

Intro Feb 16

First we have SIRACH, again.

The Book of Sirach is part of the Wisdom Literature of the Greek Septuagint and the Latin Vulgate Bible. The Book was not included in the Hebrew Canon of the Old Testament because they thought it was: A) first written in Greek and B) not in Palestine.

Why is it called Apocryphal? It is not included in Protestant Bibles. However, the OT Apocrypha books, the ones not accepted by Luther and other Protestants, are ALL found in the OLDEST manuscripts: **Sinaiticus, Vaticanus, Alexandrinus, and Beza and are included in the Catholic, most Eastern Christian, Assyrian and Coptic Bibles. They were in the Gutenberg Bible, as they were in Jerome's Vulgate, and the first King James Version.

[For more info and background, see the attached doc.]

The theme is clear: We all have choices to make. The Choices are clear: Good or Evil, Fire or Water. God wants us to make GOOD choices because He wants us to be HAPPY, and the best way to be happy is to be GOOD, to do GOOD. (Psalm and Corinthians).

The ALLELUIA adds only the little ones, *Only the pure of heart, those who approach God, simply! Like *a little child, eager to learn! Knowing you NEED someone bigger and stronger and wiser. Are you approaching God like that little child? Eager to discover what he has in mind for us. {as Paul also wrote, quoting Isaiah} That is the Q for you and for me.*

MATTHEW can seem complicated. In reality the choices Matt and Sirach put before us are simple:

- 1 **be righteous** Do the right thing. Be RIGHT with God; walk the RIGHT path in life.
Unless your "rightness" is more than the appearance the Pharisees put on, it will NOT influence God. It won't count!
- 2 **You shall not kill** OK, so you didn't KILL anyone. Think you are home free?
How about HARM a reputation? Hate? Hurt with words?
- 3 **adultery?** Cleared on that, right? Don't be so sure!
Some people are always ready to SEEM to be good, in their own minds, because "I have NEVER done This! Or That! Like *you-know-who!*"
- 4 Do not try to make a **false statement** appear to be TRUE by adding meaningless "I swear. . ." to it. Just BE TRUTHFUL. Simple truth. That is enough.

Matthew, a Jew, concedes that although we should see that the choices: Good or Evil are clear, a "simplistic" view of things is not realistic either. Wisdom—The Holy Spirit—(as Paul says) will help us to choose.

Basically Matt says what Sirach said: The choice is clear. Chose between GOOD and EVIL.

The Psalm says: If you choose GOOD, you will be blessed. {be HAPPY?}

Paul quoting Isaiah: For those who do find the WISDOM of God *who can imagine the JOY they will find?*

[Remember Hagia Sophia, Holy Wisdom, is another 'name' for Holy Spirit.]

ABOUT MATTHEW: **[There is more info on Matt & the Gospels in the attachment. How, why, when, for whom each was written.]**

This is a short summary of the essential ideas:

Matthew's Gospel can, at times, seem to be just a collection of unrelated sayings. Even repetitious. That is because ORIGINALLY it WAS just some collected sayings that Early Xtians remembered. "I remember Jesus said this here." Another one said, "He said this." "I was on the hill outside Capernaum, when he said. . ." This is why Matthew often has SIMILAR SAYINGS lumped together, as they would have been in early ORAL TRADITION.

Christian tradition unanimously attributes the first Gospel to Matthew. The early Christian Bishop Papias, who lived in modern Turkey around 120, said that Matthew *composed the sayings (LOGIA in Greek) of Jesus in the Hebrew language for Jewish converts.* *Hebrew* means the Hebrew spoken in Israel at the time of Christ, which we know today as *Aramaic*.

Matthew “composed” does not mean Matt sat down and wrote it like J.K. Rowling “wrote” Harry Potter. The community “Put it Together”, that is “wrote it—**ORALLY**”! Then it was actually ‘written’ on parchment. Remember most people could NOT read or write. Peter had MARK “write” his gospel. Peter was a fisherman. He could speak Greek and Aramaic, but probably couldn’t write, just as you probably can’t fix a computer or do the plumbing. Maybe we could call the Gospel of MARK, the Gospel of PETER, not of Mark! Matt undoubtedly could write because of his occupation “taxcollector” today maybe called an “accountant”.

So there was PROTO-Matt, [the Logia], passed on orally at first, and then written down. The Gospel of MARK, that we have, was the First Gospel WRITTEN as we have it. THEN—a FINAL written form of Matt was made after MARK. Matt then is BOTH BEFORE MK and After MK! {This is my scholarly opinion. Some may differ.}

If this is more than you want, don’t worry. Read the attached explanation of the Gospels. If you read the attachments and still have Qs, look at the links! If you still have Qs, email me at wcweavet@verizon.net.

Here is Pope Francis’ favorite picture “The Call of Matthew” by Caravaggio. 1660

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yxSjUvh0g8> for an explanation of painting

A **cross**
in the window!

Notice the
LIGHT of
GRACE.

Matthew
surprised
seems
to be saying,
“Who, ME?”

Matthew
points
to someone
ELSE.

all
Focused on
money.

Is XT
pointing to
YOU
and
ME?

