

Matthew written to Jews, do the differences matter ?

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Assertions/Conclusions of this article

To show that just because the exceptions only appear in Matthew that it does not mean they do not apply to the church, as some erroneously assert.

Supporting Evidence

Some state that because Matt. was written to Jews that the difference of the exception clause (Matthew 19:9 and 5:32...the part that says "except for fornication" (porneia) applied only to the Jews because of their betrothal customs.

Some make this claim using the point that the exception do not appear in Mark or Luke, but do in Matthew. The supposition is that since Matthews audience was Jewish, then the exceptions only applied to the Jews.

But we see elsewhere in other instances where this very thing happens in scripture, where something is stated in a couple gospels, but a critical detail is left out of one account...

1.0

Here we show that, just like the exceptions in the gospels, that there are other instances in scripture where every gospel might not include every single word that others might, and that this is why we learn to harmonize the details.

See here where no sign will be given?

Mar 8:11-13 KJV And the Pharisees came forth, and began to question with him, seeking of him a sign from heaven, tempting him. (12) And he sighed deeply in his spirit, and saith, Why doth this generation seek after a sign? verily I say unto you, **There shall no sign be given unto this generation.**(13) And he left them, and entering into the ship again departed to the other side.

Seems like a straightforward statement with NO 'exceptions' given. NO sign will be given to this generation.

Now, lets look to the 'rest' of the story for the whole truth.

The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall **no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas**. And he left them, and departed.

(Mat 16:1-4 KJV)

And so we see that, yes, some 'sign' WILL be given even tho Mark shows no sign will be.

Do you find it odd that again we are dealing with Matthew verses Mark here again on this type of thing?

Its almost as if Mark left out quite a few details in his account.

Surely he 'forgot' to mention that the pharisees said '**for every cause**' when they were asking Jesus about divorce in Matt 19-Mark 10.

This is no different and there is no contradiction. Mark and Lukes accounts simply do not contain the exceptions. Its no big deal because Matthews has it twice.

Just like the example above. Mark again fails to record a small detail, but its right there in Matthew for all to see.

So what do we do? Do we say that the Jews were taught that a sign was given but the gentiles were told a completely different story?

No...we accept that Mark didnt record the part about the sign of Jonas.....just as he didnt record 'for every cause' as Matthew does...and just as he and Luke didnt bother with presenting the exceptions.

Its all easily harmonized and precisely why we have FOUR gospel records..

Lets compare this to Jesus exception in Matt 19.

Mark 8:11-13 KJVThere shall **no sign** be given unto this generation.

versus...

Mat 16:1-4 KJV...**no sign** be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

see the word 'but' there ?
That word is this...

G1508

ἐἰ μή

ei mē

i may

From G1487 and G3361; if not: - but, except (that), if not, more than, save (only) that, saving, till.

Now lets look at Matthew versus Mark concerning the exception clause...

...Whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery.

(Mar 10:11-12)

versus...

...Whosoever shall put away his wife, [color=#FF0000]**except** it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.

(Mat 19:9)[/color]

see the red 'except' there?
Can you guess what word it is?

G1508

ἐἰ μή

ei mē

i may

From G1487 and G3361; if not: - but, except (that), if not, more than, save (only) that, saving, till.

So we have the SAME exact issue between Matthew and Mark in the exceptions where putting away is concerned as we do between those SAME two writers (oddly enough its MARK who again leaves some MAJOR point out) where that generation not being given a sign.

In Matthew in BOTH cases he makes a statement and then presents an exception to that statement.

And in Mark in BOTH cases he fails to mention the exception Matthew gives in his account of the details...there is no other hidden agenda in Mark not mentioning the exception as some preach falsely. Mark is completely alone in this particular instance because even Luke shows the exception

And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet.

(Luk 11:29)

So we see that Mark seems to be in a habit of leaving out very critical detail that others may or may not have presented.

Matthew 19 and Mark 10 present the account of the Pharisees 'tempting' Jesus over putting away a wife 'for every cause'. Matthew records the phrase 'for every cause' while Mark just so happens to leave that tidbit out as well. Matthew didnt ADD the exception for Jewish custom, just as Mark did not omit it for gentiles who also used betrothal (do some research on Roman betrothal at the time of Christ, there was no reason whatsoever to keep the exception from the gentiles who DID also use betrothal and would have needed this very critical teaching as well...*IF* it is as some present it).

If someone is going to reject the the exception in Matthew saying there were two stories given, one to Jew and one to gentile, then the same MUST be the case where this sign is concerned....apparently either Matthew was going around ADDING to Christs words based on the errors of some.

What we do with the above is simply harmonize them.

We KNOW Mark didnt take away anything and we KNOW Matthew didnt add anything.

So we simply accept that Jesus DID say 'except the sign of Jonah'...even tho Mark failed to record it and we KNOW Jesus gave His exception to the gentiles as well...again, even tho Mark failed to record it.

2.0

Lets look at the example of the empty tomb and see the great differences there. between these two writers.

Mat 28:2-6 And behold, **a great earthquake occurred**; for an angel of the Lord, having come down out of heaven, came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat on it. (3) And **His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow**. (4) And the guards were shaken for fear of him, and became like dead men. (5) But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. (6) He is not here! For He is risen, just as He said. Come; see the place where the Lord was lying.

Mar 16:5-8 And entering into the tomb, **they saw a young man sitting on the right clothed with a white robe**, and they were alarmed. (6) But he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You are seeking Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has arisen! He is not here! See the place where they put Him. (7) But go, say to His disciples, and Peter, that He is going before you into Galilee; there you shall see Him, just as He said to you." (8) And going out, they fled from the tomb, but trembling and amazement held them; and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid

See how Marks description of the Angel(s) is lacking greatly compared to Matthews?

Marks writing seems many times to just be recording occurrences without adding a lot of detail.

Possibly why Mark is the shortest of the Gospels

Mark doesnt even mention this "Great Earthquake" that Matthew tells about.

So WHICH is right.....Mark to the Gentile, Matthew to the Jews ?

Was it One angel or two?

Did they appear like a young man in a white robe to Marks audience, or like lightening to Matthews?

Do these record TWO different events or one ?

Did the great earthquake happen according to Matthews account or not?

Was the earthquake taught to Jews and not to Gentiles ?

Some would have to say as much by the way they teach that Matthew is written to Jews and Mark to Gentiles.

ALL of them are right, we take the TOGETHER in CONTEXT and find the HARMONY between them.

3.0

We see other "discrepancies", even among the SAME writer Luke in Acts.

And the men who were traveling with him stood speechless, hearing the voice but seeing no one.

(Act 9:7 EMTV)

versus

"And those who were with me observed the light and became terrified, but they did not hear the voice of the One speaking to me.

(Act 22:9 EMTV)

We have them hearing, but not seeing in chap 9, then just the opposite in chap 22.

Which is correct?

Possibly its meaningless as that isnt the point of the text, but we can clearly see that even when its the same writer so called discrepancies can occur, let alone a writer simply not recording every detail that another has.

Of course, just like the other instances, this isnt actually any discrepancy at all, but simply is in need of harmonization.

Matthew being written to Jews has NO bearing on this matter.

There are other books such as Hebrews to those Hebrew converts and James being written to those of the twelve tribes scattered abroad.

Will we say "these are written to Jew and therefore not for us gentiles" ?

Will we cast aside ANY teaching we dont like if it wasnt written to us gentiles specifically?

Jesus didnt SAY it was only for Jews and their betrothal year. He made on clear exception for divorce and remarriage.

We know this, God gives His law to humanity. He wants all people everywhere to obey Him.

When God distinguishes that a rule is for one group and not the whole, He states it clearly (below about Levitical priests forbidden to take wives "put away").

Since Jesus did not specify that this only applied to Jews, there is no reason to think that it did.

Since Jesus also did not specify "espoused wife" but clearly the word for "wife" was used, He must have been upholding that, as it always has, the sexual sins of the guilty break the conditional covenant of marriage. Jesus states we can put away a wife for this reason alone.

So we know that when some proclaim that Matthew was written to Jews, that it is irrelevant, it was written for the followers of Jesus Christ.

The rules apply evenly to all, the Jews do not receive some special ability to protect themselves from a whoring spouse while the rest of His children are left open to abuse. To state as much would be an absurdity.

IF it made ANY difference that Matthew had differences, then to follow proper rules of interpretation, we would have to do the same with EVERY book in the bible. Anything that was written to a Jewish Christians would NOT apply to gentile Christians if it were not repeated in a book written TO gentiles.

The fact is this is absurd.

The rules of Christianity are given to ALL of us, not some rules for this group and some to the other.

When you hear someone hand you a line like "Matthew was written to Jews and applies to the betrothal period" ask them to PROVE it conclusively...keeping in mind all the other material in this site. They have not a single clear verse that makes the assertion...all they do is fill in the gaps with thier own ideas, rejecting the facts in the matter as we have discussed on this website. (ex. Porneia being ALL inclusive of sexual sin and NOT just premarital sex)