
Matthew

Bible Reading: Matthew 9.9-13

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Matthew introduces us to three Pharisees, Ezra, Nathan and Obed, who also appear in some later dramas. Living in Capernaum, away from the centre of things in Jerusalem, they have taken a responsibility to ensure that everything is done decently in "Galilee of the nations". Their concern in this and later dramas is about Jesus - what he says and does, who he claims to be. Of the three, Nathan is always less negative than the other two.

Matthew

Reader: **Matthew 9.9.**

Narrator: Three Pharisees, Ezra, Nathan and Obed, were coming into the tax office at Capernaum – just as Matthew came out with Jesus.

EZRA: What's his smile about? First time I've ever seen Matthew smile!

NATHAN: Something Jesus said, I suspect.

OBED: So that's this new teacher from Nazareth!

EZRA: You hadn't seen him before, Obed?

OBED: I hadn't, Ezra. What do you make of him?

EZRA: Cautious. As you know, my motto is,

“Suspicious though I seem to be,
'Tis better now to wait and see.”

NATHAN: In fairness, I should add that he has already made a rather big impression!

EZRA: Nathan here is not so cautious!

NATHAN: Fair go, Ezra! I didn't say I support him. But I do think he deserves a fair hearing.

OBED: Suspicious or fair go – which is it to be? Here we are, far away from Jerusalem. I guess it's up to us, the local Pharisees, to check things out.

EZRA: Well, here's our first chance!

NATHAN: I get you, Ezra. For starters, what's he doing with Matthew?

EZRA: Good question!

OBED: Well, we have to associate with Matthew ourselves

EZRA: Officially. Strictly on business. Not socially!

NATHAN: Jesus and Matthew smiling... I see what you mean! Looks like social contact!

OBED: Let's follow them to check this out!

NATHAN: Some of Matthew's friends – tax collectors and other outcasts – are going to his house too!

EZRA: Looks bad! We ought to shun such people, not eat with them!

Reader: **Matthew 9.10-13.**