

d. The resulting character of the Gospels is that of an unique literary presentation. The Gospel accounts are not parallel to the Apocryphal literature or the later New Testament apocryphal gospels. In these Gospels the Words of Jesus have the central place and while you might not like a red letter Bible it is hard to miss the significance of the utterances of God.

C. writing of the Gospels
S. Synoptic Problem

2. Survey Notes on the Gospel of Matthew

a. An overview:

The traditional view of this first book of the New Testament is that it was written by (Matthew Levi,) one of Jesus' disciples, in the second half of the first century of the Christian era. This is the unanimous view of the early church and, until the 19th century, was virtually unchallenged. At that time various theories about the origin of both the gospel (the message) and the Gospels (the writings) were advanced. The major point of discussion is the "synoptic problem"--namely, the relationship between the material in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and their development in terms of each others. ("Synoptic" means presenting a summary account from a similar point of view. John, different in many ways from the other three, is not considered one of the Synoptic Gospels.)

This question has never been satisfactorily answered. As conclusions about it do not necessarily affect decisions in the cases of the individual books, we will not discuss it here except to mention a few of the major considerations. First, it is obvious that Matthew and Luke have a great deal of material in common with Mark and with each other. Second, they both have material common to each other but not found in Mark. Third, they each have some material found in none of the other Gospels. (Mark also has some independent material, but a small amount in proportion.) See the books listed in "Study Further", especially Guthrie's.

Concerning authorship, Papias, bishop of Hierapolis early in the second century, said that Matthew had "compiled the logia of Jesus in the Hebrew tongue..." (The exact meaning of logia is at the center of the debate.) Modern scholarship interprets Papias' words to mean either that Matthew collected sayings of Jesus or Old Testament prophecies and their fulfillments in him. Others say that he was the head of a catechetical school and that this Gospel was produced under his teaching and oversight.

As to the date of authorship, texts from Matthew are quoted or alluded to by Ignatius, bishop of Antioch (c. AD 115). If, as

Wm

*Adolph
 Polak*