



METHOD

Let's see how this works ...

Let's Get Uncomfortable

Ezekiel 1:1-3

¹ In the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the exiles by the Chebar canal, the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. ² On the fifth day of the month (it was the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin), ³ the word of the Lord came to Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the Chebar canal, and the hand of the Lord was upon him there.

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Let's Get Uncomfortable

Matthew 27:37

And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, “**This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.**”

Luke 23:38

There was also an inscription over him, “**This is the King of the Jews.**”

Mark 15:26

And the inscription of the charge against him read, “**The King of the Jews.**”

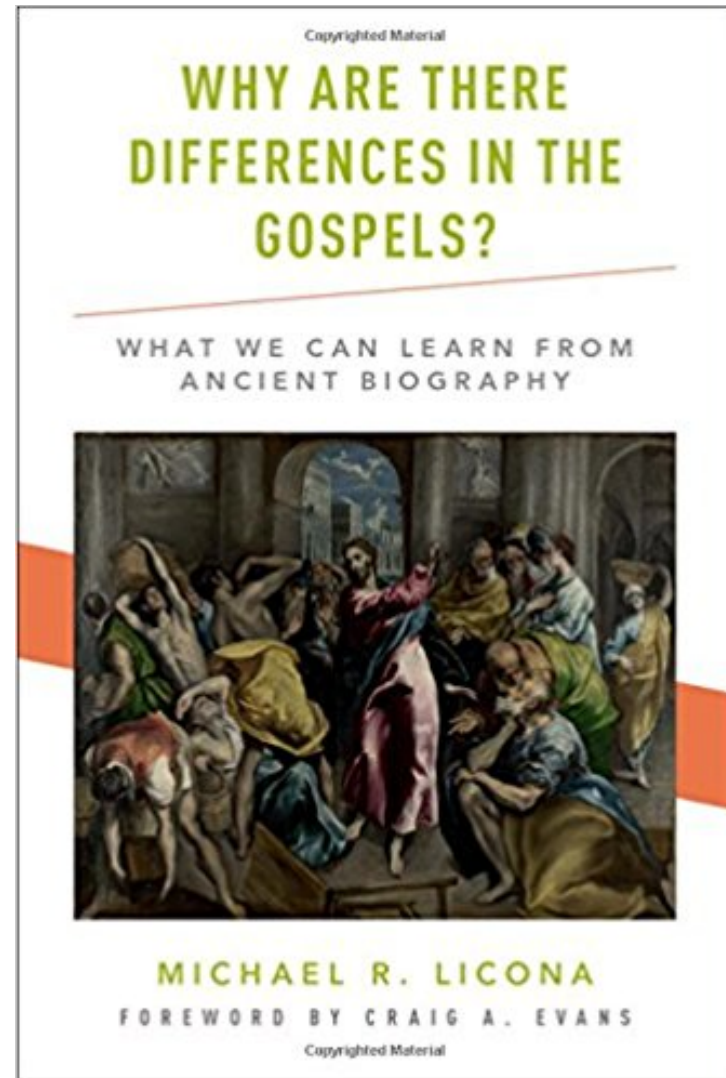
John 19:19

Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It read, “**Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews.**”

Possibilities

- Literary Convention

- Authorial Intent



Authorial Intent: Matthew

- Chiastic structure, coupled with
- Intentional Contrast

Broadly:

chiastic structure of Matthew's gospel as a whole is well known

Authorial Intent: Matthew

Individual chapters and sections of Matthew are also structured chiastically:

Matthew 13 (Constable)

Matthew 13

A The introduction (vv. 1-2)

B The first parable to the crowds (vv. 3-9)

C An explanatory interlude: purpose and explanation (vv. 10-23)

D Three more parables to the crowd (vv. 24-33)

E Explanatory interlude: fulfillment and explanation (vv. 34-43)

D' Three parables to the disciples (vv. 44-48)

C' An explanatory interlude: explanation and response (vv. 49-51)

B' The last parable to the disciples (v. 52)

A' The conclusion (v. 53)

Matthew 27:11-31a

Interrogation of Jesus as “**King of the Jews,**” 27:11-14

Barabbas and Jesus, 27:15-17

Pilate convinced of Jesus’s innocence, 27:18

The message of Pilate’s wife, 27:19

Pilate’s three questions, 27:20-23

Pilate’s symbolic Handwashing, 27:24

Jesus rejected by the people, 27:25

Barabbas and Jesus, 27:26

Mocking of Jesus as “**King of the Jews,**” 27:27-31a.

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Superscription: [27:37](#)

Matthew 27:11-31a

“... by adding the name Jesus Matthew perhaps intends to carry forward the contrast of the two men called Jesus which he has set up in vv. 16–23.”

R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1068

“An interesting variant occurs in Matt 27:16–17, where he is called ‘Jesus Barabbas.’ While extant manuscript evidence is weak, Origen implies that most manuscripts in his day (*ca.* A.D. 240) included the full name. Many scholars today accept the full name in Matthew as original and suggest that it was probably omitted by later scribes because of the repugnance of having Jesus Christ’s name being shared by Barabbas . . .”

Wilkins, “Barabbas (Person),” AYBD, 607

Matthew 27:11-31a

“ . . . There is thus a harsh irony in the fact that Jesus dies associated with a movement from which he has attempted to distance himself in the face of the unthinking enthusiasm of his followers (see on 16:22–23; 21:1–11; 22:15–22). This is just what the Sanhedrin had planned in the charge they framed to bring before Pilate.”

R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1068

Matthew 27:11-31a

which read, “This is Jesus, ^vthe King of the Jews.” ³⁸ Then two ^wrobbers were crucified with him, ^xone on the right and one on the left. ³⁹ And ^ythose who passed by ^zderided him, ^awagging their heads ⁴⁰ and saying, ^b“You

Surface	read,	“This	is	Jesus,
MSS	γεγραμμένην· ¹⁰	Οὗτός ¹¹	ἐστίν ¹²	Ἰησοῦς
MSS Trl	gegrammenēn	Houtos	estin	lēsous
Lemma	γράφω	οὗτος	εἰμί	Ἰησοῦς

Getting More Uncomfortable

- Numbers 5:11-31
- Deut 21:15-17
- 2 Samuel 11 vs 1 Chron 20
- Baal Cycle and Daniel 7
- Psa 74:12-17 (cp. KTU)
- Matt 2:13-15
- Eph 6:5-9; Philemon 8-19
- Ezek 5:5; Ezek 38:12
- Prov 8:27-28 (link)

Numbers 5:11-31

Trial by ordeal –

- Death penalty (norm) for adultery not in view because guilt not established
- What is the operative assumption of the trial by ordeal?

Numbers 5:11-31

Trial by ordeal

“. . . the guilty woman was not discovered in the act of adultery (5:13). Since this is the case, the community and, particularly, the angry husband, is effectively prohibited by the law of the water ordeal from taking matters into their own hands. This would serve as a protection for women suspected of adultery, or who might be the target of someone’s animosity or jealousy. The point is that secret adultery can and will be punished only by God.”

Deut 21:15-17

- Is there a mandate?
- Endorsement?
- What's the point of the law?
- Divinely ordained culture?

2 Sam 11 vs. 1 Chr 20

- Agenda?
- Are agendas forbidden?
- Deception?

Baal Cycle and Daniel 7

- Who is God?
- Who is the son of man?
- Polytheism?
- What is the effect / purpose?

Psa 74:12-17

- Who brings order and defeats chaos?
 - Why the application to the exodus?
 - Who is glorified?
 - Who loses glory?
-
- cp. Psa 24 and Baal cycle scene

Matt 2:13-15 / Hos 11:1

- Is there a prophetic problem?
- Whose problem is it?
- Who is the son of God?
- Why is the identification important?
- Is Matthew a hermeneutical hack?

Eph 6:5-9; Philemon 8-19

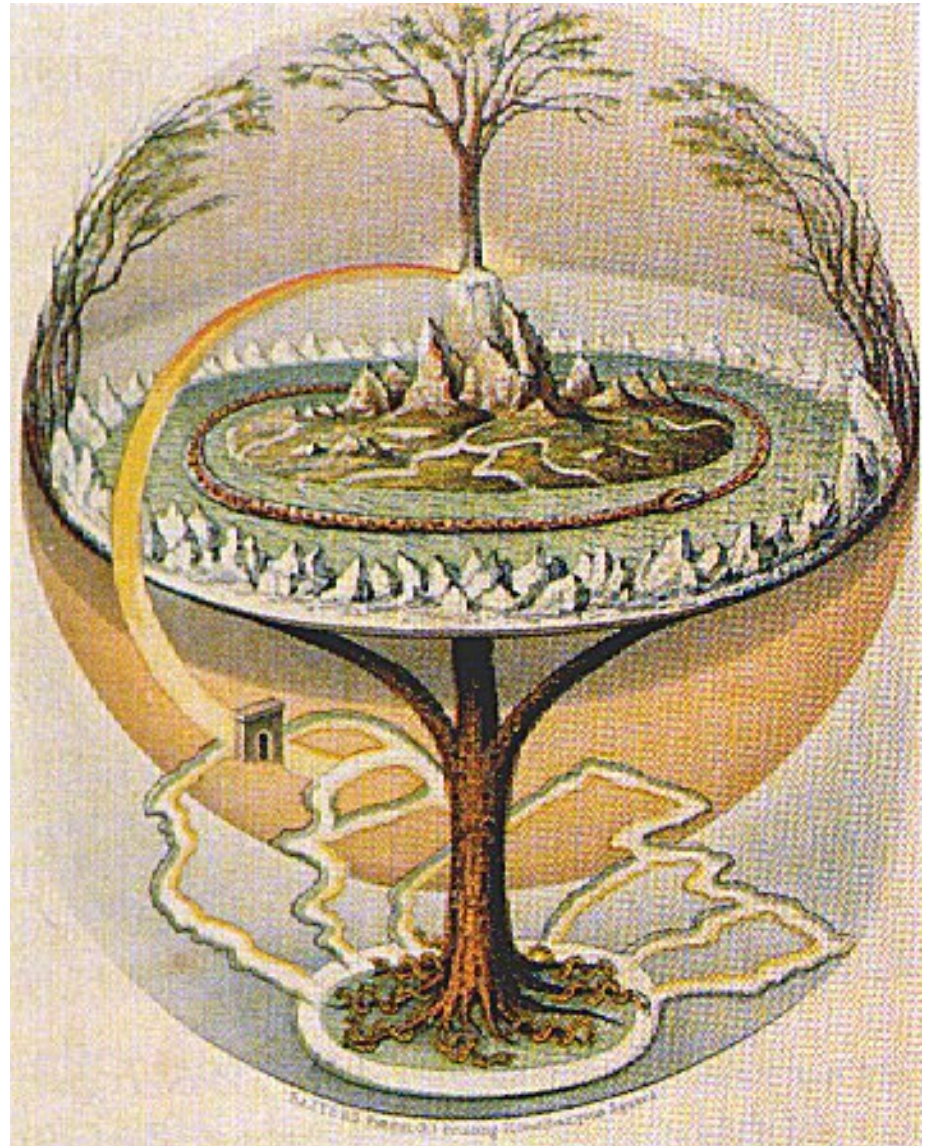
- Endorsement?
- Why not call for defiance?
- What's the alternative?
- Who is put at risk?

Ezek 5:5; Ezek 38:12

- Is this about geography?
- Literalism?
- Metaphor?
- “mythic theology” (cosmic geography)

“World Tree”

- Imaginary axis running through center (“navel”) of the earth
- Unites heaven, earth, what’s under the earth
- Cosmic Mountain / garden



Prov 8:27-28

- What are we asked to believe?
 - What are the **truth propositions**?
- Mission accomplished?

Prov 8:27-28

(my FAQ): God picked the writers and knew what he was getting — and didn't care that the writers weren't omniscient. The act of producing Scripture doesn't require God transfer his omniscience about the natural world to the writers. Had God put modern scientific knowledge into the head of the writer for the purpose of satisfying later readers, the original readers wouldn't have known what the writer was talking about. That defeats the enterprise and purpose of communication.

Prov 8:27-28

Since we have such information in the Bible, and that informative isn't scientific, that tells us the purpose of God prompting people to write wasn't to produce science — else we would have science. And so the authority of Scripture needs to be assessed in accord with God's intent (not what we wish was his intent). That means we let the Bible be what it is and not criticize it for not being what it was never intended to be.

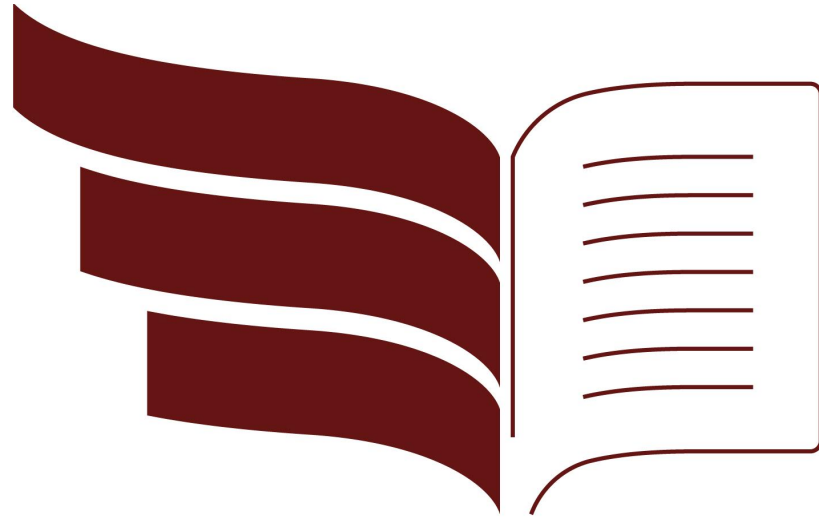
Prov 8:27-28

This was actually very wise on God's part. Why? because if God inspired Scripture today and the writers wrote with the scientific precision of today, in a thousand years the product would still be criticized — because science changes. By not typing the content to science, God had people produce something that transcends science, and always will.

Prov 8:27-28

The above applies to knowledge gained through experience and observation, made knowable by human endeavor (technology — the tools of science).

Knowledge of God and the spiritual world, by definition, is not gained through the tools of science. We must judge its validity by its coherence (philosophical / rational)



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