspect by the extremists, but a course which then and now may serve best the interest of unity and wholeness in Christ's church. In this, our day, it is still true; of Matthew the peacemaker we may well say, "May his tribe increase!"

#### Notes

1. Studies in Matthew (New York, 1930), p131
2. Introduction to the Literature of the NT (New York, 1911) p255; quoted by A.H. McNeile, The Gospel according to St Matthew, (London, Toronto and New York, 1961), pxviii.
3. Cf. E. Dobschutz, "Matthäus als Rabbiner und Katechet", ZNW (1928), 338-348.
4. The convention of calling the evangelist "Matthew" will be maintained here without prejudice as to the question of his identity with the apostle (Mt 9.9).
5. E.F. Scott, The Literature of the NT (New York, 1936), 73-75, noticed Matthew's "impartiality" and "catholicity of spirit"
6. The evidence is succinctly stated in the "Introduction" to W.F. Albright and C.S. Mann, Matthew (vol.26

- of The Anchor Bible; New York, 1971), pp xxxvii-xlviii.
7. See the argument for Antioch of Syria in B.H. Streeter, The Four Gospels (London 1930), pp 500-523; cf. J. Weiss, Earliest Christianity (New York 1959), II 752-753.
  8. G.D. Kilpatrick, The Origins of the Gospel According to St Matthew (Oxford 1946), pp130-134; Bacon, op.cit., p36, also considered likely an eastern city such as Edessa or Apamea.
  9. Cf. G. Bornkamm, Tradition and Interpretation in Mt (Philadelphia 1963), p22.
  10. E.G., in the prominence given dikaioṣunē and anomia. Cf. Gerhard Barth, "Matthew's Understanding of the Law" in Tradition and Interpretation in Mt (cited in f.n9 above), pp58-59.
  11. Matt 7.23 (Psalm 6.90; 13.41; cf. the peculiar Matthaean touch, that the increase of anomia will be a sign of the approaching end (24.12))
  12. Matt 7.21, 26 and James 1.19-27 (cf also Matt.25.35ff). M.H. Shepherd, "The Epistle of James and the Gospel of Matthew," JBL 75 (1956), 40-51, demonstrated the remarkable affinity between these two.
  13. Kilpatrick, op.cit., 130-131, finds "no sign of any use of the Pauline Epistles," and uses this fact as evidence for a non-Antiochene origin.
  14. G. Barth, op.cit., pp159ff holds that they were definitely antinomian Christians who appealed to their charismata (rather than to "faith" as in James) as "a sufficient substitute for their lack of works."
  15. Italics added for emphasis
  16. That the insertion may be artificial is suggested by the use of entelōn toutōn without a proper antecedent. It is not necessary to suppose that Matthew had Paul or his followers in mind (so Weiss, op.cit., 753); enough to understand elachistos as another expression of contempt for the lawless.
  17. Weiss, op.cit., p755 aptly notes how "law and prophets

are for him a unity", so that virtually no distinction is made between Jesus' perfect obedience (or actualizing of the law) and his fulfilment of prophecy. Cf. the very helpful discussion of the verb plērōun in the article by G. Barth, op.cit., especially pp66ff

18. Cf. II Corinthians 3.12-18, which suggests a similar notion that Christ (or the Spirit) enables one at last to read "Moses" aright.
19. Matt.1.1; that Matthew's genealogy does not go back to Adam (as does Luke's) need not imply any less "universal" interest.
20. We suppose that these come from the first quarter of the second century, but allow that the latter may contain much older material; here belong, most likely, the Pastoral Epistles as well.
21. Cf. F.V. Filson, Three Crucial Decades: Studies in the Book of Acts (Richmond 1963) and A NT History (Philadelphia 1964) especially ch.12.
22. The epithet prōtos in 10.2 must mean "first" in more than sequence; see McNeile's comment in loc.
23. Note also 18.21 where Peter's name gets connected with a Q-saying (cf Lk 17.4). He is more frequently the spokesman of the disciples in Matthew (15.15; 17.24,26; 18.21) than in Mark.
24. To name only one of the more thorough discussions: Oscar Cullmann, Peter: Disciple, Apostle, Martyr (translation by F.V. Filson; Philadelphia 1953).
25. The word ekklesia, so frequently used in Paul's letters, appears only here and in Matt. 18.17 (twice) of all the synoptics.
26. Recent translations do not always render correctly the Greek future perfect forms, "will have been bound/loosed," in reference to the action of "heaven" which the actions of men on earth can only ratify.
27. Matt 10.5 and 15.24
28. E.G., in 15.21-28 (the Syrophenician woman), where Matthew seems to emphasize the Gentile's faith (rather



than wit, as in Mark); cf. also the figures of "light" and "salt" in 5.13-14 which have unmistakable missionary implications.

29. K.W. Clark, "The Gentile Bias in Matthew", JBL 66 (1947), 165-172; S.E. Johnson's Introduction and Exegesis in The Interpreter's Bible 7, (Nashville 1951), pp231ff
30. Matt 27.25; laos instead of the expected ochlos brings out the religious, rather than general, character of the people involved.
31. Cf. C.W.F. Smith, "The Mixed State of the Church in Matthew's Gospel," JBL 82(1963), 149-168

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