

# INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW



## **WALKING WITH MATTHEW IN THE LAND OF JESUS**

DOWN AND CONNOR  
2019

# WELCOME

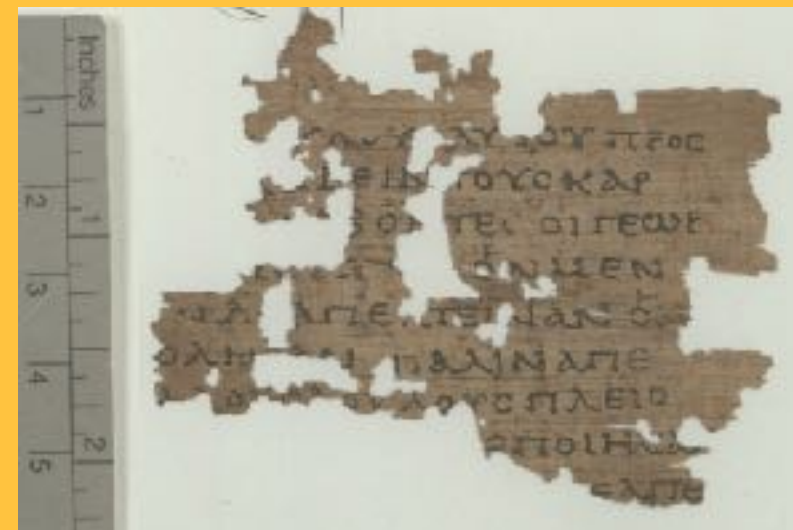
- BEFORE WE GO: INTRODUCTION TO MATTHEW
- DAY 1: THE BIRTH NARRATIVES (MT 1-2 / Exodus 1-2)
- DAY 2: THE TEMPLE ACTION (MT 21)
- DAY 3: THE LORD'S PRAYER (MT 6)
- DAY 4: THE RESURRECTION (MT 28)
- DAY 5: THE TRANSFIGURATION (MT 17 / Exodus 24 and 34)
- DAY 6: THE CONFESSION OF PETER (MT 18)
- DAY 7: THE BEATITUDES (MT 5-7 / Pentateuch)

# INTRODUCTION

- Taking up an ancient document
- Background
- Antioch
- Context
- Kind of writing
- Layout
- Moses in Matthew

# An ancient document

- Papyrus 64 / 67 (Mt 26:23, 31)
- Papyrus 104 (Mt 21:34-37)
- Codex Sinaiticus (Mt 6:4-32)





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# An ancient document

- Matthew: the second longest Gospel
- Almost all of Mark is reproduced
- From 13 onwards, he follows Mark step by step
- Large amount of M material
- Large number of parables: 19 (13 unique)

# An ancient document

- The ascription of this gospel to the apostle Matthew dates to at least from Irenaeus (ca. A.D. 185; cf. his *Adversus Haereses* 3.1.2; 3.11.8)
- Also possibly from Papias (ca. 140), though it is not clear whether the collection of Jesus' *logia* by Matthew that Papias refers to is to be identified with our gospel of Matthew (cf. Euseius, *Hist. Eccl.* 3.39.16).
- Q: would a supposed eye-witness copy from Mark?
- Q: are Matthew and Levi the one person?

# Background

- After the destruction of Jerusalem and the re-organisation of Judaism i.e. post 70
- After the separation of church and synagogue, i.e. post 70
- Before Ignatius of Antioch, who cites this text, i.e. before the beginning of the 2nd century
- ...baptised by John **in order that all righteousness might be fulfilled** by him (*Smyrnaeans* 1:1 AF-E)



# Background

- NB: this Gospel was written in Greek
- NB: organic growth out of a Jewish matrix
- Jerusalem and Judea? Disrupted after 70
- Caesarea Maritima? Hellenistic Christianity
- Northern Syria (Edessa): Aramaic speaking
- Coastal cities of Phoenicia / Alexandria (unknown)
- Antioch in Syria (Greek speaking, large Jewish population, prestigious centre + missionary focus ( Matthew 2:1–12; 8:5–13; 15:21–28; 27:54; 28:16–20)

# Background

- By the time of this Gospel, the mission to the Gentiles is already assumed and does not need to be defended.
- Matthew presupposes the destruction of the Temple in AD 70.
- There is a church organisation (prophets, sages and scribes), but nothing like what we find in the Pastorals. So before 100.
- Cited already by Ignatius of [Antioch](#). So, before 110.

# Antioch

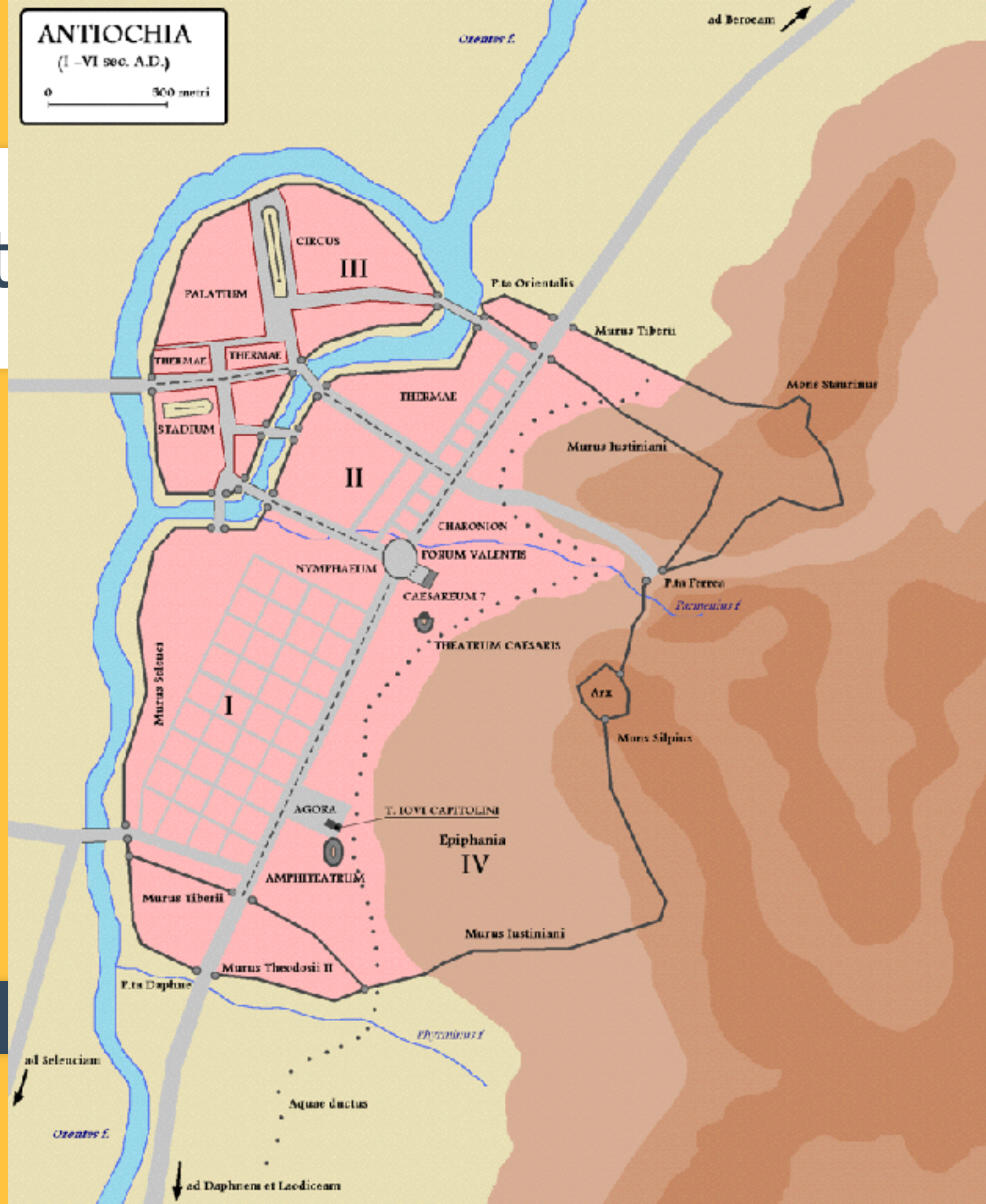
- Antioch: Christianity arrived in the 30s
- It enjoyed a lengthy development, with its own scribal traditions and theology
- The community was able to afford the expensive undertaking of a large revision of Mark, so some level of financial stability
- The strong link with Peter supports Antioch



# Antioch



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# Antioch

# Antioch





# Antioch





# Antioch





# Antioch

- The largest and most important of 16 cities in the ancient world that were named after the Syrian emperor Antiochus. His son, Seleucus I Nicator, founder of the Seleucid Empire, built it and named it in his honour.
- The population of the city in the mid-1st century A.D. may have reached 300 thousand, though estimates run as low as 100 thousand.
- The larger figure is suggested by the 1st-century geographer Strabo (Geog. 16.2.5), who said it was not much smaller than Alexandria in Egypt.
- That city had more than 300 thousand freemen in the mid-1st century B.C. (Diodorus Siculus Hist. 17.52).

# Antioch

- Antioch had a large, wealthy Jewish population in the 1st century (Josephus BJ 7:43). These Jews endowed beautifully decorated synagogues, and “constantly attracted to their religious ceremonies multitudes of Greeks” (BJ 7.45).
- The first mention of Antioch in the NT is in reference to a proselyte to the Jewish faith from this city, one Nicolaus, who accepted Christ and was subsequently appointed as one of seven men to oversee the needs of Hellenist widows in Jerusalem in the early days of the Church (Acts 6:5).
- The city was surrounded by a wall and contained many important buildings including a palace and a circus, both begun in 67 B.C. Starting in 47 B.C. Julius Caesar constructed a theater, an amphitheater, bathhouses, an aqueduct, and a Kaisareion, perhaps the oldest basilica in the east, for use by the cult of Rome. It carried his name and contained a statue of himself. He also rebuilt the Pantheon temple.



# Antioch

- Missionary work was done by people who fled the persecutions in Jerusalem and soon after arriving in Antioch “spoke to the Greeks also” (Acts 11:20). These “Greeks” were probably “Godfearers,” Gentiles who were frequently attracted to Jewish monotheism (e.g., Acts 10:22).
- This missionary activity resulted in “a great number” (Acts 11:21) of gentile conversions and prompted the church in Jerusalem to send Barnabas to Antioch to monitor the progress. Barnabas, impressed by the large number of converts and probably aware of Paul’s commission to preach to Gentiles (Acts 26:17), brought him from Tarsus to work in Antioch.

# Antioch

- For a year, they worked together in this gentile centre (Acts 11:26) which subsequently became the sponsoring church for his missionary journeys to the gentile world (13:3; 15:40; 18:22–23). The term “Christian” (“follower of the Messiah”) was first applied to the disciples of Jesus in this predominantly Gentile Christian city (Acts 11:26).
- So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. (Matthew 4:24 NRSV) Cf. Acts 15:23, 41; 18:18; 20:3; 21:3; Gal. 1:21.

# Context

1. Matthew is the most Jewish of the gospels; it was written by a disciple of Jesus in either Hebrew or Aramaic, for Jewish Christians. According to this view, Matthew wrote before 70 in Palestine.
2. The relationship with Judaism is an internal one. That is to say, Matthew wrote after 70, but for a body which still considered itself Jewish, although having to face the exclusion of the synagogue, which followed the including of the birkath ha-minim of the council of Jamnia. The great arguments in favour of this continuity and discontinuity are the expression "their synagogues" (4:23; 9:35; 10:17.12) and the verse about the Temple tax (17:24-27). Thus, in Bornkam's expression, the Matthean discussion is "intra muros".

# Background

3. Matthew writes from outside Judaism (extra muros); the parting has taken place and there is much rivalry between church and synagogue. The community is open to Gentiles. This powerful tension with the synagogue is reflected in passages which refer to persecution of Christians by Jews:

Mt. 23:34 Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from town to town...

Mt. 10:23 When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next; for truly, I say to you, you will not have gone through all the towns of Israel, before the Son of man comes.

4. There has been a complete break with Judaism; the author is a Gentile Christian, whose community is not in dialogue with any branch of Judaism. At the time of writing, most of the members are Gentiles. This view depends on being able to show that Matthew's redaction is in strong contrast to his sources. In general, there is a powerful polemic against Judaism, and even its rejection in the trial scene of the Messiah.

# Background

- A sect is not only a minority, and not only characterised by opposition to norms accepted by the parent-body, but also claims in a more or less exclusive way to be what the parent-body claims to be.
- Whether such a group formally severs itself, or is excommunicated, will depend largely on the degree of self-definition attained by the parent-body and the level of tolerance obtaining within it.

# Background

- Jewish-Christian? Author or final redactor?
- Extreme anti-Jewish polemic
- Mistakes: Sadducees (22:23); Pharisees and Sadducees together (16:11); riding two donkeys (21:2, 7); Jeremiah for Zechariah (27:9)
- Mark has more semitisms and words in Aramaic / Hebrew; often simply translates into Greek only
- Comparison with Paul is revealing: deep love for the Jews?
- Either a liberated, Hellenistic Jewish convert or a Gentile Christian with a great reverence for the Jewish-Christian traditions of Antioch



# Kind of writing

- A canonical gospel is best defined as a narrative of the words and deeds of Jesus of Nazareth, culminating inexorably in his death and resurrection, which narrative is meant to communicate to the believing audience the saving effects of what is narrated.
- The meshing of words and deeds, the inevitable thrust toward both death and resurrection, the quasi-sacramental intent of the narrative as saving proclamation, and a lack of any character sketch of the chief figure set our Gospels apart from the classical genres suggested.

# Kind of writing

**Mark**  
**(678)**  
The Sower

**Q source**  
**(252 vv)**  
The Lord's Prayer

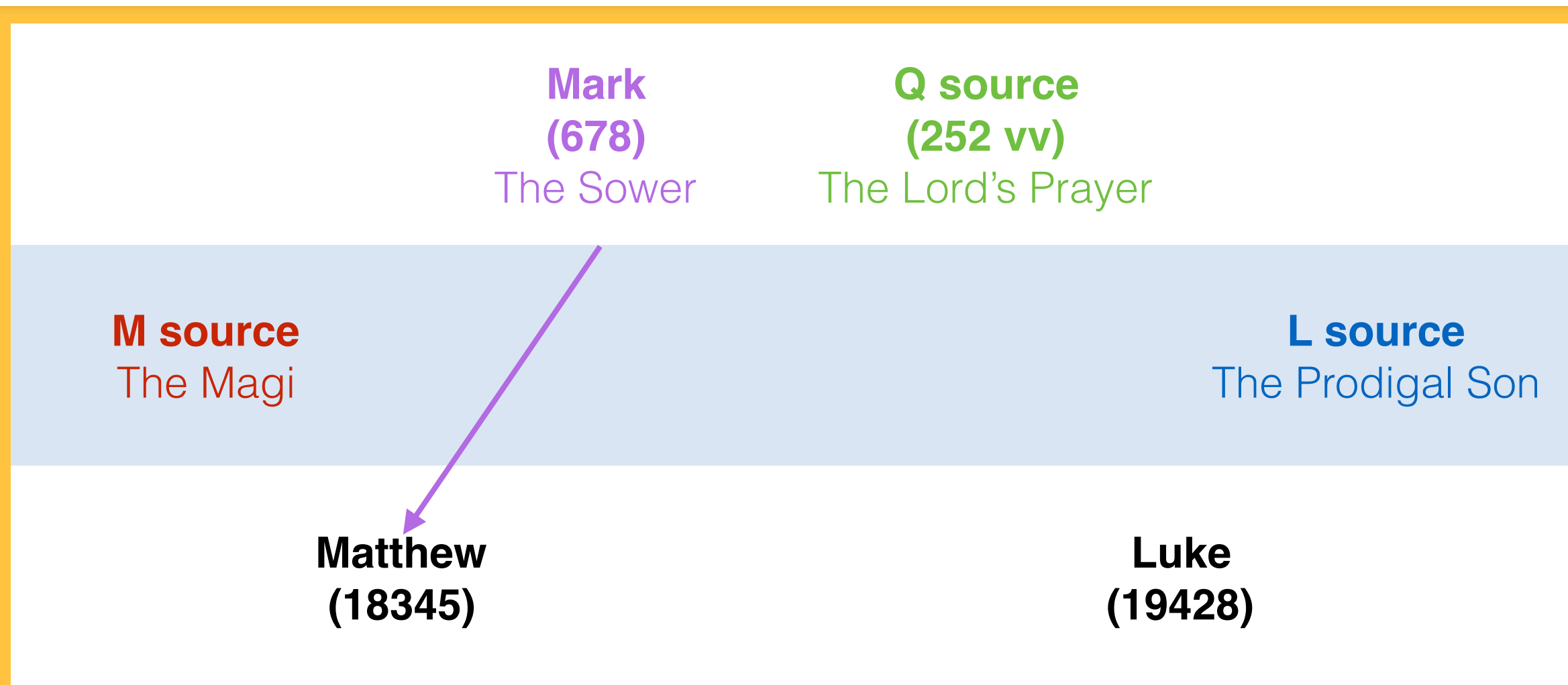
**M source**  
The Magi

**L source**  
The Prodigal Son

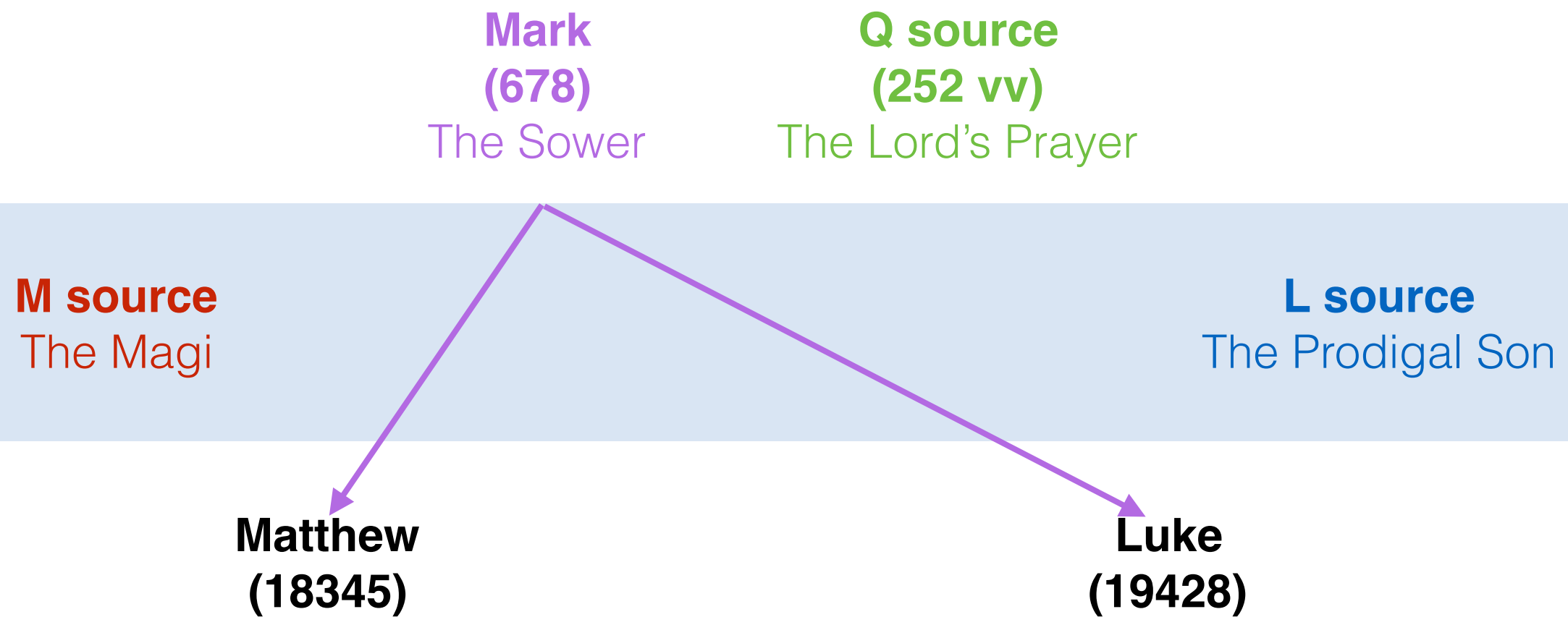
**Matthew**  
**(18345)**

**Luke**  
**(19428)**

# Kind of writing

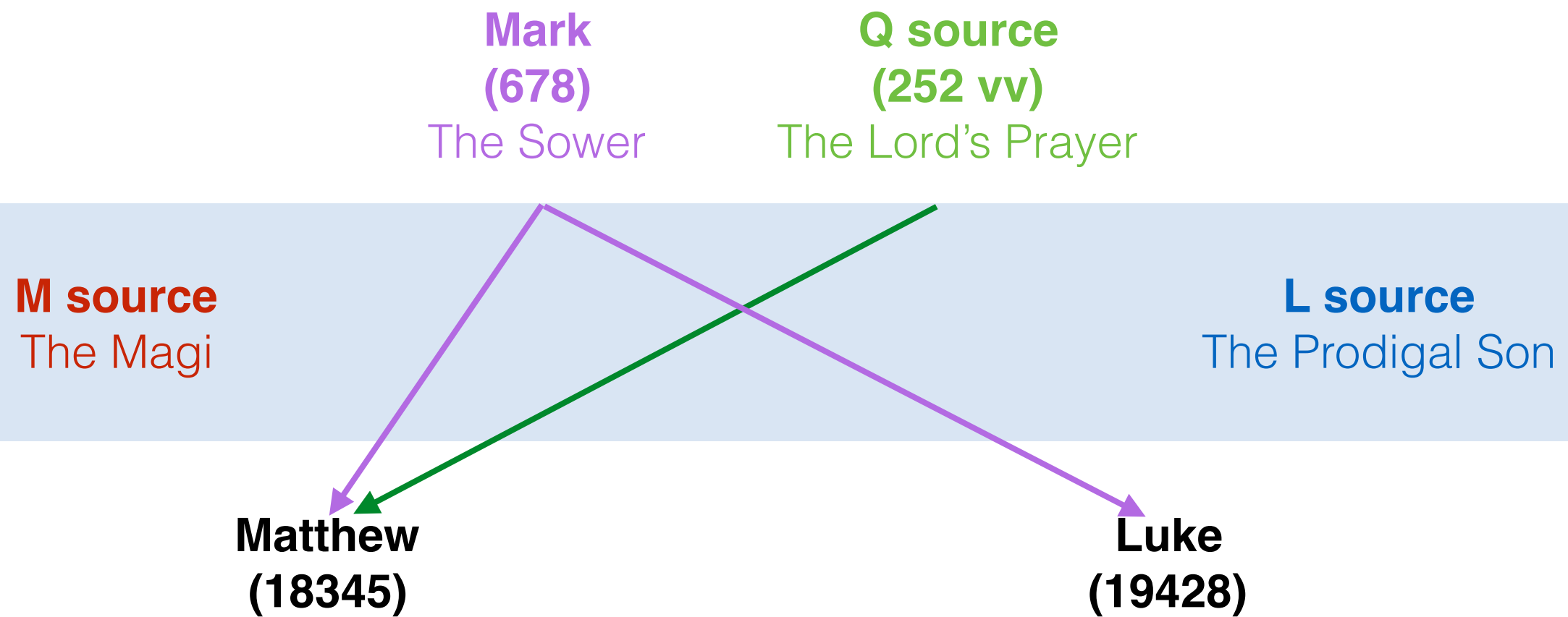


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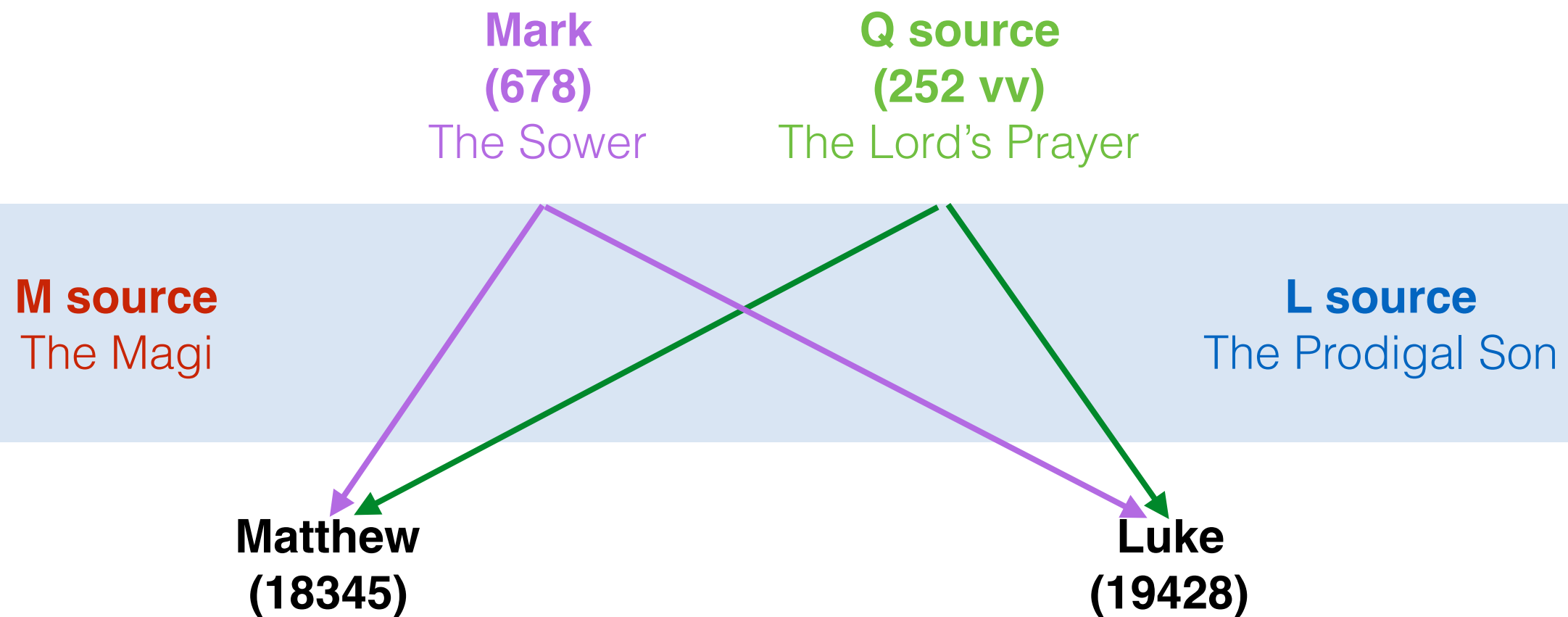




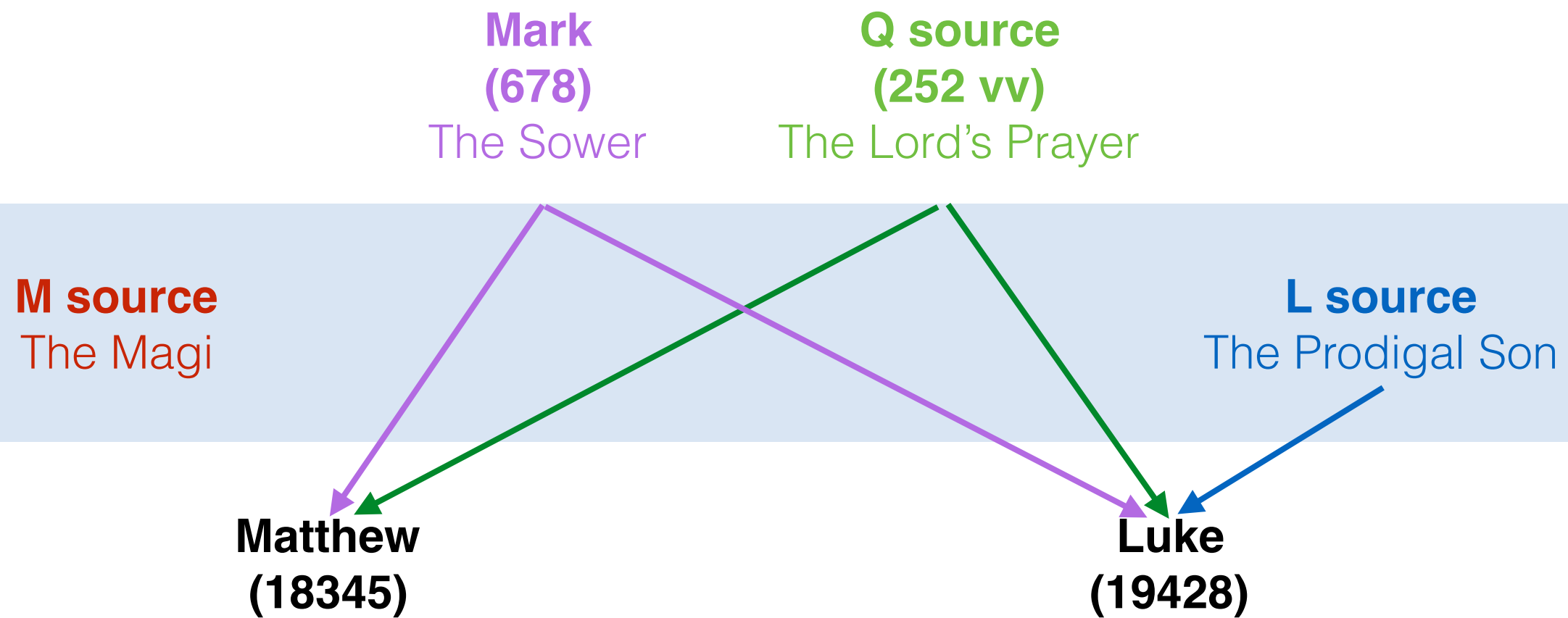
# Kind of writing



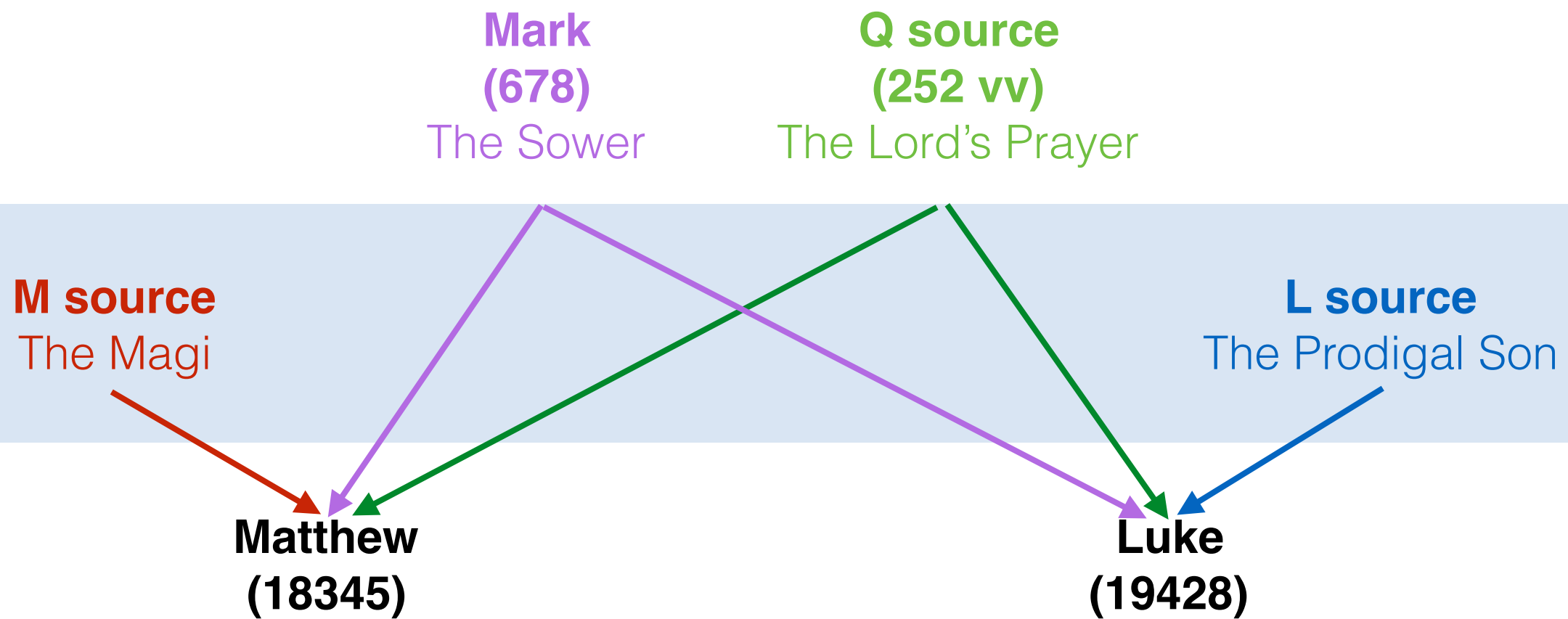
# Kind of writing



# Kind of writing

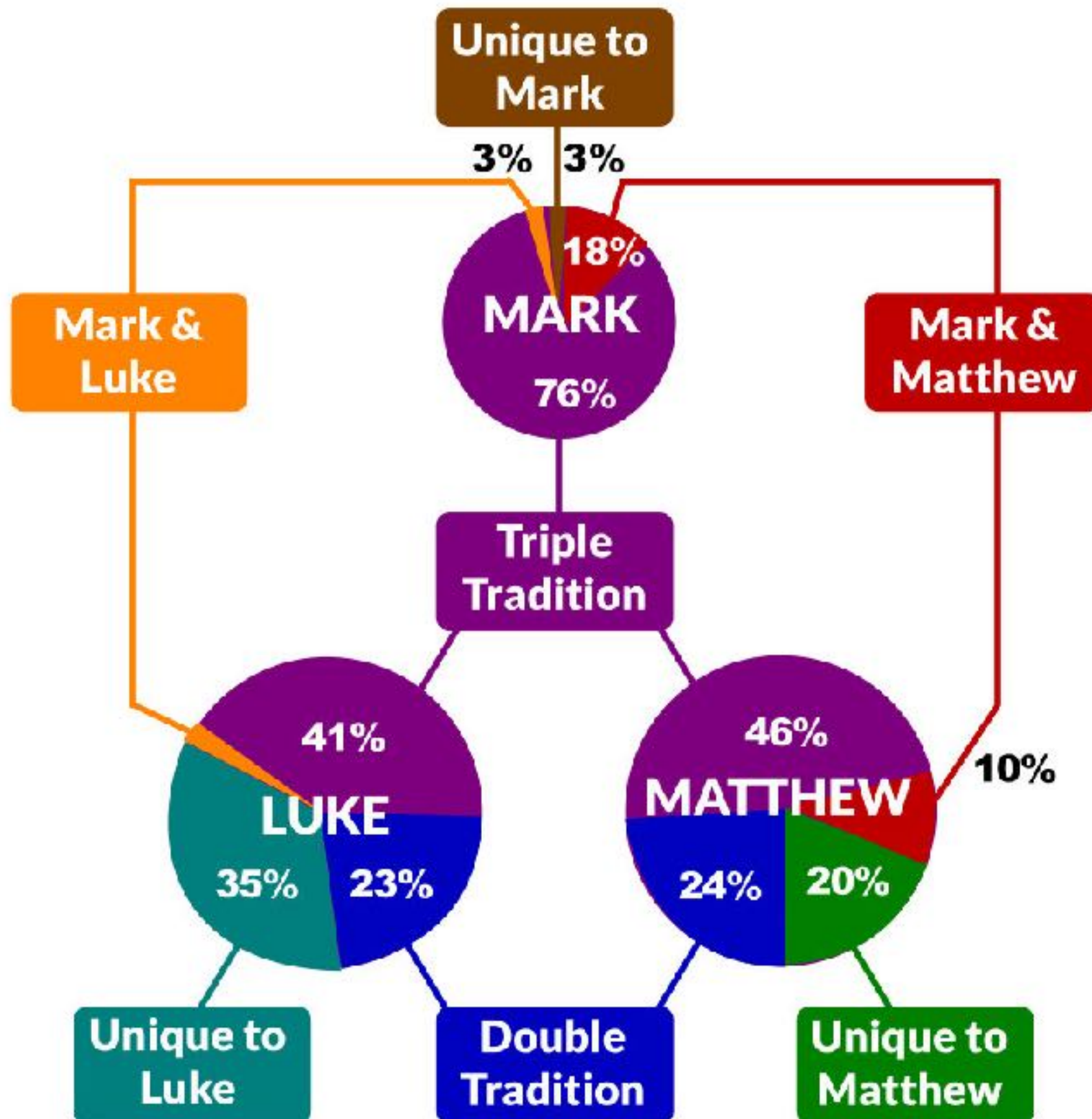


# Kind of writing





# SYNOPTIC GOSPELS COMMON/UNIQUE MATERIAL



# Layout

- Matt 7:28      Now when Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were astounded at his teaching,
- Matt 11:1      Now when Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples, he went on from there to teach and proclaim his message in their cities.
- Matt 13:53      When Jesus had finished these parables, he left that place.
- Matt 19:1      When Jesus had finished saying these things, he left Galilee and went to the region of Judea beyond the Jordan.
- Matt 26:1      When Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples,...



# Layout of Matthew's gospel





# Layout of Matthew's gospel

Prologue

1-2

Birth narratives



# Layout of Matthew's gospel

Prologue

1-2

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Layout of Matthew's gospel

Prologue

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Birth narratives

Book 1

3:1-7:29

3-4

Narrative

Temptation, baptism, call stories



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Discourse

*Sermon on the Mount*





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*Mission Discourse*



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Discourse

*Mission Discourse*

Book 3

11:2-13:52

11:2-12:50

Narrative

Controversy, woes, rebukes



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13:1-52

**Discourse**

*Parables*



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*Parables*

#### Book 4

13:53-18:35

13:53-17:27

#### Narrative

Disciples, Peter, church





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*Parables*

#### Book 4

13:53-18:35

13:53-17:27

#### Narrative

Disciples, Peter, church

18:1-35

#### Discourse

*Church Life Discourse*



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18:1-35

#### Discourse

*Church Life Discourse*

#### Book 5

19:1-23:46

19-23

#### Narrative

Discipleship, controversies,

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#### Book 5

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19-23

#### Narrative

Discipleship, controversies,

24-25

#### Discourse

*End Time Discourse*

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		5-7	Discourse	Sermon on the Mount
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		13:1-52	Discourse	Parables
Book 4	13:53-18:35	13:53-17:27	Narrative	Disciples, Peter, church
		18:1-35	Discourse	Church Life Discourse
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End Time Discourse

Climax

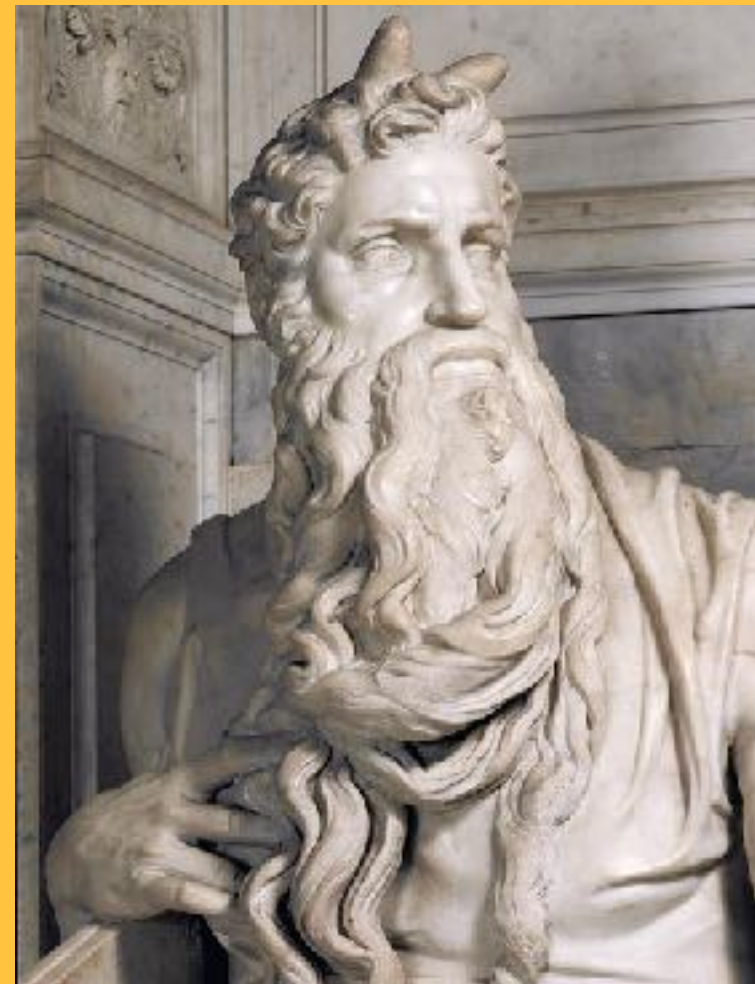
26-28

Death and Resurrection



# Moses in Matthew

- Moses mentioned
- Moses alluded to
- Moses affirmed
- Moses radicalised
- Why?



# Summary

- The gospel writer used sources, oral and written
- He structured the presentation with great care
- A one year ministry (editorial choice)
- Matthew offers an understanding of Jesus (Christology)
- He gives a particular understanding of discipleship
- The Gospel has a difficult relationship with Judaism
- Moses is significant throughout, as we shall see

