Class 5

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW
Outline

- Introduction to Matthew
- Redaction Criticism: How Matthew Edits Mark
  - Definitions, assumptions and tools
  - Matthew as redactor
- Narrative Criticism: Plotting in Matthew
  - Plotting in Matthew: infancy, discourses, gospel
  - Chiastic Structures: word, phrase, gospel
INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW
Gospel of Matthew
Re-presenting Jesus

- Source of release/forgiveness
  - not John the Baptist’s baptism
  - through healings
  - cup/death are “for the forgiveness of sins”

- God with us
  - “Emmanuel”
  - in community
  - through corporal works of mercy

- God’s commissioned agent
  - genealogy
  - disciples identify him as Son of God
  - “unflattering” scenes removed
  - citation of scripture

- Teacher or revealer
Gospel of Matthew
Re-presenting the Disciples

- The disciples understand
- They may have little faith, but they have some
- Inappropriate motives and actions are improved
- The effect is to improve on the portrait of Jesus as teacher
Gospel of Matthew
Re-presenting the Jewish Leaders

- keeps sources’ negative presentation
- associates leaders with devil
- increases hostile references to scribes
- “Rabbi” becomes a term used by the faithless for Jesus
- more negative references to temple and synagogues than Mark or Q
TWO CRITICAL APPROACHES TO MATTHEW
Two Critical Approaches
to the Gospel of Matthew

Redaction Criticism

Study how the later editor (Matthew) edited his source (Mark).
This will yield some sense of the gospel’s core themes.

Narrative Criticism

Study episode plotting for clues about the design of the narrative.
This too will yield some sense of the gospel’s core themes.
Practicing Historical Criticism
A Chronology of Methods

Historical Critical Method (HCM)

- Source Criticism
- Form Criticism
- Redaction Criticism
- Narrative Criticism

**Heyday**
- 18th–19th centuries
- 1920–1960
- 1960–1970
- 1980–1990s

**Goal**
- Identify large written units predating the gospels, upon which evangelists depended
- Identify smaller oral units predating the gospels, upon which evangelists depended
- Identify editor’s interests through editing patterns
- Identify meaning of text through internal narrative patterns

- Mark
- Q
- Controversy
- Miracle
- Chreia
- Parable

Text
Practicing Redaction Criticism

Definitions

Redaction is the activity of collecting, arranging, editing, and modifying sources to adapt their message to new circumstances and to the redactor’s own theological perspective.

Redaction criticism is the study of the changes an editor or redactor makes to his sources in order to discern patterns and emphases and, through them, his interests. Look for changes of vocabulary, content, and placement in the narrative.
The Formation of the Gospels
Assumption: The Two-Source Hypothesis

Matthew

Luke

Q

Mk

M

L

50 CE

60

70

80

90
Practicing Redaction Criticism
Matthew as Redactor: Your Exercises

• Indicate the Matthean passage you chose

• Describe the similarities and differences between Matthew and Mark

• What was your most significant difference?

• What theory or explanation did you come up with to explain Matthew’s changes?
Two Critical Approaches
Returning to Narrative Criticism

**Redaction Criticism**

Study how the later editor (Matthew) edited his source (Mark).

This will yield some sense of the gospel’s core themes.

**Narrative Criticism**

Study episode plotting for clues about the design of the narrative.

This too will yield some sense of the gospel’s core themes.
Narrative Criticism
Plotting in Matthew

Infancy Narrative 1:1–2:23
Proclamation of the Kingdom 3:1–7:29
Ministry & Mission in Galilee 8:1–10:42
Questioning of/Opposition to Jesus 11:1–13:52
Christology & Ecclesiology 13:53–18:35
Proclamation of the Kingdom 19:1–25:46
Passion / Resurrection Narrative 26:1–28:20

**Narrative Criticism**

Plotting in the Infancy Narrative (Matt 1:1–2:23)

- Genealogy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groupings</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham to David</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David to the Exile</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exile to Messiah</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*What do all these groups share in common?*

*What do these numbers signify?*
Narrative Criticism
Plotting in the Infancy Narrative (Matt 1:1–2:23)

- Genealogy 1:1-17

- Joseph’s dream 1:18-25
  Isaiah 7:14 (1:22-23)
- The magoi and the king 2:1-12
  Micah 5:1 (2:5-6)
- Flight into exile 2:13-15
  Hosea 11:1 (2:15)
- Slaughter of infants 2:16-18
  Jeremiah 31:15 (2:17-18)
- Exodus from Egypt 2:19-23
  Unknown prophecy (2:23)

What themes or motifs repeat across these scenes?
Narrative Criticism
Plotting in the Infancy Narrative (Matt 1:1–2:23)

- Genealogy

  Do any of these episodes’ themes parallel the themes of the genealogy?

- Joseph’s dream
- The magoi and the king
- Flight into exile
- Slaughter of infants
- Exodus from Egypt
### Narrative Criticism
Plotting in Matthew: Identifying Large Narrative Blocks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Block</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Sections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Proclamation of the Kingdom</td>
<td>3:1–7:29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sermon on the Mount 5:1–7:29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Ministry &amp; Mission in Galilee</td>
<td>8:1–10:42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mission discourse 10:1-42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Questioning of/Opposition to Jesus</td>
<td>11:1–13:52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Parable discourse 13:1-52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discourse on the church 18:1-35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Proclamation of the Kingdom</td>
<td>19:1–25:46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Eschatological discourse 24:1–25:46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Narrative Criticism
The Discourse Structure in Matthew

1. Sermon on the Mount (5:1–7:29) a

2. Mission discourse (10:1-42) b

   3. Parable discourse (13:1-52) c

4. Discourse on community (18:1-35) b'

5. Eschatological / apocalyptic discourse (24:1–25:46) a'
Narrative Criticism
Defining a Chiastic Pattern

Definition
A chiasm is a plotting technique whereby the author arranges information in a particular order and then reverses that order. It can be done on the level of single words or phrases or on the level of larger narrative units.

Examples
- Matt 12:22-23
- Matt 13:13-15
- gospel structure
Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute; and he cured him, so that the one who had been mute could speak and see. All the crowds were amazed and said, “Can this be the Son of David?”
Narrative Criticism
Chiasm on the Level of Phrases

Matt 13:13-15

“The reason I speak to them in parables is that ‘seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.’ With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says: ‘You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive.’”
Narrative Criticism
Chiasm in the Discourse Structure in Matthew

1. Sermon on the Mount (5:1–7:29) a
2. Mission discourse (10:1-42) b
3. Parable discourse (13:1-52) c
4. Discourse on community (18:1-35) b'
5. Eschatological / apocalyptic discourse (24:1–25:46) a'

In groups of 2, use the handout to identify “links” (shared words and motifs) in discourses 1 and 5.
Narrative Criticism
Chiasm in the Discourse Structure in Matthew

1. Sermon on the Mount (5:1–7:29) a

2. Mission discourse (10:1-42) b

3. Parable discourse (13:1-52) c

4. Discourse on community (18:1-35) b'

5. Eschatological / apocalyptic discourse (24:1–25:46) a'

The center of the chiasm functions as a plot “pivot”
A narrative inclusio is a literary device based on a concentric principle, also known as bracketing or an envelope structure, which consists of creating a frame by placing similar material at the beginning and end of a section.

Wikipedia, “Inclusio"
## Narrative Criticism

Chiasm on the Level of the Entire Gospel: A Narrative *Inclusio*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Pages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infancy Narrative</td>
<td>1:1–2:23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proclamation of the Kingdom</td>
<td>3:1–7:29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry &amp; Mission in Galilee</td>
<td>8:1–10:42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning of/Opposition to Jesus</td>
<td>11:1–13:52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christology &amp; Ecclesiology</td>
<td>13:53–18:35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proclamation of the Kingdom</td>
<td>19:1–25:46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion / Resurrection Narrative</td>
<td>26:1–28:20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Narrative Criticism

Chiasm on the Level of the Entire Gospel: A Narrative *Inclusio*

**Infancy Narrative (1:1–2:23)**

- **a** “Emmanuel: God with us” (1:24)
- **b** Birth of ruler prophesied for Israel (2:1-6)
- **c** Escape from death (2:1-15)
- **d** Massacre of infants (2:16-18)
- **e** Return to Israel (2:19-23)

- **e’** Journey to Jerusalem (21–25)
- **d’** Betrayal, arrest, execution (26–27)
- **c’** Escape from death via resurrection (28:1-8)
- **b’** Jesus assumes “all authority on heaven and earth” (28:16-20)
- **a’** “I am with you always” (28:20)

Introducing the ATLA Database

- This database logs bibliographic information for all articles, essays in books, book titles, book reviews, and media that deal with the topic of religion.

- It is the most comprehensive database our library has, covering thousands of journals and books each year, including *New Testament Abstracts*.

- Think of it as “Google for religion.”
Exercise for Next Class
Workbook pp. 90-93

Develop a 1-page research proposal. Include the following elements:

- a 1-3 sentence statement of your topic or question and your chosen method (or at least what you want to find out about your topic / passage)

- a bibliography of eight titles in the proper style (see Style Sheet)
  - six titles should be the most relevant ones from your NTA and ATLA exercises
  - there should be one book on method
  - there should be one commentary on your gospel
  - they must ALL be professional, not popular