

§43: THE CALL OF LEVI (MATTHEW)

Matt. 9:9–13; Mark 2:13–17; Luke 5:27–32

Jesus Calls Levi

Matt. 9:9

Mark 2:13–14

Luke 5:27–28

<p>9 And passing by from there He saw a man called Matthew sitting in the tax-office, and He said to him: Follow Me!</p> <p>And he rose and followed Him.</p>	<p>13 And He went out again by the sea; and the whole multitude was coming to Him, and He was teaching them.</p> <p>14 And passing by, He saw Levi, the <i>son</i> of Alpheus, sitting in the tax-office, and He said to him: Follow Me!</p> <p>And he rose and followed Him.</p>	<p>27 And after that He went out, and He noticed a tax-gatherer named Levi sitting in the tax-office, and He said to him: Follow Me!</p> <p>28 And he left everything behind and rose and was following Him.</p>
--	---	--

Levi's Reception

Matt. 9:10

Mark 2:15

Luke 5:29

<p>10 And it came about as He was lying <i>at table</i> in the house, that behold, many tax-gatherers and sinners came and were reclining <i>at table</i> with Jesus and His disciples.</p>	<p>15 And it came about that He was reclining <i>at table</i> in his house, and many tax-gatherers and sinners were reclining <i>at table</i> with Jesus and His disciples; for there were many, and they were following Him.</p>	<p>29 And Levi made a great reception for Him in his house.</p> <p>And there was a crowd of tax-gatherers and others who were reclining <i>at table</i> with them.</p>
--	--	---

Complaint of the Pharisees

Matt. 9:11

Mark 2:16

Luke 5:30

<p>11 And when the Pharisees saw, they were saying to His disciples: Why is your Teacher eating with the tax-gatherers and sinners?</p>	<p>16 And when the scribes of the Pharisees saw that He was eating with sinners and tax-gatherers, they were saying to His disciples: Why is He eating with the tax-gatherers and sinners?</p>	<p>30 And the Pharisees and their scribes were grumbling at His disciples, saying: Why are you (people) eating and drinking with the tax-gatherers and sinners?</p>
--	---	--

Jesus' Response

Matt. 9:12–13

Mark 2:17

Luke 5:31

<p>12 And Jesus heard and said: Not those who are healthy have need of a physician, but those who are sick;</p> <p>13 But go and learn what <i>this</i> is: Mercy I desire, and not offering; for I did not come to call righteous <i>ones</i> but sinners.</p>	<p>17 And Jesus heard and said to them: Not those who are healthy have need of a physician, but those who are sick;</p> <p>I did not come to call righteous <i>ones</i> but sinners.</p>	<p>31 And Jesus answered and said to them: Not those who are well have need of a physician, but those who are sick;</p> <p>32 I have not come to call righteous <i>ones</i> but sinners to repentance.</p>
---	---	--

Notes

1. **Matthew/Levi.** Double or multiple names are common in the Bible. Note also Simon/Peter/Cephas; Joseph/Barsabbas/Justus (Acts 1:23) and others. Matthew/Levi became an apostle (Matt. 10:3).
2. **Reception (Lk. 3:29).** This word occurs only here and in Lk. 14:13. It can also be translated “banquet.”
3. **Scribe.** “one capable of reading and writing, usually with competence in some area such as law, economics, or the like ... In the NT the scribes appear alone occasionally and along with other Jewish often. In almost all cases they are opponents of Jesus (but see Mark 12:28–34) ... the scribes are seen both as part of the leadership and also as a learned class. Two passages (Mark 2:16; Acts 23:9) speak of scribes of the Pharisees, indicating that scribes could belong to other groups within Judaism ... Our sources tell us little about scribal training, but literacy and knowledge of the law demanded education, active teaching, the ability to interpret Scripture, and experience in judging individual cases . . .” Harper’s Bible Dictionary, pg. 914. For a positive role of scribes in Jesus’ Kingdom, see Matt. 13:52.