

# MATTHEW CHAPTER ONE

Before we start this morning, I need to mention a few things. There are no Christians in the Book of Matthew. Someone asks, "how about the apostles and Jesus"? At this point the apostles and the Lord Jesus Christ are Jewish men, living under the Jewish law. Men and women become Christians when the permanent, indwelling Holy Spirit is given just before Pentecost.

I am not going to discuss all of these ancestors of the Lord Jesus but we will be talking about a few of them. There are some really interesting people in the lineage of Jesus. It is very important to keep in mind that this lineage is actually the lineage of Joseph. This is given to show Jesus' proper claim to be king of the nation of Israel. Mary's lineage is given in the book of Luke.

## **1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.**

This generation of Jesus Christ begins with Abraham, because he is the father of all believers according to Gal. 3:29. That verse says; **"And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."** The phrase **"Son of Abraham"** takes His royal lineage all the way back to the nation's beginning with the Abrahamic Covenant.

Genesis 17:5 **"Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee."**

Israel is just one nation so this tells us that all believers are spiritual descendants.

## **2 Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren;**

When we first met Jacob, back in Genesis, his name meant "the deceiver" and it was well chosen. At that time he was what we would describe as a lowlife. Later, when he was right with God, God changed Jacob's name to Israel.

**3 And Judas begat Phares and Zara of Tamar; and Phares begat Esrom; and Esrom begat Aram;**

Look who turns up in this verse. This is the Tamar who posed as a prostitute and became pregnant by her father in law. You can read about this in Genesis chapter 38.

**4 And Aram begat Aminadab; and Aminadab begat Naasson; and Naasson begat Salmon;**

**5 And Salmon begat Booz of Rachab; and Booz begat Obed of Ruth; and Obed begat Jesse;**

The Rachab mentioned here is the same Rahab the harlot, of Jerico. She is the one who helped the Jewish spies and by doing that saved herself and her family from destruction. Here she is in the line of the Messiah. Ruth is also in the line. She is a Moabitess and the Moabites are under a curse. The Jews are forbidden to marry Moabites. This curse is the result of the incest between Lot and his daughters who are the parents of the Moabites.

**6 And Jesse begat David the king; and David the king begat Solomon of her that had been the wife of Urias;**

Here we have two more jewels in the lineage. David and Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah. Heavy emphasis on the "had been" there. David had Uriah killed so he could cover up his adultery with Bathsheba. So here we have a murderer and an adulterer or two. God took the child that was the result of this adultery but later gave them Solomon.

**7 And Solomon begat Roboam; and Roboam begat Abia; and Abia begat Asa;**

Solomon had his problems too.

**8 And Asa begat Josaphat; and Josaphat begat Joram; and Joram begat Ozias;**

**9 And Ozias begat Joatham; and Joatham begat Achaz; and Achaz begat Ezekias;**

**10 And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;**

**11 And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon:**

**“Carried away to Babylon”** refers to the 70 years’ captivity of the Jews in Babylon during the days of Daniel the prophet.

**12 And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel;**

**13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor;**

**14 And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud;**

**15 And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob;**

**16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.**

It is unusual for women to be listed in Jewish genealogies but here we have had five listed if we count Mary. She has her own genealogy in Luke. The list has now come down to Joseph the husband of Mary. Do notice that the Holy Spirit is always careful to phrase it as Joseph, the husband of Mary.

**17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.**

**18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost.**

Don't you know this was a shock to everyone but Mary. Here she is, a teenage girl pregnant out of wedlock in a male dominated Jewish society. It would have been legal for Joseph to have her killed.

**19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily.**

Joseph is not only not going to have her killed, he is going to have a private divorce to protect her. Marjorie Holmes wrote a book called "Two From Galilee", a fictional account of the early life of Mary and Joseph. In it she pointed out that God chose Joseph for a reason just as He chose Mary. He knew the heart of Joseph and knew the kind of father he would make for Jesus. If you have not read that book you should. Keep a towel handy.

**20 But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.**

Joseph is mentioned in Scripture only in the Gospels and only in relation to Jesus Christ's childhood which suggests that Joseph died before the time of Christ's public ministry. "This angel" is literally "an angel." to "put her away," means to divorce her. The Jewish betrothal had to be legally broken.

**21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins.**

The name of the child Jesus, in Hebrew, means "the Lord is Salvation". Jesus, by His very name and nature, is the Savior. You see in these Scriptures that Jesus is the Son of God. He had no earthly father. Joseph was not Jesus' father. God was His Father. Mary furnished the flesh, and God furnished the Spirit. Can you imagine how surprised Joseph was when an angel told him that Mary was carrying the Messiah.

**22 Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying,**

Matthew points out the fulfilling of Old Testament prophecies at least a dozen times. He quotes from the Old Testament more than 60 times and more than any other New Testament writer, except Paul.

**23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.**

Immanuel means :God with us: This is a title describing the Son of God rather than a name. It implies God will come to dwell among His own people, which He did in the person of Jesus the Christ and will again at the Second Advent.

God took on the form of flesh and dwelt among us. Jesus was, is, and always will be, God. who was housed in a body for His stay on the earth. There are three reasons why God had to have a human body. First,so that He could lead a sinless life. Second, so that He could be the sacrifice for our sin. Finally,so that He could die. God as a spirit could not die. Many people today have decided that Jesus was not, in fact, born of a virgin. How foolish is that? A God, so great that He could speak the universe into existence, can certainly cause a virgin to have a child. Abraham's wife, Sarah, thought it was impossible to have a child after she was 90 years old, but she did.

**24 Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife:**

When the angel told Joseph about Mary's pregnancy, he took her into his home but they did not consummate their marriage until after the birth of Jesus. Technically they were still betrothed. Mary later had at least six other children.

**25 And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus.**

God does speak to some people in dreams but not all dreams are from God. When a dream is from God, there will be no doubt. The word "firstborn" has been removed from the new,corrupt bibles in order to promote Mary as a perpetual virgin. Mary,as has been said,had at least six other children after the birth of Jesus.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWO**

**1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,**

“Bethlehem of Judea” is five miles south of Jerusalem. Its name in Hebrew means “House of Bread.” This little city is the birthplace of King David and the other ancestors of Joseph. The Herod spoken of here is Herod the Great an Edomite, appointed king by Rome. He was noted for his great cruelty.

**2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.**

“His star” could not have been a natural star, since it led the wise men to Jerusalem and then to Bethlehem. It almost certainly was a special star used by God to indicate the place of the Messiah’s birth. The “wise men” were from the priest caste from the Persians and Babylonians. No doubt they were astronomers and would have had access to the writings of Daniel and other Jewish books from the captivity.

**3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.**

Herod was troubled, because he believed this person would take his throne. In other words he feared a rival. When it speaks of "all Jerusalem", it means people who might lose their standing, if a new king were enthroned.

**4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.**

These men that he gathered were the rabbis, and religious leaders of that day. These men knew the law and knew of the promise of Messiah. In the Old Testament, it was prophesied that Christ would be born in Bethlehem. You can find that in Micah 5:2.

**5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,**

This ancient prophecy from (Micah 5:2). was written in the eighth century B.C. The original prophecy also declared the deity of the Messiah. These religious people knew where He was to be born. They just did not want to give up their positions to a new king.

**6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.**

There is another prophecy in Isaiah 9:6. **For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.** Both Micah and Isaiah were contemporaries.

**7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.**

It is apparent that Herod was a liar. He had no intention of worshiping Him but wanted to kill Him. The wise men did go and find Him. Bethlehem is only 5 miles from Jerusalem. It is a short journey.

**8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.**

The wise men would have had access to the writings of Daniel and since they were probably astronomers they would have paid careful attention to the stars. Jesus would have been approximately one year old at this time. Notice He is referred to as a young child and, by this time, they are in a house, not a stable.

**9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.**

We do not really know how many wise men there were. We assume three because of the three gifts. At any rate, the company would have been a large one since people of power did not travel alone in those days. There would have been servants and probably at least a few

soldiers for protection. It was a large company that came to visit the young Jesus.

**10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.**

These men had to know that they were being supernaturally guided by God. That star certainly was no ordinary star.

**11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh.**

Spiritually speaking, these gifts represent the three offices of the Lord Jesus. Gold is for the crown of a king, frankincense is for use by a priest. Myrrh is a bitter perfume and signifies a prophet who has come to die. Oddly enough, myrrh is one of the first and a couple of the last gifts given to Jesus. Mark {15:23} **And they gave him to drink wine mingled with myrrh: but he received [it] not.** Some say this was intended as a painkiller but I find it hard to believe the Roman soldiers were interested in dulling pain. The whole purpose of crucifixion was to inflict as much pain as possible. John 19:39 **And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound [weight].** This would have been for anointing the body of our Lord. Notice the difference in Nicodemus. At first he sneaked in by night. Now he is a believer and comes openly with gifts.

**12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.**

So the wise men depart for their own country. Notice here that Herod and the Jews do not worship Jesus but He was worshiped by a group of Gentiles from a far country.

**13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou**



**there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.**

Joseph heeded God's warning and left in darkness. This way no one would know which direction they went. Most people did not travel at night, and Herod would not expect them to travel at night either.

**14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:**

None of these things which happen to Jesus, Mary and Joseph are by accident. God is always in the background guiding events. This is where the Magi's gift of gold came in handy. It is not likely that a poor carpenter would have had the money for a trip into Egypt without God's help. Always keep in mind how desperately poor these people were. The next time money is running a little short at the end of the month, thank God for how rich you are.

**15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.**

Recent records set Herod's death at 4 B.C so it is probable that the stay in Egypt was very brief; perhaps no more than a few weeks.

**16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.**

Remember that he had asked the wise men when they had first seen the star. Herod's has full knowledge that the Messiah was the target of his murderous plot. Herod killed all the male children, not only in Bethlehem, but in all the villages of that city. How arrogant must a person be to believe he can derail the plans of God.

**17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying,**

**18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.**

Matthew is paraphrasing Jeremiah. It's very close but not exact. The actual text in Jeremiah is; **Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, [and] bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they [were] not.** That's 31:15 if you are taking notes.

**19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,**

Herod is dead but his son has come to power as governor. Joseph goes to Galilee and settles in Nazareth where Herod is not in power.

**20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.**

God provided the money, the protection and the guidance for Joseph and his family. Now He is bringing them back to Nazareth so the prophecy saying, **"He will be called a Nazarene"**, would be fulfilled.

**21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.**

His obedience to all of God's commands shows that Joseph was a true believer and was a man of good character and consecration to God.

**22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:**

This son of Herod was a murderer and, probably, as bad or worse than his father. Joseph had obeyed God and come back into the land of Israel, but was afraid to go to Jerusalem. God gave Joseph a dream and told him to go to an area away from Jerusalem, into Galilee.

**23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.**

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Notice the careful wording by the Holy Spirit. This was “spoken by the prophets”, not written by them. This is not recorded, in scripture, by any of the Old Testament prophets.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER THREE**

Keep in mind as we study these chapters that there are no Christians present at this time. Everyone is still under the Jewish law and the kingdom gospel is being preached.

**1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,**

John the Baptist was the son of Zechariah and Elisabeth, and a cousin of the Lord Jesus. Jesus said of him that there was none “greater than John”. That's Matt. 11:11 if you are taking notes. The Jews had practiced baptism for years. To them it was a symbol of being purified from sin. Even the washings in the Temple were a form of baptism. John preached wherever there were people and water to baptize those people in. There is no record of his ever preaching in the temple or synagogue. He preached mostly in an area near Jericho and near the Jordan River. He preached outside populated areas, out where the common people lived.

**2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

John is preaching the gospel of the kingdom which gospel includes repentance. Just what is the kingdom of heaven? The kingdom of heaven is where God is and John somehow knows that God, in the form of Jesus Christ, is somewhere close. There are no Christians here. John has no New Testament and has no knowledge of the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. The kingdom was promised to the Jews and they will get it at the Second Advent. The phrase kingdom of heaven is used only in the Gospel of Matthew.

**3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying,**

**The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.**

Matthew's words stress that John's ministry takes place away from the religious establishment. John is preparing for the ministry of the Messiah which also started away from Jerusalem.

**4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.**

John's clothing set him apart from the religious leaders. The religious leaders would have worn expensive suits and ties along with well polished shoes. John wore the clothing, and ate the diet of a desert survivalist. The comment is sometimes made, by those who should know better, that locusts were not allowed under Jewish dietary law. See Lev. 11:22). These were an allowed food. Locusts were eaten by the poor. They were salted and dried then eaten with butter or honey. You are welcome to my share of those.

**5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,**

Even though John did not own a tailored suit, his message was an exciting one, and people from all the surrounding area came to hear him speak.

**6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.**

The baptism of John is one of seven baptisms in scripture. It is associated with the doctrine of water purification. If you want to read more on that go to Num 8:7 and 19:9. Baptism is total immersion into something; water, death, fire or the Lord Jesus Christ.

**7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?**

Apparently these Pharisees have come to be baptized which is an odd thing. John doesn't mince words but wades right into them. This warning is not for their hypocrisy though they were guilty of that. This warning was for their soon rejection of the Messiah. John seems to

have had some advance knowledge.

### **8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:**

I think John is asking the question, where is the fruit. Repentance is not sorrow, but rather a change of mind which results in a change in behavior.

### **9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.**

“Abraham to our father” means that they were trusting in their physical descent for salvation.

### **10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.**

There is a principle for us in this verse. We are not in any danger of being cast into the fire but we are supposed to bring forth fruit.

### **11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:**

Three types of baptism are referred to here:

1. With water. John's baptism symbolized cleansing;
2. With the Holy Spirit. All believers in Christ are Spirit-baptized.
3. With ... fire. Because fire is used in verses 10-12 as a means of judgment, this must speak of a baptism of judgment upon the unrepentant.

John was saying, truly my baptism, is important, you must repent; but there is a better baptism (baptism of the Spirit), that is the indwelling of the Spirit. Baptism of the Spirit occurs at the moment of salvation, not sometime later. It occurs only once. In other words, you can be filled with the Spirit many times but baptized into the Body only once.

**12 Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.**

This Scripture was saying Jesus will stir up the people. He will separate the good from the evil. This floor, probably, spiritually means the whole world. He shall gather all believers together unto Him, and they shall become the Bride of Christ. "He will burn up the chaff" just means the wicked shall burn eternally.

**13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.**

Jesus now goes to the Jordan River to be baptized . John "forbade him", for the obvious reason that Jesus needed no repentance of sin. He sought John out specifically to baptize Him, to show His association with John. They were cousins ,and John would recognize Him. John would be able to see with his own eyes the One he had been proclaiming.

**14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?**

John's baptism symbolized repentance, and John saw this as inappropriate for the One he knew was the spotless Lamb of God. He knew Jesus was the Messiah and John felt his own need for the salvation Jesus had to offer.

**15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.**

"Suffer it to be so" means allow it to be or let it happen. By identifying Himself with those He came to redeem, Jesus began His public ministry as the Messiah. Jesus, in speaking to John, affirmed His authority; and John submitted to the higher authority.

**16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:**

In the process of His baptism, Jesus went up out of the water. This indicates total immersion. He was completely in the water and came up out of it. The descending of the Holy Spirit of God was a sign to John to indicate that this was the true Messiah. The dove is a symbol of innocence and purity so serves as an ideal representation of the Holy Spirit.

**17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.**

The voice from heaven is that of the Father. There can be no doubt that all three persons of the Trinity are actively involved here as distinct persons of the Godhead. The Father speaks, the Spirit descends, and the Son is baptized.

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## **MATTHEW CHAPTER FOUR**

**1 Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.**

We can safely assume that this happened immediately after His baptism. There is a lesson for us here. As soon as a person gives his, or her, life to Christ the tempter shows up. Jesus came to conquer sin and the devil. He faced temptation greater than we face, and yet, He did not give in to temptation. Temptation comes to all, and it is not a sin until it is acted upon.

**2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred.**

This was a remarkable feat of endurance, and physical strength. We see this strength again at His trial and crucifixion. His real physical hunger serves as the setting for the first temptation by Satan. The statement, "If thou be the Son of God," indicates Matthew's purpose for including this record of Jesus' victory: it proves that He is the Son of God. Almost all temptation comes when we are at our weakest, and when we are alone

**3 And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.**

Be sure to notice in this verse that the devil approached Jesus with a question, just as he did Eve. There was no doubt in Satan's mind who Jesus was; but Satan's design was to get Him to violate the plan of God and employ the divine power that He had set aside when He came in human flesh.

**4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.**

Be sure to notice that every time either Satan or the Pharisees tried to tempt Jesus it was with a question and each time they tried, He answered with scripture. Jesus uses the Old Testament constantly without ever amending, or changing, the words.

**5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,**

There is something ironic in the next verse. The very scripture Satan uses to tempt Jesus Psalm 91:11-13 goes on to promise God's ultimate victory over him! I will read that passage. **For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways. {91:12} They shall bear thee up in [their] hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. {91:13} Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.** For anyone who may not know, the dragon refers to Satan.

**6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.**

Every false doctrine and heresy is based on scripture. Notice here that the devil quotes scripture in an attempt to prove his point. What the devil says here is true but is outside the will of God in this case. Always resist taking verses out of the context in which they belong. The three main beginnings of heresy are adding words to



verses,taking away words from verses and taking verses out of context. For just one example of many,Acts 2:38 will have you repenting and being baptized for salvation and that would send you to Hell. For more examples,there are verses in Matthew,Hebrews, James and Revelation that will have you losing your salvation if you take them out of their proper context.

**7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.**

Again the Lord Jesus uses scripture to answer Satan. We are not to tempt God yet here is God,in the flesh,being tempted. One other point here;not every sign and wonder is from God. The devil is a counterfeiter.

**8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;**

This mountain is not named but it does not have to be high enough for them to see the whole world because Luke 4:5 says they see it in a moment of time so the vision is supernatural.

**9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.**

For Christ to fall down and worship Satan would have been to acknowledge the Devil's lordship over Him. In His rebuke "**Get thee hence, Satan,**" Jesus clearly asserts His lordship over the devil. Satan is the "ruler of this world" and the "god of this world" so his was a legitimate offer. Satan,with God's permission,controls both the religious and political areas of the world.

**10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.**

Notice that Satan increased what he offered each time. He thought that if he offered Jesus the whole world as His kingdom that Jesus would jump at this. Along with the greater offering came an even worse sin. Jesus had to fall down and worship Satan to receive the

world and all that was in it. What Satan did not realize was that Jesus will take the earth back for mankind at the Second Advent. He did not take it back by compromising with the devil.

**11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him.**

Satan is subject to the Lord Jesus and must leave when told to do so. The angels are ministering spirits. Mark 1:13, when referring to this says there were wild beasts with Him. These could be literal beasts or possibly demons in beasts' bodies. This works for us as well but do notice that we must be submitted to God for this to work. James 4:7 says **"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you"**.

**12 Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, he departed into Galilee;**

Matthew mentions four clear geographical areas in relation to the ministry of Christ: These were Galilee, Perea ("beyond Jordan,"), Judea, and Jerusalem.

The circumstances of the arrest and eventual beheading of John the Baptist are recorded in chapter 14. Apparently a strong persecution of the followers of John and Jesus took place at this time. Luke 4:16-31 explains that the reason for Jesus "leaving Nazareth" was an attempt on His life after a synagogue service at Nazareth. From this point on, Capernaum became the headquarters of Jesus' ministry.

**13 And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:**

This is where the public ministry of Jesus begins.

**14 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,**

"That it might be fulfilled" refers to the coming of Christ into Galilee in fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 9:1-2. The people of Galilee, had long been despised by their southern Judean cousins. Capernaum is

never mentioned in the Old Testament and is found in the New Testament only in the Gospels. Yet it was a central city in Christ's ministry; most of the time Christ spent in Galilee was in Capernaum. Jesus performed many miracles in Capernaum including healings of the centurion's servant, the nobleman's son, Peter's mother-in-law, the paralytic, and the raising of Jairus's daughter. Later, Jesus condemned the people of Capernaum, for despite His many miracles, they still did not believe.

**15 The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;**

"Galilee of the Gentiles" is a strange way to speak of Galilee since it was a Jewish city. But this name was used even in Isaiah's time because Galilee lay on the route through which most Gentiles passed in and out of Israel. In Jesus' time, the region of Galilee had become an important center of Roman occupation.

**16 The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up.**

The "sea", mentioned here, is the Sea of Galilee, where a lot of fishing was going on. Capernaum was Peter's home. Today it is in ruins and is a tourist site. Many of the activities of Jesus took place near this sea. The demoniac man was freed of the legion of demons near here, the feeding of the multitude took place here, the draft of the fishes was here. But even the miracles that Jesus did here, was not enough to convince these people that He was the Messiah.

**17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

This marks the beginning of His public ministry. Note that His message was exactly like that of John the Baptist. "Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand": The opening word of this first sermon sets the tone for Jesus' entire earthly ministry. Repentance was a constant theme in all His preaching. There is a small difference in the preaching of John and Jesus. Jesus, as the Messiah, is not calling on His listeners to prepare for the coming of the kingdom but rather is

saying that the kingdom is here. Remember, **"the kingdom of Heaven is at hand"**.

**18 And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.**

Simon Peter and Andrew were the first two disciples called by Jesus. They left John to follow Jesus for a time before going back to fishing. Perhaps they had returned to Capernaum during Jesus' earlier ministry here. Here He called them to follow Him in long-term discipleship. There were three very significant events in Peter's life. His confession concerning Christ at Caesarea Philippi, his involvement at Christ's transfiguration, and his threefold denial of Christ before the Crucifixion. After the ascension of Jesus, Peter continues as the leader, opening the door of the gospel to the Jews, that's in Acts 2, to the Samaritans in Acts 8:14-17, and to the Gentiles, that's Acts 10 and 11. However, his ministry remained primarily to the Jews.

**19 And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.**

These men dropped everything and followed Jesus. This call was not for salvation, they were already saved, it was a call to the ministry. They had to give up the comforts of home, and their living, for an uncertain future of winning souls. These men were just ordinary men with little education and certainly no college degrees. They had only the call of God upon their lives.

**20 And they straightway left their nets, and followed him.**

James and John" were also brothers and fishing partners with Simon and Andrew. The statement in verse 22 that they "immediately" responded to His call is a perfect picture of true obedience to the lordship of Christ.

**21 And going on from thence, he saw other two brethren, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them.**

This James is easy to distinguish from the other men named James in the New Testament, because he is never mentioned in Scripture apart from his brother John.

**22 And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him.**

James and John did not hesitate when Jesus called. They left their father, their job, their home, and all their possessions, and followed Jesus. John, as we will see later, was very close to Jesus. He was known as John the beloved.

**23 And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.**

Jesus stated that if the miracles that were done in Capernaum had been done in Sodom, they would have repented and been saved. But in Capernaum, they believed that Jesus was the carpenter's son, not the Son of God.

**24 And his fame went throughout all Syria: and they brought unto him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy; and he healed them.**

The Bible says that if all the miracles that Jesus did were written in a book, there would not be enough books in the entire world to hold them. You can easily see how this fame would spread. He healed literally thousands. He cast out demons, restored sanity, and cured palsy and other diseases. All these people had to do was to believe. He not only healed the body, but the spirit, as well.

**25 And there followed him great multitudes of people from Galilee, and from Decapolis, and from Jerusalem, and from Judaea, and from beyond Jordan.**

The bible tells us of several occasions where over 5,000 people followed Him. This was a huge group of people but where did they all disappear to when He was crucified?

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## **MATTHEW CHAPTER FIVE**

There are no Christians present for the Sermon on the Mount. There are no born again believers present and none of the New Testament has been written at this time. These are Jews under the Old Testament Law. This sermon has been called the constitution of the Millennial Kingdom. It can not be applied doctrinally to the Church but that said, there are many principals which we can apply to our lives.

### **1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him:**

The disciples have come to Jesus to learn and He doesn't disappoint them. What follows is a lesson on how to live a godly life. We have no power to live this way apart from Jesus death, burial and resurrection. Even then we fall far short and can only live it spiritually.

### **2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,**

### **3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

This does not say the poor but the poor in spirit. These are different things. Blessed in scripture means happy. These are not salvation verses but instructions in living. The poor in spirit as opposed to arrogant or haughty. This is the contrite spirit that has willingly placed itself in subjection to the Lord. Poor in spirit describes those who are very conscious of their own hopelessness apart from divine grace

### **4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.**

A lot of people mourn who are never comforted. You can see how this can not be applied, doctrinally, to the Church since many of us have mourned and not been comforted. But, you and I can apply it spiritually and know that the Holy Spirit is with us in time of trouble. Another name for the Holy Spirit is "The Comforter".

### **5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.**

The meek have never inherited the earth and never will until the Second Advent. All bible verses concerning the Jews, and dealing with inheritance, wherever you find them, are speaking of the Second Coming.

**6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.**

To the unsaved man, he should hunger and thirst for the salvation of God which is Jesus. For the saved it is hunger and thirst for the word of God and for prayer. For those present, and listening to Jesus, the filling comes in Acts 4:31 which says; **And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.** This, of course, applies to those of the group who were saved.

**7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.**

This is one that we can claim since it is reaffirmed several times in the Pauline epistles. One instance is Romans 12:19-21. **Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but [rather] give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. {12:20} Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.** Mercy is something we, as Christians, should be practicing. We reap what we sow. The Lord tells us that He will forgive our trespasses, as we forgive those that trespass against us.

**8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.**

Every person, lost or saved, will see God at some point in time. For the Christian, this "pure Heart" can not be obtained without the new birth. I am happy that this Scripture does not say pure in deeds. The Lord will judge our hearts on judgment day.

**9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.**

Jesus is the King of Peace and the only true peace comes from Him. There will never be peace on the earth, until the King comes back and brings His peace to the earth. Be sure to notice that the Lord Jesus himself was not a peacemaker but trouble followed Him everywhere He went. We are to be soldiers for Christ but we can at least try to keep peace among the brethren.

**10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

This righteousness is identified in the next verse as being the Lord Jesus Christ. To be persecuted for something we have done wrong is one thing, but to be persecuted because we are serving God is something else. Paul said, to count it all joy when we are persecuted for Jesus. The disciples and Paul thought it a great honor to be persecuted for preaching about Jesus. The Scripture says when we see great troubles coming upon the earth to look up and rejoice. Luke 21:28 puts it this way; **And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.** We see these things happening now.

**11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.**

This is speaking of being persecuted for doctrinal preaching and teaching. The day is coming when straight preaching will be against the law. That is already the case in other countries. Canada and England come to mind. For instance, it is very near to being called "hate speech" to preach against homosexuality though it is clearly said to be an abomination in scripture. That is just one example. Consider some other possibilities like abortion and separation.

**12 Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.**

Consider a Christian in Iran or Somalia who is about to have his head chopped off. That person is told to rejoice. Could you do it? True enough that they will have great reward but still it has to be tough. The people being addressed here will get their reward at the Great White Throne Judgment. We get ours at the judgment Seat of Christ.

**13 Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men.**

The basic character of the believers life is compared to salt and light. **"Ye are the salt of the earth:"** Only the genuinely born-again person is salt and can help meet the needs of the world. Salt adds flavoring, acts as a preservative, melts coldness, and heals wounds. Thus it is a very appropriate description of the believer in his relationship to the world in which he lives. This earth would already have been destroyed, if it were



not for the few Christians here. If the Christians fall away, what will happen to the earth? That is just exactly what is happening today. I believe that America is allowed to continue for two reasons. We still send out missionaries and we still support the nation of Israel.

**14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.**

This can be applied to present day believers because it appears again in the Pauline epistles. That's in Phil.2:15 and 1 Thess.5:5 if you are taking notes. This is a good example of taking scripture written for Israel and applying it spiritually to the Church. This is fine as long as the instructions given to Israel appear again in the Church letters.

**15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.**

John 8:12: **Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.** The sun is a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. We, the Church, are like the moon and are to reflect the light of Christ. Even a little light can do away with a lot of darkness.

**16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.**

All good works have only one purpose and that is to glorify God. This is the type of work that will not burn up at the Judgment Seat of Christ. A couple of examples are bearing fruit, both fruit of the spirit and souls led to Christ. Using your gifts properly would be another.

**17 Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.**

This passage shows that the Law and Prophets, when they speak of righteousness, are fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

**18 For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.**

This passage is important. It indicates that the prophecies do not end with the First Advent. Heaven and earth do not pass away until the end of the Millennial Kingdom. For the size of a "jot and tittle" think of our period and

comma in 10 point type. They are simply the smallest characters in the Hebrew alphabet.

**19 Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.**

Romans 3:31 makes it clear that the Law is still in effect for someone. That verse says;**Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.** That said, Paul makes it clear that Christians, in our age, are not under the Law. You can find that in Gal.3:22-26, Rom.6:14-17 and several other places in the Pauline letters.

**20 For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

This must have been a sobering statement to those sitting, and listening, on that mountainside. Whatever else the scribes and Pharisees may have been they were righteous though it was self righteousness. The Lord is speaking here of a righteousness beyond that of the scribes and Pharisees. This is at least a hint of the righteousness to be gained through the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ.

**21 Ye have heard that it was said of them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:**

This is a reference to the fourth commandment but when we study further we find that not only is he in danger of the judgment, but if there are at least two witnesses he is to be executed. Jesus goes on to dig a little deeper in the next verse.

**22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.**

Unless we move this verse to the time after the Second Advent it makes no sense doctrinally. There is no record of a Christian ever calling anyone Raca. That is an Aramaic word of contempt. Furthermore both Jesus himself and Paul call some people fools. 1 Cor.15:36 Paul says **“thou fool”** and the Lord Jesus uses it in Luke 24:25. There He says;**Then he said**

**unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:** So, don't worry about this verse. It is far in the future.

**23 Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee;**

**24 Be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.**

This is clearly Old Testament and Second Advent teaching. That spot on the floor that we call an altar is not an altar. When have you seen anybody leave a gift there. An altar is 5 x 5 and built as a place to offer sacrifices. Now, with that said, there is a good principle here for us. Before offering anything to God get right with your brethren if there is a problem between you.

**25 Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him; lest at any time the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison.**

**26 Verily I say unto thee, Thou shalt by no means come out thence, till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing.**

This is speaking of debtors prison. This thing has two applications. First it is speaking of settling problems before it gets before a judge. Second, the Mosaic Law is spoken of, by Paul, as being our adversary and we are told repeatedly not to go back under the Law.

**27 Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery:**

**28 But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.**

Notice that the Lord does not cancel the Law here but adds to it. Now it is not only the act but the thought as well. Do be sure to notice that it is the lust that gets you in trouble. The act would follow if the opportunity were to occur. Men look. We are born with it and die with it. God put it in us to appreciate a woman's beauty. For what it's worth, women look too.

**29 And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.**

Jesus was not advocating self-mutilation in this verse, since that would not cure the lust. He was using this graphic illustration to demonstrate the

seriousness of the sins of lust and evil desire. The point is that it would be better to lose a member of your body than to bear the eternal consequences of such a sin.

**30 And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell.**

Like the last verse, this one is not advocating self mutilation. About the best we can do to reconcile these verses with the rest of the New Testament is to know that it would be better to lose a part of the body than to miss salvation. That, of course, would be salvation by works. It would be better to be physically maimed than to go to Hell forever.

**31 It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement:**

**32 But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery.**

Now here is one that was true in the Old Testament, true in the New Testament still under the Law and still true in the Church Age.

Divorce, except for fornication, is a sin. I will say it again; Divorce, except for fornication, is a sin. As I look around this room, knowing the history of most of you, there are many divorces represented here. So, are we living in sin, as some would say? No. If you are a born again child of God then your sins are forgiven. The question always comes up; what about a pastor that gets a divorce? Is he any different from you? Aren't his sins forgiven the same way yours are? To that I would add that if God calls you to a ministry then it would be up to God to "uncall" you.

**33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:**

This comes from Deut. 10:20 and Deut. 6:13. 6:13 says this; **Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name.** Now watch these next three verses.

**34 But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne:**

**35 Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King.**

**36 Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.**

So my take from this is that swearing an oath is important to God and not to be taken lightly. If you swear an oath to God you had better perform that oath. Oaths between individuals should not be done. The exception is the oath taken in court. This exemption is found in Matthew 26:63 where Jesus is facing off against the Pharisees.

**37 But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.**

Here it is summed up. Your word ,and reputation,should be good enough that all that is needed is a yes or a no. Verse 37 goes deeper ,warning that anything more leads to evil.

**38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:**

I confess that I like this. Our justice system should mete out punishment this way. You may remember that man who was mad with his wife so threw all four of his children off the bridge over there in Mobile. He is still alive. They should tie a concrete block to his ankles and toss him over the side. That's an eye for an eye.

**39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.**

This is a tough one. Here as well as in the Pauline epistles we are told not to retaliate for wrongs done to us. We do not need to take vengeance. If we will let Him handle it for us the Lord will take care of it. Romans 12:19 puts it this way;**Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but [rather] give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance [is] mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.** Kill them with kindness.

**40 And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.**

**41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.**

We are to have confidence in almighty God and keep our eyes on the eternal. Jesus was saying, don't argue over material things. They will pass away.

**42 Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away.**

If we lend to the brethren we are to lend without interest. That goes all the way back to Deuteronomy and Exodus. The Deut.23:19 passage says this; **{23:19} Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of any thing that is lent upon usury:** That passage goes on to say that interest may be charged to strangers.

**43 Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.**

**44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;**

This is what the Old Testament Jewish rabbis taught and that would seem logical in light of what the Jews faced through the years. The Psalms are full of it. Now Jesus has turned it one hundred eighty degrees and said love your enemy. Actually Jesus is teaching nothing new. There are examples of the same teaching in Proverbs and Job.

**45 That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.**

Loving one's neighbor does not automatically make one a child of God but it is one of the proofs of our salvation. The book of James tells us that we know we are saved because we love the brethren". Jesus takes it a step further and includes even non believers.

**46 For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same?**

Publicans were public officials of Jewish nationality who worked for the Roman government as tax collectors and were generally despised by the people.

**47 And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so?**

**48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.**

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This passage is more complex than it appears on the surface. We, as Christians, must love God first. Then, we must love the brethren. Finally, we should love the unsaved only up to the point of trying to get them saved. Otherwise we should not be involved with them any more than necessary. There are some traps buried in there. How about that grouchy, contradicting, absolutely unlovable Christian? Yep, love him too. Find a way.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER SIX**

**1 Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.**

Jesus warns us not to give in order to be seen by others just to bring attention to ourselves. The one who gives to be seen by men gets no recognition from the Lord. True worship results from the desire to serve God, not men. Gaining the reward of human recognition is an end in itself.

**2 Therefore when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may have glory of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.**

Picture in your mind, how ridiculous this is. A servant walking ahead of a Pharisee, blowing a trumpet, while the Pharisee loudly proclaims, look, I'm giving a dollar to the poor. The reward here is that they are seen by men, nothing more. God does not reward hypocrisy, but He does punish it. Do not "publicize" your righteousness, for Jesus warns against acting like the hypocrites, whose aim is to win human praise.

**3 But when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth:**

I'm going to read a comment from one of my study bibles. "This means that one's giving of finances should be done so freely and

spontaneously that his right hand can not keep up with his left hand". Have you ever heard anything so stupid. One of my regrets is that I paid money for this piece of trash. This is a King James version whose notes are written by those who obviously do not believe the King James version is the preserved word of God. So, back to the verse. This simply means to give in secret or at least discreetly. If you see a need, and meet it privately, this does two things. It assures your reward from God and it avoids embarrassing the receiver of the gift.

**4 That thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly.**

The key phrase is "thy Father which seeth in secret. Giving by faith, out of a cheerful heart, depends on our total confidence in the fact that God does indeed see us. These verses do not condemn public giving, but rather they speak against giving out of the wrong attitude and for the wrong reasons. If you see a need, quietly take care of it. God sees everything we do, but more than that, He sees the reason why we did it.

**5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.**

This is why you see short prayers here in our congregation. Get prayed up before you get here. You see three basic types of prayer at large gatherings such as camp meetings. There are short, to the point prayers, there are long prayers where someone is showing just how pious they are, and then there are the sermons preached in place of the asked for prayer. This last one usually comes from someone who has not been asked to preach at the meeting so they are getting their licks in while they have the floor. Listen the next time you attend one of these events and you will hear all three kinds.

**6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.**

Here we are. Do your earnest praying in secret. Now of course it does



not have to be a literal closet but should be a private place where you can be alone with God.

**7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.**

“Our Fathers and Hail Marys” jump to mind but other repetitions are equally useless. Talk to God as you would a family member. After all, you are a child of God.

**8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.**

Prayer is not an attempt to change the will of God nor is it overcoming God’s reluctance to answer. Prayer in the life of the true believer is an act of total confidence and assurance in the plan and purpose of God. When you are finished praying be sure to spend a while listening quietly. This is an excellent time for the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart.

In the next few verses we have a sample prayer. This prayer, often called the “Lord’s Prayer,” is in reality a disciple’s prayer. He did not intend for this particular prayer to be merely recited. In these verses above, Jesus was saying, talk to God, don’t memorize a prayer and say it every time. Tell God what is in your heart. Tell Him you love Him and need His help.

**9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.**

Do notice that He did not say pray this prayer. He said pray “after this manner”. The prayer is a model, It is short and simple yet comprehensive. Notice that there are six petitions in this model prayer. Three are directed to God and three are for human needs.

**10 Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.**

The kingdom of God is very different from the kingdom of heaven. The kingdom of God is within, while the kingdom of heaven is wherever God happens to be. Remember that both Jesus and John announced

that the kingdom of heaven was “at hand” meaning that God, in the human form of Jesus, was somewhere nearby. Keep in mind here that Jesus is literally offering the kingdom to the Jews at this point in time. Let us be glad they did not accept or we would not be here today.

**11 Give us this day our daily bread.**

It is perfectly alright to pray for our food and we should. The Christian can follow this prayer and be on safe ground doctrinally until we reach verse twelve. There we run into a difficulty.

**12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.**

No Christian, in this age, is ever saved by forgiving anyone. Simply put, this is salvation by works. It is verses like this that lead people astray in the Church Age. We will see more of this in verses 14 and 15.

**13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

It certainly would not hurt the Christian to pray something along the lines of verse 13. God will take care of our needs one day at a time. The Bible says take no thought for tomorrow.

**14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:**

**15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**

This is more along the lines of verse 12. Forgiveness of sin by forgiving others is not for the Christian. We are forgiven by believing the gospel of the Grace of God and accepting Jesus Christ as our savior. The atoning blood of Christ covers our sin.

**16 Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.**

“When ye fast” indicates that fasting is assumed to be a normal part of one’s spiritual life. This is very much in line with the verses on prayer

and alms giving. The theme of all three is, "don't do it for show".

**17 But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;**

No one should be able to look at you, or for that matter, listen to you, and be able to tell you are fasting. Though Jesus Himself instituted no fast for His disciples, voluntary fasting does appear in the early churches. In other words, Jesus was saying that when we fast we are to do so secretly to the Lord, while outwardly maintaining the appearance of joy and triumph.

**18 That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly.**

When you fast, it is a serious time with God and Him alone. We fast to show sincerity and God will honor a sincere fast. You may fast one day, two days, three days, or as long as you have agreed with God you will fast. One last note on this subject. No where in scripture are we commanded to fast. This is done only to draw us closer to God.

**19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal:**

While this is said to Jews, Paul also devoted a great deal of ink convincing Christians that true wealth was that sent ahead to Heaven. Sometimes when you have a few minutes try to think of anything you can store up for security on this earth. Banks fail, thieves steal, electricity fails and food spoils, droughts and floods come, fires destroy and the list goes on. There is absolutely nothing physical that you can say will be there when you need it.

**20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal:**

The concept of laying up treasures in heaven is for faithful service, as is illustrated other places in the teaching of Jesus.

**21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.**

It is not a sin to have money or to be wealthy. The sin of having money occurs when we see someone in need, and will not help them. It is the love of money that is a sin. Whenever you help God's people here on earth, you are laying up treasures for heaven. Jesus said, **"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me"** Now granted, He said that to Jews but this is one of those principles that carry over into the Church. Another principle concerning money is; Be content with what you have, whether it be much, or little. Help everyone you can, as often as you can. Your heart and pocket book are usually in the same place.

**22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.**

**23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!**

Jesus is using this language metaphorically. He says that if a man's spiritual sight is healthy and his affections directed toward heavenly treasure, his whole personality will profit. God has warned, all through the scriptures, that it is the eyes that lead to sin. The eyes led to sin in Genesis 6. David's problem started with his eyes. God specifically warned Israel not to keep the pictures of the pagans when they entered the promised land. That's Numbers 33:52 which says; **Then ye shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their pictures, and destroy all their molten images, and quite pluck down all their high places:** Obviously God considers what you look at important.

**24 No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.**

Mammon is the Syriac word for riches. While there is nothing wrong with riches provided they are used properly, you cannot devote your life to gaining riches and serving God. One will suffer and it is usually the service to God that suffers. Jesus has said flatly that it cannot be done.

**25 Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?**

Jesus now deals with the dangerous tendency of those who have few possessions. "Take no thought", means "do not worry." This word means to be so worried about material needs that we distrust God. Worry is the direct opposite of faith. Even the poor are not to worry about what they should eat, drink, or wear. Faith is knowing that God will provide the necessities.

**26 Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?**

Here Jesus contrasts us to birds. In Luke 12:22 is that story of the rich man who was building bigger barns in which to store his wealth. There was one whose eyes were set on his wealth instead of on God. He learned a hard ,and final,lesson about God's provision.

**27 Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?**

That is exactly how much good worry does. Most of the things we worry about never happen. When God told Abraham to leave Ur of the Chaldees and go to a land He had never seen, Abraham did not question how he would make a living. He knew if God told him to go, that God would provide.

**28 And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:**

In all of these verses Jesus is stressing the need for faith. Psalms 37:25-29 **"I have been young, and [now] am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."** God's plan has always been to bless the believers not just spiritually, but with their physical needs as well. We are promised food and clothing but not steak and fur coats.

**29 And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was**

**not arrayed like one of these.**

No doubt Solomon had some fine clothes but even they can not compare with something made by God. Any flower is more beautiful than Solomon's clothing and any sunset ,or sunrise ,more beautiful than any art work by man.

**30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?**

The Word says that God knows the desires of our hearts even before we pray. God knows our needs; and if we put God first, and work, and do our best, and not worry , God will see that our needs are met. “**O ye of little** faith”: This was the Lord’s recurring rebuke of the weak disciples but can certainly apply to us as well.

**31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?**

In these verses above, Jesus was trying to tell us that we should not be concerned about material things. Fear and worry is lack of faith and an insult to God.

**32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.**

Verse 32 plainly says that Gentiles,that's us,compare unfavorably with the chosen people. This verse also states again that this is addressed to Jews. The people of the world are seeking wealth and fame in this life, and take no thought for the hereafter. When our priority is spiritual, God will take care of the material, for where God guides, He provides.

**33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**

This is the first time the kingdom of God appears in scripture. This last portion of the Sermon on the Mount is summarized by the statement “seek ye first the kingdom of God.”

**34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow**

**shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.**

Again we are warned against worry. We have enough trouble living for Christ one day at a time without worrying about tomorrow.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **1 Judge not, that ye be not judged.**

Without a doubt, this is the most well known verse among the unsaved. This is one of the big clues that this book is for the Jews and not the church. Let's look at two other scriptures which are for the Church. 1 Cor.2:15 says this; **But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.** Then 1 Cor.6:3 says this; **Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?** That is just two of many such scriptures all showing that we are to judge such things as behavior and doctrine. How else are we to know what to separate from?

### **2 For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.**

Now even though these first two verses are not for us, we can still get some degree of caution from this one. Be careful how, and more importantly, why we judge. Don't ever let our motive be to put down another to lift ourselves up. We are not ever to render a verdict based upon prejudice. Also, and this is important, we are never to use ourselves as the standard of judgment.

### **3 And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?**

Here we see the Lord using some sarcasm. There is an obvious lesson here. Before we can witness to others we must learn for ourselves and get our own lives straight. It is hard to be an effective witness while holding a beer and smoking a cigarette.

**4 Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?**

We need to examine ourselves and get forgiveness for our own sins, before we start pointing them out in someone else. The Bible says that if we know one of our brothers or sisters is involved in sin, go to him and tell him. If he does not listen, take a witness. Then if he does not listen; stop fellow-shipping with him. Whether God forgives him or not, is not our business. The judgment we are allowed is whether we should fellowship with him or not.

**5 Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.**

The one bible passage that jumps to mind is the woman taken in the act of adultery. The religious people of the day brought the woman to Jesus to stone her to death. Jesus told them anyone that was without sin cast the first stone. Jesus then leaned over and wrote something in the sand. We are not told what He wrote but I like to think it was a list of their sins. People claiming Christianity need to live clean lives, not giving even the appearance of evil.

**6 Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you.**

This principle is why Jesus Himself did not do miracles for unbelievers. This principle governs how one handles the gospel in the face of those who hate the truth. "Dogs", in the sense above, are people of low character who have no intention of coming to Christ. The lesson to be learned here is : when you see there is no hope to lead them to Christ, leave them in their own mire of sin but do not get in there with them. Do not wallow in the sin with them. It will not clean them up but will dirty you up.

**7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:**



**8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.**

The formula given for prayer here is not the one New Testament Christians use. This is an Old Testament type prayer to the Father. We pray in the name of Jesus. There is a good principle here that is reaffirmed in the Pauline epistles and that is to keep on asking and ask in the name of Jesus Christ. Prayer includes asking and getting answers from God but it is more than just asking; it is confession, adoration, thanksgiving and fellowship with God. By its nature, prayer is talking with God. It is necessary to the successful Christian life, and is so important that not praying is considered a sin. That's 1 Sam. 12:23 if you need a verse.

**9 Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone?**

**10 Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?**

Bread and fish were the main articles of food of the Galilean people. The assurance of an answer to prayer is based on the fact that God is our Father. In fact, He is the Father of Jews and saved Gentiles. No where in scripture is He referred to as the Father of lost Gentiles nor the father of mankind. No normal parent would mock his child by handing him a stone when he was crying from hunger.

**11 If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?**

God loved us while we were yet in sin, so much so, he gave His only begotten Son to a cruel death on the cross, that we might be saved. It is not much, in comparison, for God to answer our prayers. So little is required of us, just believe on Jesus Christ as our Savior.

**12 Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets.**

This is commonly called the Golden Rule and it's not unique to Christianity but is found in many religions. This proverbial saying is

just another way of expressing the Christian ethic of loving one another. The Golden Rule, showing love was what the law and prophets were all about.

**13 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat:**

Both the narrow gate and the wide gate are assumed, by the world, to provide a pathway to God. Two ways are offered to people. The narrow gate is by faith, only through Christ, narrow and precise. It represents true salvation of God's way that leads to Heaven. The wide gate includes all religions of works, and self-righteousness, with no single way (Acts 4:12), but it leads to hell, not heaven.

**14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.**

Enter ye in at the strait gate" (narrow), means that one must come through the narrow gate in order to reach the path that leads to eternal life. Though many are on the "broad way, that leadeth to destruction" (Hell), the gate that leads to life is so narrow that "few there be that find it." Christ Himself is both the gate and the way. Remember that Paul said, in Galatians **But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.** God is not making exceptions for sincerity.

**15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.**

The Lord Jesus warned of false prophets and false religion. He also warned against bringing all doctrines together in one religious group. See Luke 12:51 for one reference on that subject. False prophets can be identified by their attitude toward the word of God. They appear meek and mild until their positions are challenged.

**16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?**

Fruit can be faked for a time but rotten fruit will sooner ,or later,be exposed. If the fruit are words the observant student can predict rotten fruit from the rotten words. The rotten fruit of the false bibles are worldly Christians.

**17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.**

**18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.**

This corrupt fruit is identified ,in it's context,as the fruit of false prophets. It is good to keep in mind that we are sinners by choice. Without the covering blood of Jesus it is impossible to bring forth good fruit.

**19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.**

Be sure to notice that the “evil tree”(you can read person in there), is headed for Hell. How can this possibly be applied to a New Testament Christian?There are many Christians today who bear no fruit yet they will be in Heaven,not Hell. They just won't have rewards and will wind up scrubbing heavenly toilets for eternity.

**20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.**

When we apply this to a Christian we know that a Christian will fail from time to time but the general course of his life will be to follow God and do His will. For the Christian fruit takes two forms. The fruit of the spirit found in Galatians and the the new converts that his life,and verbal witness, has influenced

**21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.**

Faith that says but does not do anything is really unbelief. Jesus was not suggesting that works are necessary for salvation, but that true faith will produce fruit. This is precisely the point of (James 1:22 which says;**{1:22} But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. And 2:26 which adds this;For as the**

**body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.**

Many people pretend to be Christians, who have not sold out to God. Some come to church for the fellowship, some come to better their position in the community, and some come so that they can belong to something. None of these things will get us to heaven. God wants us totally, or not at all. Playing church will not get it. Jesus explains here what it takes. Our will must be turned over to God so completely that we, like Jesus, can say, "**Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done**". The redneck version, a total commitment to God.

**22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?**

**23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.**

This verse is often used incorrectly to scare Christians into doubting their salvation. The verse really refers back to verse 15. The bible does interpret itself if we let it. One of the greatest healing, evangelistic, ministries is yet to come. That one will be by the Antichrist.

**24 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:**

This parable of the two builders provides a powerful conclusion to this section on commitment to the will of God. Jesus continually emphasized the necessity of doing the will of God and led His life doing that will.

**25 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.**

With this Jesus is not adding works to faith but showing that rather we are to show our faith by our works.

**26 And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:**

Keep in mind here that the “house” is the house of Israel. The wise builder is believing remnant and the foolish builder is that part of Israel that has rejected the Messiah.

**27 And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.**

Jesus reminded His listeners that hearing this message alone will not change his life. He must both hear and do what Jesus has said. The man whose house collapsed was at fault, not because he failed to labor, but because he did not lay the proper foundation. There is certainly an application for the Christian in this. Our proper foundation is the correct, rightly divided, word of God. How easy would it be for someone who has grown up in another denomination, which teaches false doctrine for salvation, to miss it and wind up in Hell for eternity. That is what is meant by building on the wrong foundation.

**28 And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at his doctrine:**

When Jesus finishes teaching the crowd is astonished at the authority with which He teaches. Proper preaching is done with authority and proper doctrine.

**29 For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.**

The scribes quoted others to establish the authority of their teachings; Jesus was His own authority. This matter of authority was a major issue between Jesus and the Jews, who felt their authority challenged. The outstanding feature of His teaching was His “authority,” meaning the divine approval with which He delivered His message. Such straightforward preaching, based on His own life, was in direct contrast to that of the scribes, who simply copied the Law and the theologians of their day. They had to rely on tradition for their

authority, whereas Christ was His own authority. Jesus did not tell them that the law was bad. He told them His interpretation of the law. He did have all authority since He wrote the law in the first place. His understanding was not like ours but was a heavenly understanding. When Jesus took on the form of flesh and dwelt here on the earth, He related to the difficulties and temptations in our own lives. I regard the Sermon on the Mount as an indication of what we will become and what it will ultimately take to please God. I am speaking now of the glorified body and millennial kingdom.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER EIGHT**

**1 When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him.**

It is easy to confuse the accounts in Matthew 5-7 with the passages in Luke 6 but these are separate accounts, taking place in different locations. The passage in Matthew takes place on a mountainside while the one in Luke takes place on a plain. Further, the disciples had not been called in the Matthew account while all twelve were present for the Luke account.

**2 And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.**

This leper called Jesus Lord. This is the first time, in the New Testament that He is addressed this way. The first thing he did, before he asked for anything, was worship Jesus. He called Him, "Lord". Then he said, with no doubt in his heart, You can heal me. Here He was called Lord by a leper and at His crucifixion he was called Lord by a criminal.

**3 And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.**

Touching a leper was forbidden. Even the priests could only look at a leper.

**4 And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way,**

**shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them.**

This is an odd command but, as usual, there is a reason. Think of the shock when this man presented himself to the priest. No one but a priest was supposed to be able to deal with leprosy since it was highly contagious. The priest had to think, we can't heal leprosy but the carpenter's son can.

**5 And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,**

A centurion is a Roman soldier in charge of one hundred men. These centurions would have had great power in an occupied country.

**6 And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.**

"Palsy" is a disease of the central nervous system, and there is really no cure for it. This would have to be a miracle. Hundreds of years have passed, and there is still no cure for palsy, outside of a miracle from God. This disease is tormenting. It causes you to shake out of control.

**7 And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.**

There are several centurions mentioned in the New Testament. Peter witnessed to one, and his household with the result that several Gentiles were saved. There was one who released Paul from scourging and there was one who testified to Christ's deity at the crucifixion.

**8 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.**

Jewish tradition held that a person who entered a Gentile's house was defiled. The centurion, was no doubt familiar with this law and felt unworthy of having Jesus do this for his sake. He also had faith enough to know that Christ could heal by merely speaking a word.

**9 For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I**

**say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it.**

Even though this man had great authority, he was fully aware that compared to Jesus, he was unworthy. In fact, we are all unworthy. It is only through grace that we are saved. He recognized the fact that everything and everybody was subject to the command of Jesus. There was no question about the authority of Jesus.

**10 When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.**

Jesus was impressed that someone, who had never studied the Scriptures, would believe. The scribes and Pharisees, who did study the scriptures, were the worst doubters of all. Jesus came to the house of Israel, but when they refused Him, He sent the apostle Paul to the Gentiles.

**11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.**

The “many from the east and west” is a clear reference to the fact that both Jew and Gentile will be together in the millennium. Matthew goes no further into the hidden mystery later revealed by Paul.

**12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

Just because a person is Jew by birth, does not mean that he or she will go to heaven. This Scripture above is saying, regardless of whom your parents or grandparents are, without belief in Jesus Christ, you will wind up in hell.

**13 And Jesus said unto the centurion, Go thy way; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the selfsame hour.**



Sometimes faith was involved in the Lord's healing, but in this case not by the one being healed. If we have no faith and we don't believe, nothing will happen. The bottom line was, this servant was healed.

**14 And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, he saw his wife's mother laid, and sick of a fever.**

Peter's home, as we have said before, was in Capernaum. Jesus probably went there to get away from the crowd. The Scripture does not state the cause of the mother in law's fever but she was sick enough to stay in bed. Just one touch of Jesus' hand, and the fever left. Be sure to notice that she did not need recovery time but she immediately went to work seeing to their physical needs.

**15 And he touched her hand, and the fever left her: and she arose, and ministered unto them.**

**16 When the even was come, they brought unto him many that were possessed with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word, and healed all that were sick:**

Take note also, that sick people are spoken of separately. He healed the sick, and cast out the evil spirits. Notice also, that He healed all. The Bible explains in detail, how Jesus got rid of the evil spirits that possessed the bodies they were in; He called them out. There is some minor controversy as to whether a Christian can be possessed by a devil. An evil spirit can come into a non-Christian, and actually control that person but I do not believe that a Christian can be possessed by a devil. Now, that said, my favorite commentator says a Christian can be possessed but he does not give an example. There is no example in the Bible of a Christian being possessed by a devil. Consider that a Christian has the indwelling Holy Spirit and it is hard for me to believe the Holy Spirit will share His dwelling with an evil spirit. I do believe a Christian can be tormented from without, and that evil spirits can lead a Christian in the wrong direction but not from the inside.

**17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, Himself took our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses.**

Be sure to notice here that Jesus took some liberties with His quotation of Isaiah. Isaiah said: **borne our griefs and carried our sorrows**. The modern Holiness movement takes Matthews verse to mean anyone can be healed of any sickness provided they have enough faith. That is the problem with taking things in Matthew, meant for the Jews, and applying them to the Church. It is true that healing is a part of the atonement but we do not get the benefit of that until the Second Advent. At that point the world itself will be healed and the curse lifted.

**18 Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about him, he gave commandment to depart unto the other side.**

The people thronged Him so greatly, that He was pressed from every side. Every so often, He went aside to rest and pray. This multitude, it seems, had followed Him from the time He had given the Sermon on the Mount. He needed some time alone. His Spirit was always ready, but His body got tired; just like ours does. It seems that Jesus avoided large crowds when He could.

**19 And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.**

The reference to “a certain scribe” is unusual since scribes were usually referred to in the plural. “Master, I will follow thee:” indicated that he was willing to follow Christ both spiritually and publicly. This “Scribe” was like so many new Christians. They promise to follow no matter where or how hard the road gets, but when trouble come, they fall away. Instead of making it easy to follow Him, Christ insisted that he count the cost of such a commitment. Notice that the other disciple was unwilling to follow unconditionally.

**20 And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.**

How does this compare with some of these modern con artists who have huge TV ministries, large mansions, million dollar incomes and one or two private jets to fly them all over the world? “The Son of man” is the title by which the Lord most frequently referred to Himself. The

Lord deliberately used this biblical title of Himself in order to teach that He was in fact, the Messiah. Jesus told this scribe right off, if you follow me, it will not be easy. You might have to sleep outside and may not know where your next meal would come from. Jesus does not promise an easy life even today. He just promises to take care of our needs, not our wants.

**21 And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.**

The request to “bury my father” probably meant he wanted to stay at home until his father died. This disciple, was not one of the 12, but, probably, part of the 120 who followed Jesus for a while. He was asking Jesus to let him tend to his business at home, and he would answer the call to the ministry later. We cannot put off the call of God for any reason. God will not wait while we tend to earthly things.

**22 But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead.**

Jesus’ reply, “Let the dead bury their dead,” was not intended to be harsh, but rather to emphasize that the time to be about the heavenly business was now. This is one of the many verses with a double meaning. This is referring to the spiritually dead as well as the physically dead.

**23 And when he was entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.**

The sea of Galilee is surrounded by hills and mountains, so is susceptible to violent, sudden storms. This is apparently what happened. They started in a calm sea that rapidly changed to one capable of wrecking the boat.

**24 And, behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, insomuch that the ship was covered with the waves: but he was asleep.**

Just before the disciples saw one of the greatest displays of His deity, they were given a picture of His humanity. He was so weary that not even the violent tossing of the boat awakened Him. Jesus’ body was tired. He was sleeping right on through the storm. These storms come

up suddenly and drown many fishermen. These disciples who had fished on this sea, knew how dangerous it could be.

**25 And his disciples came to him, and awoke him, saying, Lord, save us: we perish.**

They knew where the help was. Jesus is the only one who can save us, but we must ask for His help. Jesus is always always listening.

**26 And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm.**

Here is that statement, “o ye of little faith”, again. Jesus uses this five times in Matthew. If the disciples, who were with Him, had so little faith, how little must ours be?

**27 But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him!**

This is a rhetorical question since only God can control the sea and wind. Jesus rebuked them for being fearful. Fear is the opposite of faith. Probably all this happened to make them realize they should act in faith not fear. Nevertheless, He spoke to the wind and the sea, and they both immediately obeyed Him.

**28 And when he was come to the other side into the country of the Gergesenes, there met him two possessed with devils, coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man might pass by that way.**

Matthew says “Two possessed with devils” while Mark and Luke mention only one man. Mark and Luke emphasize the more predominant convert of the two, whereas Matthew gives the more complete account of both men with whom Jesus dealt. This area that was on the other side of the Sea of Galilee, and today is called the Golan Heights.

**29 And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?**

In contrast to the scribes and Pharisees, these demons recognized Jesus as the son of God. The expression, before the time, indicated that the demons knew that the end is near. The time spoken of is the last judgment.

**30 And there was a good way off from them an herd of many swine feeding.**

The fact that these people had a herd of pigs indicates that these people were Gentiles . No Jew would have had anything to do with pigs. Swine were considered unclean by the Mosaic Law. There is a spiritual principle in the incident. Those who are deliberately disobedient deprive themselves of divine protection and place themselves at the mercy of the demonic forces.

**31 So the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine.**

Jesus grants their request all the while knowing what would happen. Don't ever say God doesn't have a sense of humor. These spirits desire a body to dwell in. If they cannot get a human, then they will settle for an animal.

**32 And he said unto them, Go. And when they were come out, they went into the herd of swine: and, behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and perished in the waters.**

Mark 5:13 says that there were 2,000 hogs in this herd. This suggests that the number of demons was large. We know from other scriptures that the demons name was Legion which indicates a thousand. From this it is apparent that many demons can inhabit the same body.

**33 And they that kept them fled, and went their ways into the city, and told every thing, and what was befallen to the possessed of the devils.**

**34 And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus: and when they saw him, they besought him that he would depart out of their coasts.**

These people were frightened by the demoniac's conversion and angry at the loss of 2000 hogs. They wanted Jesus gone before He cost them more money. One final note before we leave this chapter. The demons did not drown with the pigs. Spirits do not die.

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## **MATTHEW CHAPTER NINE**

**1 And he entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into his own city.**

The city is Capernaum, His chosen place of residence.

**2 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.**

It would be much easier to heal the man than to forgive his sins. In this case Jesus apparently did both. In effect He is telling the crowd that He is God since only God can forgive sin. In this case it seems that the palsy was connected to some sin in the man's life, though this is not always the case.

**3 And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.**

They were afraid to speak out, but "said within themselves." Each one of them hated the Lord Jesus. They did not know what to call him but in their hearts they meant, this nobody, this strange person, who is so great that we fear him, so good that we hate him. They were blaspheming him by their unbelief, and yet the irony is these blasphemers charged the Lord with blasphemy.

**4 And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts?**

These Pharisees could not heal the man nor could they forgive his sins but here comes a Man who can do both. So when they see this their reaction is not, "this must be God" but rather, "let's kill him".

**5 For whether is easier, to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk?**

If we compare the two miracles, we could not decide which is easier since both are impossible for man. In some respects the pardon of sin is the greater work of the two, for it requires action by God. Illness can sometimes be healed by the action of a doctor though in this case it is beyond the power of a doctor to heal immediately. Our Lord did both miracles, and confirmed his claim of power by a visible sign. Think about this; we will have complete, and total, healing when our bodies are raised incorruptible and glorified.

**6 But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.**

Notice that title, "Son of man". It does not occur in the Pauline epistles but is strictly a Jewish title used during His earthly ministry.

**7 And he arose, and departed to his house.**

It must have been hard to leave one to whom he owed so much, and go at once to his house but He followed orders so he is an example to us all. He did not go to the temple, he went to his home. His sickness had made his house sad, and now his healing would cheer his family.

**8 But when the multitudes saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.**

The common people wondered, and were awed, and even adored God. But it did not go far enough, nor last long enough. Men may see, and even in words may glorify God, and yet still not accept his Son as their Lord. The multitudes evidently viewed Jesus as a man on whom God had bestowed special gifts or perhaps a prophet who had received miraculous power.

**9 And as Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose, and followed him.**

This is the calling of Matthew. Tax collectors were despised by the people since most were like our current crop of politicians and were

crooked and self serving. I think the lesson here is that God can use anyone, even a tax collector. Two words were all it took for his conversion and obedience: "Follow me." Like the man with palsy, he did exactly what he was told to do: "He arose, and followed him." At any rate, he did, then and there, follow Jesus as a sheep follows its shepherd.

**10 And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples.**

Here we see Jesus associating with these hated Roman tax collectors and people who knew none of the Jewish law. Even if they did, they would not have practiced the law; because they were idolaters. A Pharisee would have nothing at all to do with them. I believe these Pharisees were afraid of Jesus, so they asked the disciples. Jesus knew in His heart their evil intentions, and instead of letting the disciples answer this accusation, He answered for Himself.

**11 And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners?**

Publicans were despised by the Jews and were viewed as being as low on the social scale as Gentiles. They were agents of Rome.

**12 But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.**

The Pharisees thought they were, religiously pure. The outcasts knew they were not. Salvation can't come to the self-righteous. Ultimately, as the Scripture tells us, "**There is none righteous, no, not one**" That's Romans 3:10 if you are taking notes.

**13 But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.**

Here we have a little sarcasm from the Lord. These Pharisees were not righteous but self righteous.



**14 Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?**

**15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.**

The disciples of John were scandalized because the disciples of Jesus were seen at feasts, and were not known to fast. They did not murmur in secret like the scribes, but came straight to the top, and asked the Lord himself. This open discussion prevented dissension, and it was therefore wise. There is no mourning and sadness preparing for a wedding. John the Baptist preached repentance and people who are repentant are sad. You can see why John's disciples would fast. They were repenting, seeking for the Savior. Jesus answered that as long as Christ was present with them there was too much joy for fasting, The followers of Jesus were rejoicing and happy, because the salvation that Jesus offered was a free gift.

**16 No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for that which is put in to fill it up taketh from the garment, and the rent is made worse.**

That new cloth does not work on old material is an analogy to trying to patch Church Age truth onto old Mosaic ceremonial law. Jesus did not come to patch up our old outward religion, but to make a new robe of righteousness for us. All attempts to add the gospel to legalism will only make matters worse.

**17 Neither do men put new wine into old bottles: else the bottles break, and the wine runneth out, and the bottles perish: but they put new wine into new bottles, and both are preserved.**

The putting of new wine into old bottles is a picture of those mixtures and compromises, which cannot, serve any good and lasting purpose. In other words do not try to bring different denominations, with different doctrines together. There is a large movement today to do just that. The Bridegroom is still with us by his indwelling Holy Spirit. We need to follow nothing except Jesus crucified and risen.

**18 While he spake these things unto them, behold, there came a certain ruler, and worshipped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead: but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live.**

**19 And Jesus arose, and followed him, and so did his disciples.**

Both Mark and Luke give us the ruler's name as Jarius, a ruler in the synagogue. Some of the Pharisees did believe that Jesus was the Messiah. Obviously this man was a believer and had plenty of faith. This was an important man but watch Jesus, in the next few verses, put a sick woman ahead of him.

**20 And, behold, a woman, which was diseased with an issue of blood twelve years, came behind him, and touched the hem of his garment:**

It was likely the fringe on His prayer shawl that the woman touched. At any rate, think of her faith to believe that even His garment could heal her. Note also that she broke several of the Jewish laws when she approached and touched Him. He did not rebuke her for this, instead He praised her for her faith and granted her prayer..

**21 For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be whole.**

**22 But Jesus turned him about, and when he saw her, he said, Daughter, be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole. And the woman was made whole from that hour.**

Jesus never did a partial healing. Most of His healing was done publicly and all of them could be easily verified. This story is about the woman's faith. That this woman was a Jewess is apparent when we compare her story to the story of the Canaanite woman. You may recall that He at first refused the Canaanite even to the point of calling her a dog. But He did answer her prayer. The one in this story was answered immediately.

**23 And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise,**

Jarius' faith is the point of this story. Since Jesus has been slightly delayed by the woman with the issue of blood, by the time He gets to Jarius' house the child is dead. Do not think this happened by accident. How much greater testimony is it to raise someone from the dead than to heal a sickness? Think back to the story of Lazarus. The same reason was used by Jesus there. He let Lazarus stay dead for four days.

**24 He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.**

They knew she was dead.

**25 But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose.**

At these wakes there were always paid mourners who put up a hideous noise. To work His miracle the Lord sent these noise makers out so He could work in peace. Consider that all the people know is that a person has been raised from the dead. We have no knowledge of what goes on behind the scenes for Jesus to bring someone back from the dead. At the very least, there is always the opposition of Satan to deal with. There are commotions in modern church life in which noise and excitement will have to end before much is done by the Lord. He is not said in this gospel to have spoken, and so we have a contrast between empty noise and his silence. This is the first case of resurrection by our Lord. This is typical of the giving of spiritual life to persons who are saved.

**26 And the fame hereof went abroad into all that land.**

**27 And when Jesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying, and saying, Thou son of David, have mercy on us.**

These two blind men show their belief by calling Him the Son of David. That was a term reserved for the Jewish Messiah. The form of their address seems to indicate that they had put their faith in Jesus as the Messiah. At this point, Jesus had just healed the incurably sick woman of the issue of blood, and had raised the young girl from the dead. We read in the last lesson that the story of these two miracles

had spread throughout the land. No wonder these two blind men followed Him. Here again, was another impossible situation. These men believed that Jesus was their only help.

**28 And when he was come into the house, the blind men came to him: and Jesus saith unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord.**

There is a lot of irony in this passage. In Jewish law two witnesses are required for testimony to be regarded as true. In this case we have two blind witnesses.

**29 Then touched he their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you.**

Notice that He puts the responsibility on the blind men. Had they not had faith they would have remained blind. Our own blessings depend on the amount of faith we have. For Jesus to act in your life you first have to believe that He will.

**30 And their eyes were opened; and Jesus straitly charged them, saying, See that no man know it.**

This double miracle deserved to be made widely known; but our Lord had reasons for demanding silence. He “straitly charged them.” means He left them no option. Jesus did not desire fame; he wanted less crowding; he wished to avoid excitement.

**31 But they, when they were departed, spread abroad his fame in all that country.**

Human will be humans. In spite of being told to keep quiet about their healing they were no sooner out of sight than they began to tell everyone about “their” miracle. Of course Jesus knew this before they left Him.

**32 As they went out, behold, they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil.**

The term dumb means unable to speak, not stupid. He does not come of his own accord. He was brought to Jesus. He does not cry for help,

for he is “a dumb man. He is not himself, but he is “possessed with a devil.”

**33 And when the devil was cast out, the dumb spake: and the multitudes marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in Israel.**

The devil had silenced the man, and so, when the devil was gone, “the dumb spake.” The people confessed that this was a wonder quite unprecedented; and in this they only said the truth: The people were quick to express their admiration; but we see very little evidence of their believing in our Lord.

**34 But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.**

This was the unpardonable sin. That is, blaspheming the Holy Spirit by attributing His miracles to Satan. The Pharisees had seen enough of Jesus’ power to know it was God’s power. But, in their willful unbelief, they said His was the power of Satan.

**35 And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.**

Notice again that He is preaching the gospel of the kingdom. He healed them all. He brought the good news (gospel), to everyone, so they might be saved. He not only brought salvation, He is salvation.

**36 But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd.**

These people were eager to learn, but they had no teachers. “What he saw affected not only his eyes, but also his heart. He was overcome by sympathy.

**37 Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few;**

Pretenders are many, but real “laborers” in the harvest are few. The crowds were ready to be taught, but there were few to instruct them. God only can send out laborers”. Man-made ministers are useless.

**38 Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.**

This is true today as it was then. Jesus is indicating that there are many who will believe the gospel of the kingdom. The scribes and Pharisees have failed miserably at this task since they are more interested in their religious position than winning souls.

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## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TEN**

**1 And when he had called unto him his twelve disciples, he gave them power against unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of disease.**

Be sure to notice in verse one that they are referred to as disciples. You and I are disciples. In verse two the reference changes to apostles. The difference is that they have now been given the apostolic powers. No one today has these powers. The apostolic powers were given to be signs to the Jews.

**2 Now the names of the twelve apostles are these; The first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother;**

**3 Philip, and Bartholomew; Thomas, and Matthew the publican; James the son of Alphaeus, and Lebbaeus, whose surname was Thaddaeus;**

**4 Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot, who also betrayed him.**

**5 These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not:**

**6 But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

These two verses are very important. They help us understand that the book of Matthew is not written to the Church. As I have said, there are no Christians present here. These are specific instructions, given

by Jesus, to the twelve. There is no record in the bible, of any of the twelve, other than Peter and possibly Phillip, witnessing to Gentiles. Even Phillip, witnessing to the Ethiopian eunuch is in question, as that was likely a different Phillip. The bottom line is; Jesus, in His earthly ministry, did not come to Gentiles and He commanded His apostles not to go to them. All of this changed after His resurrection when He gave a new commandment; **Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.**

**7 And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand.**

This is what they preached. This is the same gospel preached by John the Baptist. Basically, it is repent and accept Jesus as your Messiah. Be sure to know the difference between this, the kingdom gospel, and the Gospel of the Grace of God, which is the gospel we are saved by and are to teach and preach in this age. The gospel changes back to the kingdom gospel in the Tribulation period.

**8 Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give.**

These, of course, are instructions to the apostles but there is a great principle for us in there. We have received salvation for free. It has literally cost us nothing. We are to pass that along freely. Now, as to the apostles, all was to be done without fee or reward for their powers had not been purchased, their miracles were not to be sold. Compare that to the modern con man pretending to be an apostle. The key phrase, for them, is ; "sow the seed". Redneck translation; send me your money.

**9 Provide neither gold, nor silver, nor brass in your purses,**

**10 Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat.**

They would not need to pay for food, lodging nor extra clothing if it were needed. The bible clearly teaches that those who preach the gospel should live by the gospel. In other words we are to take care of them. All of this applies to people who are willing to hear, and

receive, the gospel. Obviously this would not work among hostile tribes. When working in a hostile environment the Lord's command is different. Luke 22:36 says: **“He that hath a purse, let him take it.”** That's just good, common sense.

**11 And into whatsoever city or town ye shall enter, enquire who in it is worthy; and there abide till ye go thence.**

He said to find a good believing family, and stay with them while you were ministering in a town. They were not to jump from house to house since that might suggest that they were beggars.

**12 And when ye come into an house, salute it.**

Say, “Peace be to this house.” We ought never to enter a house without wishing it good, nor to leave it without having endeavored to make it better. This is still a good rule to follow.

**13 And if the house be worthy, let your peace come upon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace return to you.**

Think well of the family until they prove otherwise by their conduct. Bless the house. We are to think well of all until proved otherwise. This is another good principle to go by.

**14 And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet.**

I have actually seen Jehovah's Witnesses do this as they hurried out my gate. They don't come to my house anymore and I miss them since I like to mess with them. That, by the way, is exactly the point here. If the disciples message was rejected they were to leave and shake the dust off their feet as they went. The implication is that God would not bother to send them another witness.

**15 Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for that city.**

Do you get this verse? It speaks of the city but would also apply to the individuals who rejected the message. They are going to Hell and to greater punishment than Sodom and Gomorrha. As far as we



know,Sodom and Gomorrah did not have a witness to carry the message to them. There was Lot but apparently he was totally ineffective.

**16 Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves.**

The term wolves is used to describe false prophets. These are those who seek to destroy the church by teaching false doctrine. The “church” was full of these people then and it is full of them now. Charles Spurgeon said,” We are called to be martyrs, not maniacs”.

**17 But beware of men: for they will deliver you up to the councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues;**

It has always seemed odd to me that they used the synagogues as a place for scourging (that's beating),people. That would be like bringing a Southern Baptist into our church and beating him for using false bibles. Come to think of it.....

**18 And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles.**

No doubt,with His foreknowledge,Jesus meant this for those who came later as the Apostles stayed in Jerusalem, and it was Paul who was brought before governors and kings for the Lord's sake. Maybe I'm being a little too hard on the apostles since they were all,with the exception of John,martyrs for our Lord.

**19 But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak.**

**20 For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you.**

Now,this applies to those hauled before some governing body or court. It most certainly does not apply to teachers and preachers who should spend the necessary time in study and know most of what they intend to say before standing before a group. We owe that to our Savior.

**21 And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.**

This was very true in those early days of the Church and the very one doing the most persecution was Saul of Tarsus (Saint Paul). It is always amazing how God works. A murderer and chief tool of Satan, became the greatest Christian evangelist and missionary who ever lived. This is also true in many countries today. China and the middle East come to mind.

**22 And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.**

These verses clearly have a significance that goes beyond the disciples' immediate mission. This is clearly a verse that applies to the Tribulation period that precedes Christ's second coming.

**23 But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the cities of Israel, till the Son of man be come.**

**24 The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord.**

If Christ suffers, so will His pupils. If they attack Christ, with blasphemies, so will they curse the disciples. This was the promise of persecution and what they could look forward to in the future.

**25 It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?**

"Beelzebub" was originally a Philistine deity associated with satanic idolatry. The name came to be used for Satan, the prince of demons. Jesus said here, if they think I am evil, they will think my followers are evil too.

**26 Fear them not therefore: for there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; and hid, that shall not be known.**

We should all realize that what Jesus wants is an empty vessel that He can speak through. We have to be taught of the Spirit: not mind knowledge, but heart knowledge.

**27 What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops.**

We do not witness out of fear. Our fear of man is unfounded simply because he can do just so much to you. Our fear should be of God, who could send you to a burning hell. One of the biggest fears in our society today is fear of our own government, and particularly the IRS. Ninety percent of the time, the things we fear never happen. Besides, fear is the opposite of faith, and is dishonoring to God. Fear of God can also be spoken of as respect.

**28 And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.**

In other words, Jesus reminded them that it was more important to fear Him who had authority over the “soul” as well as over the “body” and who has authority to cast men into hell, and not Satan, who will himself be finally cast into the lake of fire.

**29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.**

**30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.**

These two verses are mind boggling when you spend a little time thinking on them. God knows where every sparrow in the world is at any given time and what their state of health is. He knows the number of hairs on the heads of some seven billion people. These two things are representative of all the things of the universe. If He wanted to He could tell you the number of grains of sand on Pensacola beach at any given time.

**31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.**

**32 Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I**

**confess also before my Father which is in heaven.**

This verse certainly brings to mind the salvation verses in Romans 10:9-10. **That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. {10:10} For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.** Now be sure to notice that there is absolutely nothing in those two verses except belief and confession that the things Jesus has said about himself are true.

**33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.**

This principle has carried forward to the church age. Confession before men is one of the two requirements for salvation in this age. The other requirement being true belief. One of the main ways we confess Him before men is by going forward in church and making a public confession of our faith. That said, it should be more than that. We also confess Him by witnessing to others about Him. Think about this; we can go to either Heaven or Hell depending on the confession of our mouth or the lack of that confession.

**34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.**

**35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.**

Never before in history has there been a time when parents and children were at more odds. Years ago parents were treated with respect by their children, now most young people feel that their parents are too “old fashioned” and out of touch with the way things really are.

**36 And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.**

Salvation usually happens to one family member at a time. Usually the one who gets saved has a lot of opposition from the other family members.

**37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.**

Christ must be first. Right here He rightly claims the highest place in every human heart. We know that the Son of God has a right to speak this way. We must beware of making idols of our loved ones, by placing them above the Lord Jesus Christ.

**38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.**

Here our Lord brings up His death for the second time in this gospel. At first he spoke of being taken from them, but now He speaks of the cross.

**39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.**

As Christians we should have a balanced approach to life. If we are living for this life and not preparing for eternity, then we are doing it wrong. If we are storing up treasures in heaven and not providing for our families here, we are also doing it wrong. Think of it this way; I do not want to stand at the Judgment Seat and be guilty of spending more for my toys that I have sent on ahead in the cause of Jesus Christ.

**40 He that receiveth you receiveth me, and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.**

Christ lives in His people. Those who come in His name are His ambassadors. Therefore, how they are treated is how He is treated. There is just one message; Salvation through Jesus Christ. If you are spreading that message, those who receive it, receive Jesus.

**41 He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.**

The meaning of this statement is that those who are not prophets themselves may share in the labor and reward of the prophets by willingly supporting their ministry. This is why we willingly support evangelists and missionaries.

**42 And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.**

“One of these little ones” is a reference to the fact that even the smallest service done to the most insignificant of Christ’s servants shall be rewarded by the Lord Himself.

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## **MATTHEW CHAPTER ELEVEN**

**1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and to preach in their cities.**

He arranged their missionary journey, then followed them later. It was his plan to send them two and two through the cities of Israel, and then to follow them up in person to back up their testimony. The term, “their cities”, sounds odd to us. It is highly likely that the apostles had been assigned cities in which to witness.

**2 Now when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples,**

**3 And said unto him, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?**

Verses 2 and 3 are full of questions and the questions are never answered completely. It is possible, but not likely, that John's faith began to fail. Some believe that, but John knew full well who Jesus was. It is also possible that these were sent for the sake of the other disciples. Were they wavering so much that John himself could not reassure them? But when he heard of all the miracles that Jesus did, he may have wondered why he was left in prison.

**4 Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see:**

Our Lord makes no claims, but instead, sets clear evidence before John's delegates. He bases the evidence upon his miracles and that is all one needs to know. The messengers received command "Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see." Of hearing and seeing they had more than they could fully report, and plenty to make them see for themselves that Jesus was the Christ.

**5 The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them.**

The last two proofs are the climax of the argument: "The dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." These two miracles are placed together because it is as much a miracle that the gospel is preached to the poor as it is when someone is raised from the dead. Now, think about that one and you will see what I mean. No one had ever given the poor an even break. They were born into poverty and lived their lives and died in poverty. There was no upward movement in the old Jewish society. The only way out, for the man, was the military. There was no out for the woman. John's disciples had come at a right time when our Lord's work was in full swing.

**6 And blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me.**

A person is truly blessed whose faith is strong enough to withstand whatever comes. If John was doubting, he had not fallen, but very possibly he had stumbled. He had to wonder why Jesus left him in prison. The miracles that Jesus did was proof that He was God manifest in the flesh.

**7 And as they departed, Jesus began to say unto the multitudes concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?**

When John's disciples left, Jesus started telling the people who John the Baptist really was. The people expected Jesus to take up His reign then, and they expected the one who would herald His coming to be

dressed in finery. Prophets were usually dressed in skins, not fancy clothes. Even today, the true messengers of God are not high and mighty by the world's standards. They just have a message to bring, and usually, they stay in the back ground so that the message is what stands out.

**8 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? behold, they that wear soft clothing are in kings' houses.**

**9 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? yea, I say unto you, and more than a prophet.**

Here Christ affirms the fact that John is a prophet. The next few verses explain this statement.

**10 For this is he, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.**

That phrase, "of whom it is written", refers back to two places in the Old Testament. Those are Isaiah 40 and Malachi 3.

**11 Verily I say unto you, Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.**

Up till the coming of our Lord, John was the greatest prophet born; but the new dispensation was on a higher plane, for "the kingdom of heaven" now was at hand.

**12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.**

From the time he began his preaching ministry, John the Baptist evoked a strong reaction. Notice that where Matthew says, "the violent take it by force," Luke has, "everyone forcing his way into it" (Luke 16:16). So, the sense of this verse may be rendered this way.

**13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.**

God left not himself without witness all along. John ended the chain of prophets, and now the Lord himself appears. Our Lord draws a line at



John by saying “until John”.

**14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.**

John was the Elijah for whom they looked. Would people believe it? Would they obey his command to repent? Then he would be to them a true Elijah. There is a parallel in our time. Even a man sent of God is to his hearer very much what that hearer chooses to make of him. A minister, may bring the message of salvation, or he may teach or he may just bring a happy sermon. After that, it's up to us. If we refuse to receive it it is meaningless. All of us have favorites among the preachers we know.

**15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

John the Baptist is a type of Elijah who will appear later. He has already appeared in the sense that if the Jews had received the Messiah then John would fulfill the prophecy of Malachi 4:4-5.

**16 But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows,**

Christ reflects on the scribes and Pharisees, who were proud and conceited. He was saying that, whether it was a joyful message, or a sad message, neither pleased them. In other words, nothing pleases you. If you don't want to dance, why don't you mourn? As we see from the following verses this is referring to John.

**17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented.**

This does not mean that he did not eat or drink at all, otherwise he could not have lived. He ate sparingly, very little; and what he did eat and drink, was not the common food and drink of the time. He neither ate bread nor drank wine, but lived upon locusts and wild honey. He did not accept any invitations to people's houses, and shunned all feasts and entertainment.

**18 For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil.**

So they say he hath a devil; is a demoniac, a madman, one that is unsociable and melancholy; under a delusion of Satan, and influenced by him to abstain from proper food and company of men, under a pretense of religion.

**19 The Son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children.**

There is no way to please critics. Now according to the Pharisees Jesus is a glutton and a drunk.

**20 Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:**

**21 Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.**

Jesus, in His foreknowledge, knew what the doom of certain Jewish towns would be; and he knew what certain heathen cities would have done if they had been had the same opportunity. Salvation was lost to Chorazin and Bethsaida, but would have been accepted by Tyre and Sidon. The practical point was that the Jewish cities remained unmoved by the message which would have converted the heathen Sidonians.

**22 But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you.**

This verse gives us a big hint that there are degrees of punishment in Hell. That stands to reason as there are degrees of reward in Heaven.

**23 And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day.**

Sometimes, people are so deeply rooted in their sins that there is no possible way to get them to repent. If Jesus couldn't do it, what makes

us think that we can? Even with all the miracles He did, they did not accept Him and get saved.

**24 But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.**

To reject the gospel of the Grace of God is to condemn oneself to Hell. Here, again, our Lord speaks from his own full authority, with “I say unto you.” He speaks what he knows as He will himself be the Judge.

**25 At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.**

Be sure to notice the sarcasm in these words as the Jewish leaders are ironically identified as wise and intelligent and the followers of Christ as the infants, yet God has revealed to those followers the truth of the Messiah and His gospel. So the educated Pharisees are fools and the babes in Christ are wiser. In today's church it is the educated fools who are the bible changers.

**26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.**

The Lord Jesus Christ claimed that the task of executing the divine will had been committed to Him. This claim that would be utterly blasphemous if Jesus were anything less than sovereign God Himself.

**27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.**

So you can easily see that only Jesus, His Father, and the Holy Ghost can really reveal anything to us. Head knowledge will never do. It has to be in our hearts and be a part of us for us to understand, and only God can give us that.

**28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**

Note that this is an open invitation to all who hear, but it is phrased in such a way that the only ones who will respond to the invitation are

those who are burdened by the weight of trying to save themselves by keeping the law. It's easy to lose sight of the fact that the ones being preached to here are all law keeping Jews.

**29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.**

One of Jesus favorite words is come. He does not say go to Moses or go to the Law but come to me. We must come to Jesus by personal trust. We do not come to doctrine nor to priest nor minister first, but to Jesus Himself.

**30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.**

Jesus' call has always been to those in need. The sooner we learn to lay our cares on Jesus, the better off we are. He can take care of all our problems, if we depend totally upon Him.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWELVE**

**1 At that time Jesus went on the sabbath day through the corn; and his disciples were an hungred, and began to pluck the ears of corn and to eat.**

This is a place where my favorite commentator is wrong,dead wrong. He insists that the corn mentioned here is maize. It is not. All grains,all over the world,are called corn. Maize,that grain we call corn,did not grow in the Old World until it was taken there from the Americas. Corn,in the King James bible is usually either wheat or barley. Both grains grow in an "ear" at the top of the stalk. Now,all that gibberish was worthless but I needed to get it off my chest. The point of this verse is that they were "working" on the Sabbath. They were gathering,and eating, grain. Sabbath food was to be prepared the day before. This gives the Pharisees a talking point.

**2 But when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto him, Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawful to do upon the sabbath day.**

It is important to notice a difference here. God said, "**Remember the Sabbath and keep it Holy**". All the many rules concerning keeping the Sabbath were added by the Jews. So, Jesus and the twelve were not disobeying God but disobeying some old Pharisee somewhere back in time. In any case, Jesus made the rules and He can change them at His pleasure.

**3 But he said unto them, Have ye not read what David did, when he was an hungred, and they that were with him;**

**4 How he entered into the house of God, and did eat the shewbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, neither for them which were with him, but only for the priests?**

This story about David is found in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel verses 1-6. It is the time when David is running from Saul and is traveling without food and weapons. It is a very interesting chapter as this is also the place where David reclaims Goliath's sword. When he leaves this place he has both food and a weapon.

**5 Or have ye not read in the law, how that on the sabbath days the priests in the temple profane the sabbath, and are blameless?**

This one is found in Numbers 29:32. The priest are portrayed killing offerings on the Sabbath. Considering the thousands of animals offered it was a seven day a week job. Be sure to notice that in these two instances Jesus used the scriptures to answer the Pharisees.

**6 But I say unto you, That in this place is one greater than the temple.**

This was a straightforward claim of deity The Lord Jesus was God dwelling in human flesh – far superior to any building.

**7 But if ye had known what this meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice, ye would not have condemned the guiltless.**

"Mercy, and not sacrifice": This phrase was commonly used as a rebuke for those who did not know something they should have known. The verse Jesus cites is Hos. 6:6; which emphasizes the

absolute priority of the law's moral standards over the ceremonial requirements.

### **8 For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.**

Christ has the prerogative to rule over not only their man made Sabbath rules, but also over the Sabbath itself, which was designed for worshiping God. Again, He claims deity and this further enrages the Pharisees.

### **9 And when he was departed thence, he went into their synagogue:**

### **10 And, behold, there was a man which had his hand withered. And they asked him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath days? that they might accuse him.**

This happens almost too quickly. Did God set this man with the withered hand in the synagogue or did the pharisees put him there hoping to trap Jesus. Regardless, these religious people were trying to find some reason to get rid of Him. They knew that Jesus would not let the Sabbath keep Him from helping someone in need.

### **11 And he said unto them, What man shall there be among you, that shall have one sheep, and if it fall into a pit on the sabbath day, will he not lay hold on it, and lift it out?**

He answers their question by another. He presents a hypothetical case, and makes them to be judges. If a poor man, with "one sheep", saw it fall "into a pit", or become cast on its back "on the sabbath", would he not "lay hold on it, and lift it out", and set it on its feet? Of course he would; and he would be right in so doing. Isn't a man better than a sheep? Therefore it must be right to heal a man on the Sabbath.

### **12 How much then is a man better than a sheep? Wherefore it is lawful to do well on the sabbath days.**

He was telling these people, in a way that they could understand, what He was doing. They had sheep, and He knew that if they had a sheep missing, they would go and find him, even on the Sabbath.

**13 Then saith he to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth; and it was restored whole, like as the other.**

The man was sitting down, and Jesus asked him to stand up so that everyone could see him. Then He told him to hold up his hand so everyone could see that it was withered. Then the Lord restored it at once, before the whole synagogue, and especially the Pharisees. The poor man had hidden his hand when it was dried up, but when restored, it was right that it should be seen by all in the synagogue. By that restored hand, made whole on the sabbath, all men knew that Jesus would work deeds of mercy on the sabbath

**14 Then the Pharisees went out, and held a council against him, how they might destroy him.**

The Pharisee's were jealous and afraid. They had no power like this in their lives.

**15 But when Jesus knew it, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all;**

Imagine this; it was a multitude and the Book says "He healed them all": In all of Old Testament history there was never a time or a person who exhibited such extensive healing power. Physical healing was rare in the Old Testament. Christ chose to display His deity by healing, raising the dead, and liberating people from demons. That not only showed the Messiah's power over the physical and spiritual realms, but also demonstrated the compassion of God toward those affected by sin.

**16 And charged them that they should not make him known:**

Here Christ seems concerned that the multitude might try to make Him king.

**17 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,**

Jesus' whole life was a judgment and condemnation of sin before the eyes of all men. He conquered not by military might, nor by power, but

by the Spirit of the Lord. The Messiah would not try to stir up a revolution or force His way into power.

**18 Behold my servant, whom I have chosen; my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall shew judgment to the Gentiles.**

**19 He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.**

The sense here is that at any time Jesus could have called a mob together, or for that matter an army. He did not come to do it this way but by healing and teaching.

**20 A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory.**

A bruised reed in scripture usually refers to a saint who has been hurt in service. God does not throw them away but heals them and restores them to service.

**21 And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.**

That little, short prophecy has certainly come to pass. The despised Gentile dogs have come to love Him as their Master. He shall be the hope of those who were left as hopeless. We Gentiles do trust in his name. In us is this prophecy fulfilled.

**22 Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.**

The evil spirit had secured himself by closing the windows and the door of the soul, that would be the eyes and mouth. This person was blind and dumb. How could he escape? He could not see his Savior, nor cry to him. But these problems vanished, in an instant, when Jesus cast out the demon: "the blind and dumb both spake and saw." This next is a quote from Charles Spurgeon. "Nothing baffles our Lord. Men who neither see their sin, nor cry for mercy, his grace can save". I put that quotation in there because you sometimes hear some other things taught in our churches today. As a "for instance", you



sometimes hear that there are some sins that can not be forgiven. Hogwash.

**23 And all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?**

These people knew Jesus as one of them. They thought He was only flesh and blood. “Is he? He cannot be; he must be; but is he? Is this the Son of David?” There is almost the beginning of acceptance here.

**24 But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.**

Now the Pharisees accuse Jesus of performing His miracles by the power of Satan. This is the “unpardonable sin” as we will see in verse 31.

**25 And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:**

The reasoning of the Pharisees (in verse 24), was not expressed verbally, but Jesus, knew their thoughts, gave them here ample proof of his omniscience. Mark puts it this way; **“And he called them unto him, and said unto them in parables, How can Satan drive out Satan?”**. Don't miss the fact that Jesus knew their thoughts. He knows ours.

**26 And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?**

A soul under Satan's power, is blind in the things of God, and dumb at the throne of grace. If you get nothing else this morning get that. I am not saying that a Christian is possessed by Satan but one can certainly be influenced by him. Satan's influence will keep you from study and prayer. Satan's influence can find many reasons to skip church. Satan's influence sneaks in a little unbelief which leads to more unbelief. He seals up the lips from prayer. The more people magnified Christ, the more anxious the Pharisees, influenced by Satan, were to vilify him.

**27 And if I by Beelzebub cast out devils, by whom do your children cast them out? therefore they shall be your judges.**

Apparently some of the Pharisees children and disciples, made a practice of casting out demons. In this case it does not matter whether they were really able to do this or were pretending. If Jesus wrought this miracle by Beelzebub, and the Pharisees believed that, how could they have learned it better than from their own sons? Did their sons have dealings with Satan? No matter how they answered they would be in the wrong.

**28 But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.**

The Lord's power over demons was evidence enough that He was the Messiah. The phrase "The Kingdom of God is come": was precisely true. The King was in their midst, displaying His sovereign power. He was warning them here, that they were speaking out against God.

**29 Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.**

Satan is the strong man spoken of here. Christ, by means of the gospel, spoils his house by taking out souls that would otherwise be lost to Hell.

**30 He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.**

You cannot straddle the fence. You are either the friend of Christ, helping win souls to Him, or you are His enemy, driving people away from God. There is no middle road. We cannot be uncommitted.

**31 Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.**

**32 And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy**

**Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.**

In verses 31 and 32 we are discussing the “unpardonable” sin. So, these people who often use Jesus Christ as a curse word can be forgiven. Speaking against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. Now, it has been said by those who should know, that you cannot commit this sin today. The reasoning is this. First, all sins can now be forgiven. Second, Jesus is now in Heaven and the problem here was about the miracles He was performing, so the setting is no longer here. As a Christian why would you even think of blaspheming the Holy Spirit anyway. If I were an unbeliever I think I would err on the safe side. There is still another way to look at this. The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost is deliberate rejection of Christ, and His salvation. It is the ultimate sin that by its very nature puts a man beyond the opportunity of salvation.

**33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.**

There is a good principle for us Christians in verse 33. We are known by our fruit, both kinds. The fruit of the Spirit and the souls we have a part in winning to Christ.

**34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.**

There is an old saying, “That which is in the well comes up in the bucket”. In other words, the mouth betrays what is in the heart. Had they been good, their words would have been good; but such was their hardness of heart, that they could not “speak good things.”

**35 A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.**

Christ says they were a wicked race; like poisonous reptiles, with a corrupt and evil nature. They could not be expected to speak good things.

**36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.**

If, and I do say if, this applies to us Christians then it is a very troubling verse. The verse does say, "every idle word". This would also apply to all that useless garbage posted on Facebook every day.

**37 For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.**

Words" are the indication of what is in the heart. On the negative side, this is not speaking only of cursing but also of things such as lies, malicious gossip, false witness etc. On the positive side would be things like instruction, witnessing, encouraging etc. It is words that allow us to confess Christ openly and that confession is an important part of our salvation.

**38 Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee.**

The Pharisees change their manner, but they are still trying to trap the Lord. How hopeless had the Pharisees become that nothing could convince them. They show their hate of the Lord Jesus, by ignoring all the wonders he had done. What further signs could they seek than those he had already given? They treat all the miracles of our Lord as if they had never occurred.

**39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas:**

**40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.**

Jesus reprimanded them for always wanting a sign. Jesus wants our faith. He called those who continuously had to have a sign an evil and

adulterous generation. This adultery here, is spiritual rather than physical. The sign Jesus was speaking of here, was Jonah being in the belly of the whale three days and nights. Jesus would be in the earth 3 days and nights. One interesting thing I noticed as I was preparing this is the unbelieving comments by some of the commentators. Calling the whale a "great sea creature" or "large fish". Jesus Himself said it was a whale and He knows what a whale is. If you want a reference for that it is right here in verse 40.

**41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.**

Everyone will be present at the Great White Throne judgment, including those judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The men of Nineveh will be there and will condemn those who did not repent: the Ninevites will condemn the Jews, "because they repented at the preaching of Jonas," and the Jews did not. Those who heard Jonah and repented will be witnesses against those who heard Jesus and refused his offer of salvation.

**42 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.**

The Queen of the south is Sheba who came to Solomon. Unless the Lord is using this as a figure of speech, Sheba will also be at the judgment and will condemn those who refused the Lord Jesus Christ.

**43 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.**

Now we are back to demon possession. There are at least two parts to this. It would apply to a demon possessed person, but this is also a type of the nation of Israel.

**44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished.**

Notice that the person, which the demon refers to as his “house” is now clean. This is the person who manages to get himself morally right without being born again. This is a picture of a lot of today's church members. The “house” is empty but clean. The Holy Spirit has not taken possession.

**45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.**

The demon is so pleased with his clean “house” that he calls other demons and invites them to join him. We now have eight demons dwelling in the person where before there was one. The verse says, **“they “enter in and dwell there”, that is** they take the full possession and make a permanent stay. Their residence is secured beyond future likelihood of removal; and now the man is worse off than before since the unclean spirits are more numerous and more wicked. Backsliding is a dangerous thing.

**46 While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him.**

**47 Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee.**

This saying was not intended to be one of disrespect to Mary or to His brothers. However, there is no suggestion here that Jesus' mother had any special access to His presence or any particular influence over Him. Jesus was preparing the crowd to receive the precious truth that “whosoever shall do the will of my Father” is, in fact, His adopted family. These are actual half-brothers and sisters, of Jesus. Matthew explicitly connects them with Mary, indicating that they were not cousins or Joseph's sons from a previous marriage, as some churches try to claim, in order to keep Mary a perpetual virgin.. They are mentioned in all the gospels. Matthew and Mark give the names of 4 of Jesus's brothers, and mention that He had sisters as well. References are Matt 13:55 and Mark 6:3.

**48 But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren?**

**49 And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren!**

Jesus was not putting down His earthly family. He was emphasizing eternal spiritual relationships . Even His own family needed Him as Savior.

**50 For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.**

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All of this was said and done to make us know there is a physical family, and there is a spiritual family. The family of God counts as much, or more, than our earthly families.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER THIRTEEN**

**1 The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.**

We see several instances where Jesus went aside to be alone. He obviously had little time to Himself for prayer and meditation. This multitude of people had probably, been waiting for Jesus to appear again out of the house. He was so pressed by the large number, that He cast out a little way from the shore. His voice would carry well across the water, as well.

**2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.**

The ship became his pulpit, and the little space between it and the shore gave him breathing space, and enabled more to hear him. There was room for the whole multitude on the beach. Notice that the teacher sat, and the people stood. We would have less sleeping in congregations if this arrangement was used today.

**3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;**

The first parable is set in an agricultural context. This would be a farmer walking through his field and scattering seed. The seed is the Word of God and the sower is the evangelist preaching the gospel.

**4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:**

The “way side” probably refers to the roadside or path. It was packed hard and the seed found no root, thus the “fowls”(that would be demons) snatched it away. Here there was no response at all to the gospel.

**5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:**

**6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.**

These seed fell where the soil was thin over a rocky surface. The sun soon dried the soil causing the young plants to wither and die.

**7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:**

The third group of seeds fell “among thorns” that had not been plowed. The thorns , choked out the crop.

**8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.**

There is a good principle for us in this verse, and a little warning in the next verse.

**9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

**10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?**

Perhaps the crowd had complained to the disciples that they could not see what their Master was driving at. The apostles may have felt



unable to reply. The disciples did not at first understand why Jesus did not just say exactly what He meant. Jesus did not want these unbelievers accepting the message with their minds. Jesus wants us to accept by faith the things of God. This is the very reason that Noah's Ark has not been found and photographed for the whole world to see. God does not want our heads to believe, He wants our hearts.

**11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.**

Jesus' was hiding the truth from unbelievers. The Savior's reply is that only the disciples are to know the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." A "mystery" in the Bible implies a secret into which one must be initiated in order to understand it. The mystery revealed would be the Church in the interval between the first and second advents. He only hinted at this and left it to Paul to reveal it fully. We say this in a different way. You must be born again to understand the Bible.

**12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.**

Those who had some understanding of spiritual truth would seek more. Those who lived willfully in the dark, would become more and more bewildered, and would gain nothing. It is just so with carnal men; spiritual truth rather blinds them than enlightens them.

**13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.**

Here Matthew seems to suggest that their own unbelief is the cause of their spiritual blindness. Yet we are not to think that God blinds them because He somehow delights in their destruction. So, most of this multitude are going to Hell. Again here, Jesus was just explaining that a saved and unsaved person can look at the same thing and get two totally different messages. The unsaved has their understanding darkened, so that they do not understand.

**14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:**

That sixth chapter of Isaiah is constantly being quoted in the New Testament. It clearly sets forth the spiritual blindness of Israel. Those who refuse to see are punished by becoming unable to see.

**15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.**

You see above, that these people had, on their own volition, closed their eyes and ears to the truth. They had to take the scales off their eyes and the stoppers out of their ears that they might see, hear, and understand. This is what happens when we are “born again”.

**16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.**

We have learned the great secret; the counsel of the Lord has been revealed to us, and we are blessed. Those of us under the gospel of grace now know what the greatest and best of men under the law could not discover. Those of us under the gospel dispensation see more truth in Jesus than the best of the saints could see before he came. Truly to hear the gospel and to see its blessings is a high favor. The love and gratitude which we show in return should be great indeed!

**17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.**

In the Old Testament there was a shadow covering the truth. The way to God's throne was not open to them. The temple's curtain had not been torn. Remember that it was torn top to bottom at the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus. They understood only in part. They knew God only

through the priest in the temple. Now we have a great High Priest in Heaven

**18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.**

Jesus is about to show them how to understand this parable.

**19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.**

To hear but not to understand, is to leave the good seed on the outside of your nature, and not to take it into yourself. Nothing can come of such hearing to anyone. Satan is always on the watch to hinder the Word. This man was not saved because he "received seed". He received the truth as he was, without his nature being changed, and the seed remained as it was. We would say he heard but was not born again.

**20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;**

**21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.**

The "stony places" are shallow individuals who receive , the message with "joy." This is an emotional convert who is not truly born again. They soon fall away if their emotions are not constantly fed.

**22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.**

This class of hearers we know by personal acquaintance in this day and age. They hear the word, they are affected by the gospel, they take it as seed into their minds, and it grows well for a season, but the heart cannot belong to two things at once. Seeking after money, or else pride, luxury, sports and other sins which come of chasing after

the world. These things prevent a man, or woman, from being useful in God's work. He keeps his profession; he occupies his pew; but he does not grow spiritually. In his case the weeds have outgrown the wheat, and smothered it.

**23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.**

Just as there were 3 soils with no fruit, thus no salvation, there are 3 kinds of good soil with fruit. Not all believers are equally fruitful, but all are fruitful.

**24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:**

Here, is a farmer going out to plant and, of course, he plants good seed, or it would be a waste of time. We reap what we sow, if we want corn, we do not plant pumpkins. To borrow from Matthew and apply it to this age, the church is built with the seed of the Word being planted and growing.

**25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.**

How do we do this today? Many ways. To mention just a few let's start with letting false preachers come into the church and preach. So far we haven't had that problem. Encouraging the reading of false books on doctrine. Watching TV con artists. How about this one; participating with other denominations that practice false doctrine. All those things and many others sow tares among the wheat.

**26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.**

Good seed grows, and, evil seed is equally full of the power to increase. The tares are up as soon as the wheat, and it looks so like it that it appears to be the same thing. The field is ruined; its yield is poisoned by the mixture. What had the enemy gained for himself?

Nothing: it was enough for him that he had injured the man he hated. Remember that scripture; “A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump”.

**27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?**

Man is so prone to sin, that if Satan sows the tares, he can leave and we will take care of the rest. On the other hand, when good seed is sown, it must be tended, watered, and fenced to keep out the deer.

**28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?**

The tares are those who scatter doubt among the people, and introduce skeptics into the church. They always work behind the scenes and the real cause of the mischief is Satan himself. Had there been weeds in the corn, a hoe could have removed them; but the tares look just like the wheat on the outside. We cannot get rid of these.

**29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.**

All through the Bible, the wheat stands for the true believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the church, if you begin to throw the enemy out, some of the true believers will be hurt and leave. It is just best to leave them alone and feed them the truth. They will either repent and be saved, or they will leave on their own.

**30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.**

The Christians will be gathered and taken to heaven. The false professors will be left. This occurs at the end of the Church age when God decides that it is time to reap the harvest of the Christians from the earth.

**31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:**

The Palestinian “mustard” is a shrub whose seed is unusually small and yet grows to a fairly large size. The idea seems to be that the tiny beginning of the church will eventually culminate in great growth. However, such large growth will eventually come to harbor the “birds” (evil ones). The parable accordingly foreshadows the growth of the church into a world power. That said, outward growth is not always a true picture of spiritual growth.

**32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.**

Who, at the time, could have guessed that our Lord and his twelve apostles would produce millions of Christians through the ages. Even now we can not tell what the smallest thing might grow into. Something as simple as a tract might lead to a great preacher or missionary.

**33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.**

Leaven, that's yeast or sourdough, in scripture is almost always used as a symbol of evil. The leaven is not just false profession of unsaved church members but false doctrine that they will attempt to bring into the church.

**34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:**

**35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.**

Pay attention to this next. The “prophet” in this case was the psalmist (see Psalm 78:1). It begins, "Give ear, O my people, to my law." Now who could have said this but God? Yet in the third verse this same

person speaks of "our fathers"; and therefore he must be a man. Here, then, in this seventy-eighth psalm, is the sacred person who is both God and man. So we see again, that Jesus spoke in parables so the worldly people could not understand with their minds, and come to God not with their hearts, but with their minds. These secrets, that Jesus was revealing, were things to come in the dispensation of grace, not the law. That's the secret part from the foundation of the world. Jesus left it to Paul to fully reveal this secret.

**36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.**

At this time the disciples had not received the Holy Spirit who is the teacher. They did not understand; because it is the Spirit who helps us understand the parables.

**37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;**

He came to this world on purpose to sow the kingdom of heaven in it. All the grace, and truth, and spiritual life that we have is of his sowing. He alone has the power to change the heart.

**38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;**

Those of us who are believers in the Lord Jesus have to grow in the midst of evil. We must be tried, or else the Lord would not truly know if we belong to Him. Satan's crowd is all around us including in the church.

**39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.**

This verse has direct parallels in the Book of Revelation where the angels are sent to reap two harvests. One angel gathers the saved from the Tribulation period and the other angel gathers the lost. The devil is headed for a burning hell, and he would like to see all of us go there with him.

**40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.**

In the time of harvest, that's the end of the Tribulation, the tares shall be gathered out from the wheat first; and being bound in bundles, shall be burnt in the fire, that's the lake of fire. Hypocritical and heretical men, and all unsaved formal professors, shall be gathered out from among the Tribulation saints, and shall be cast into everlasting fire.

**41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;**

This is in preparation for the millennial kingdom where everything will return to a state like it was in the garden in Eden.

**42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.**

This will be a time of trouble such as the world has never known before. Just to know that we would be forever separated from Jesus would be bad enough, but to burn forever would be horrible. Jesus is the Judge and He will decide which way we go. It is a wonderful thing that we have the power, now, to decide where we will spend eternity.

**43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

It is beyond description what is waiting for the true believer. We are not told a lot about Heaven but we do know it will be one eternal day with the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. We will shine, because we will be in the presence of the Light (Jesus).

**44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.**

This cannot apply to the Church since the Christian has nothing for sale and can not buy the Church. The only one who bought the church and the people in it, is the Lord Jesus Christ. The treasure is Israel. The field is the world (the Lord just said so in verse 38). The "man" is



God as it has been in all the parables. So,projecting forward to a future time,there is a believing remnant of Israel hidden somewhere in the field(the world).

**45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:**

The pearl,in scripture,stands for a person,usually female. Though it is called a precious stone,it is the only one that comes from a living thing. All the other precious stones are inorganic minerals.

**46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.**

The “pearl” is different from the “treasure “ of verse 44. This “pearl of great price” is the Church. It is paid for by the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The saved sinner comes from a dirty, muddy place to the light. So,the “Man” is Christ. The “Pearl is the Church. The “Great Price” is the blood of Jesus Christ.

**47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:**

This is a seine or draw-net. It encircles a large area of water, and gathers within it all kinds of creatures that move in the sea. The net-casting is a success, for the net gathers, and is full. Yet the success may not be so great as it seems; for the contents of the net are of every kind,both good and bad(that's saved and unsaved). So long as it is in the water, it contains both bad and good. The Church today is in this type of mess. Some,probably most, will be worthless and will be cast away into the lake of fire. Even though they were once in the net, the unsaved go into the lake of fire for eternity. Do not take this verse to mean that anyone loses their salvation. Think of the large church congregation today,and how many of those are there for the wrong reasons. Those people are physically in the “net” but lost. The imagery is similar to the parable of the tares (in verses 24-30).

**48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.**

Salvation is offered to everyone. The "sea" here, means masses of people. You see, Jesus has thrown the net for everyone. He died for all, but not everyone receives salvation.

At a special time, everyone will die to this world and stand before Jesus. The Christians will be the keepers in this fish net. Those cast away are those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus. These will be condemned to the lake of fire. You may notice that I keep referring to the lake of fire instead of Hell. The reason is that these parables refer to the "time of the end" and that is when the lost come out of Hell and go into the lake of fire.

**49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,**

The separation between "the wicked" and "the just" occurs more than once in scripture. It happened once when Christ brought up the saved from the underworld. It will happen again at the Rapture of the Church. This particular verse is speaking of the separation at the Battle of Armageddon. That is Revelation 14 verse 14 and following.

**{14:14} And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud [one] sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. {14:15} And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. {14:16} And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped. {14:17} And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. {14:18} And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. {14:19} And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast [it] into the great winepress of the wrath of God. {14:20} And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress,**

**even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand [and] six hundred furlongs.**

The doom of the wicked is described in terms which are terrible to the last degree yet there are those today who would say, "God wouldn't really do that". Those people need to spend some time reading the old Testament and the Book of Revelation.

**50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.**

**51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.**

Their reply clearly shows that the disciples understood the parables. We should certainly understand them as well. We have the New Testament and hundreds of years of study by Bible students to fall back on. There is no excuse now for not understanding the scriptures except for those few parts that are still hidden to be revealed later.

**52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.**

We are not to abandon the Old Testament teachings in favor of the new but rather to let the new build on the old. There are identical passages in both Testaments. This would be one of those places where "rightly dividing" comes into play.

**53 And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.**

**54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?**

Jesus then gave His disciples a firsthand opportunity to witness the truth of these parables in action by teaching at the "synagogue" in His hometown of Nazareth. The people were amazed since they knew Jesus as the carpenters son.

**55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?**

These are his half brothers. You may hear some try to claim that these were cousins but the Bibles clearly list them as brothers. Here we have four brothers listed.

**56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?**

Since "sisters" is plural there were at least two and there may have been more.

**57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.**

What a sad verse. Where were these at the cross? They were not even believers at this point. The fact that Joseph does not actually appear in any of these accounts suggest that he was no longer living.

**58 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.**

They knew Jesus too well as a boy and a young man from their own town, and they concluded that He was nothing special. This happens even with people who are called to the ministry today? Friends and family have a very hard time believing that you have been called of God. We will see the results of unbelief in the next verse. It is really difficult to minister to people who do not believe that you are called of God.

**Matthew 13:58 "And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief."**

This is not to suggest that His power was somehow diminished by their unbelief. He had the power to do more miracles, but not the will, because they rejected Him. Miracles belonged among those who were ready to believe.

## MATTHEW CHAPTER FOURTEEN

“Herod Antipas,” is identified as Herod the Tetrarch in the Gospels, was the son of Herod the Great. Of the Herods, Antipas figures most prominently in the Gospels since he ruled over the regions where both John the Baptist and Jesus conducted most of their ministries. The word tetrarch simply means the ruler of a region divided into four parts. This Herod is remembered primarily for his imprisonment and execution of John the Baptist and his part in the trial of the Lord Jesus.

**1 At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Jesus,**

**2 And said unto his servants, This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead; and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him.**

Now Herod thinks John has come back to haunt him. Herod had a guilty conscience. He was afraid of John when John was living, and now, he had worked himself up to believe that Jesus was John raised from the grave.

**3 For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife.**

**4 For John said unto him, It is not lawful for thee to have her.**

This was not just his brothers wife but also his, that is Herod's, niece. “Herodias” was her name and she was the daughter of Aristobulus, a half-brother of Antipas.

**5 And when he would have put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.**

Herod and Herodias would have already killed John, but they were afraid of the followers of John, because there were so many of them.

**6 But when Herod's birthday was kept, the daughter of Herodias danced before them, and pleased Herod.**

This is Salome and she is a real piece of work. According to Josephus, the Jewish historian, she married yet another son (her own

father's brother and her mother's uncle), of Herod the Great, thus further tangling the web of incest in that family.

**7 Whereupon he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.**

**8 And she, being before instructed of her mother, said, Give me here John Baptist's head in a charger.**

Alcohol and lust have made a complete fool of Herod. The whole thing was planned between this shameless mother and daughter, who both knew Herod's weak points and how to handle him. No doubt Herodias was more incensed than Herod at what John dared to say. The mention of the details shows the cold-blooded character of the demand.

**9 And the king was sorry: nevertheless for the oath's sake, and them which sat with him at meat, he commanded it to be given her.**

An oath was considered sacred and inviolable, especially when made by a ruling monarch. It was appearance Herod was concerned about. He did not want to be embarrassed in front of his dinner guests.

**10 And he sent, and beheaded John in the prison.**

**11 And his head was brought in a charger, and given to the damsel: and she brought it to her mother.**

You can easily see why we should not take oaths. Herodias caught Herod at a weak moment and plotted this evil scheme. This sin belongs to both mother and daughter. Herod really did not want to kill John, but to save face with his friends; he carried out this deed. John was a martyr and his troubles were over. Herod's trouble was just beginning.

**12 And his disciples came, and took up the body, and buried it, and went and told Jesus.**

John's followers did not desert their murdered leader. The body was surrendered to them; they reverently took up the body, and buried it. They were his disciples still, and his death was not the death of their

faith. They did the only act of kindness then in their power. Be sure to notice that it is not said by the writer that they buried John, but "they took up his body, and buried it". The real John was already gone. Herod soon found that, being dead, he yet spake. What remained for John's disciples but to go to their leader's Friend and Master, and tell him all the circumstances, and wait further orders? John had taught them well, since they went at once to Jesus when their teacher was dead

**13 When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.**

These people traveled a great distance over land to reach the spot where Jesus had come by boat. Jesus withdrew from the city to be alone for a while. It was not time for Jesus to confront Herod here. The large groups of people who followed Jesus for the healings and miracles would not be discouraged and followed Him anyway. They just walked out to the desert where He was. They wanted to be healed and to see more of His mighty miracles.

**14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.**

Mark 6:34 says he "was moved with compassion" because they were as sheep having no shepherd. It was his duty, as shepherd, to feed the flock. This multitude had needs in their lives and Jesus is always concerned about our needs. This time was no different. He realized they had great belief, or they would not have come so far. Faith brings answers to prayers. Jesus healed them.

**15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves victuals.**

The time is probably about three or four o'clock. The day had already been spent in teaching and healing. The disciples were telling Jesus that supper time had passed, and that these people needed to leave

to go find food. Now, human nature being what it is, they were saying the service has run overtime.

**16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.**

There is a lot in this short verse. Jesus is saying that these people are penniless and can not afford to buy food even if there were a place to buy it. Feed them and do it at once.

**17 And they say unto him, We have here but five loaves, and two fishes.**

That would be five biscuits and two sardines.

**18 He said, Bring them hither to me.**

The redneck version says bring what you have and Jesus will make it sufficient. Indeed, the best way to have an increase of our supplies, is to bring what we have, and put it into Christ's hands; whereby not only good is done to others, but that an abundance is returned to the giver.

**19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.**

As usual , he blessed the five loaves and the two fishes; and broke the loaves, and divided the fish. and gave the bread and fish to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude. Now this was pretty simple stuff. But I know that by the time it had passed through our Lord's hands it was a feast.

**20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.**

Be sure to notice the fact that nothing was wasted. There is a lesson here for all of us. It is a sin to waste what God has provided whether it is food, money, talent, or anything else that the Lord has provided for our use. After this meal no one needed anything else, no one found that the food did not suit him, for they were all hungry. After the feast, twelve great baskets were needed to hold the leftovers. There was



more provision after the feeding than before it. I can't help wondering if the Lord sent the boy home with one of those big baskets of leftovers.

**21 And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children.**

So there could easily have been twenty thousand people in this multitude. This is one of the most interesting miracles in the Bible. Several things we need to note here. Jesus is called the Bread of Life. He fed those millions of Israelites on their way to the Promised Land, this was minor compared to that. This also shows the importance of prayer before meals. God owns everything, and it is all subject to His command.

**22 And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.**

Here Jesus is still trying to get some time alone. He evidently promised his disciples that he would follow them, for the words are, "to go before him unto the other side." How he was to follow he did not say. It was considerate of him to wait and deal with the multitude while the disciples sailed away in peace. He always takes the heavy end of the load.

**23 And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone.**

Jesus needed time away from the group. He sent the multitude home and went aside to commune with the Father. We should learn from this the importance of time alone with God. The most effective prayers are when we are alone with God.

**24 But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary.**

By now the ship was about three miles out. The Sea of Galilee is well known for its high winds and shipwrecks. This was no different.

**25 And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them,**

## **walking on the sea.**

The fourth watch is 3-6 AM. The lesson for us is that he will not fail to reach the storm-tossed boat in time. Whether it be to a single Christian , or to the church as a whole, Jesus will appear in his own chosen time, and his time will be the right time.

**26 And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear.**

Some of these men were seasoned sailors and would not be afraid of a storm. The sight of what they believed was a ghost, is what took away the last of their courage.

**27 But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.**

**28 And Peter answered him and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water.**

Peter answered him in his usual impulsive manner. This part of the story is told only by Matthew, who was in the boat at the time. The incident is not a parable, but is an actual event. Peter did say ,“Lord, if it be thou”: for he was not fully assured that it was Jesus. Peter could have been aware that Satan can transform himself into an angel of light and may have been able to mimic the voice of Christ..

**29 And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.**

Peter knew that Jesus was as able to support his body on the water and yet showed his dependence by not being willing to take a step without his order. The secret of success is to obey the Lord's voice, and then keep our eyes upon Him.

**30 But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.**

Notice that there are three miracles in this event. Jesus walks on the water, Peter temporarily does so, and the wind ceases immediately.

**31 And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou**

**doubt?**

Peter was doing fine, until he took his eyes off Jesus, and looked on to the things of the world(in this case wind and waves). Fear is lack of faith. Our cry is. the same as Peter's, Lord save me. There was no hesitation. Jesus is always as near as our cry for help. It was Peter's doubt that caused him to sink.

**32 And when they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.**

**33 Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God.**

No wonder that Peter and the other disciples worshiped him. All of the disciples, who had been thus rescued by the Lord's coming to them on the stormy sea, were overwhelmingly convinced of his Godhead. They believed before, but these miracles confirmed their belief.

**34 And when they were gone over, they came into the land of Gennesaret.**

**35 And when the men of that place had knowledge of him, they sent out into all that country round about, and brought unto him all that were diseased;**

They sent out into all the nearby country, and brought unto him all that were diseased; which not only expresses their faith in him, that he was able to heal all their sick and diseased. It does say "all" twice in the verse. This must have been another multitude of sick and diseased.

**36 And besought him that they might only touch the hem of his garment: and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.**

Their faith was so strong that they thought if they could touch anything of His, it would heal them and it did. The great miracles here, happened because of their great faith.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER FIFTEEN**

**1 Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of**

**Jerusalem, saying,**

Just when our Lord is busiest, here come the Pharisees.

**2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.**

The washing consisted of a ritual of pouring a trickle of cold water over the outstretched hands. The Jews were not concerned so much with cleanliness as with ritual. This is what we would call nit picking and is for no other purpose than to trap Jesus. He turned it back on them. That was too petty a point for him to dwell upon.

**3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?**

I must admit that I was puzzled by this verse and the next three. They go together. I searched through six commentaries and found nothing that made sense until I came to both Dr. Ruckman's and Dr. Dake's comments. Both of these men agree on these verses.

**4 For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.**

**5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;**

**6 And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.**

Quoted from the Ruckman Study Bible. I used this because it was the best comment I found, from the six I use. "What is happening is a young man sees his father and mother getting up in years and he doesn't want to lose his hard earned money caring for them after their retirement. So he converts what he doesn't want to lose into a gift for the priests at the temple so his parents can't touch the money. It is the Lord's. After they are dead he goes back to redeem his gift: he gets 80% back and the priest keeps 20%. God calls this robbery and says the man who does such a thing is cursed". See Prov. 28 24-27

**7 Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,**

**8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.**

God does not want us to be like a robot going through all the formalism. He does not want us to talk a good belief in Him, but to truly believe way down deep in our hearts. We must obey out of love and not by keeping a set of rules. He wants our hearts.

**9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.**

“Teaching for doctrine the commandments of men”. Does that sound familiar? Keep seven sacraments for salvation; be baptized in order to be saved; speak in tongues to prove you are saved; be baptized for the dead. Surprised at that last one? We had a new convert in Bible Baptist Church in Pace who said he had been baptized over fifty times for dead people he had never even heard of before. These, and many more, are commandments of men and not Holy scripture.

**10 And he called the multitude, and said unto them, Hear, and understand:**

By his actions he would rather teach the ignorant peasants than those false-hearted scribes and Pharisees. He had more hope of being understood by the uneducated multitude than by educated Pharisees and scribes. The multitude has common sense.

**11 Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.**

The Lord Jesus declared that it lay in thoughts and acts. The Pharisees had now a sentence to harp upon, and harp they would. They had sought to lay hold upon a sentence which they could use as an accusation, and in this case he gave them one which they might quote if they dared to do so.

**12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?**

Sometimes the truth hurts. He had hurt the feelings of these Pharisees who had come for no other reason than to do Him harm. My question here is why were the disciples concerned about the

feelings of the Pharisees. Truth offends heretics, hypocrites and super sensitive people.

**13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.**

This is more like the tares in the wheat field. What I believe it says to our generation is that there are many who believe they are Christians who are not. This is the false doctrine being taught by many denominations that will send people to Hell. Probably the most widespread heresy out there is, that if the good you do outweighs the bad then God will let you in. These are the ones who will be “rooted up” and that is a shame since these people sincerely believe they are doing the right thing. Now, that said, a person can do everything wrong in their spiritual life and still make it to Heaven. It is still belief from the heart and public confession of Jesus Christ that get you there.

**14 Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.**

The statement by Jesus, “Let them alone” is actually a severe judgment. It shows abandonment by God and is described in Romans as “giving them over”. This is a sad statement about the condition of some of our churches today. The preachers (that would be Joel, Bennie and others), have watered down the truth of God to such an extent, that people who attend those churches are marching right down the road to Hell while believing they are ok.

**15 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Declare unto us this parable.**

**16 And Jesus said, Are ye also yet without understanding?**

**17 Do not ye yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly, and is cast out into the draught?**

Jesus is referring to wholesome food taken into the mouth. He does not mean things like liquor and drugs. No wholesome food defiles a person. This is a good verse for those who keep the Jewish dietary laws.

**18 But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth**

**from the heart; and they defile the man.**

These Pharisees looked on the outward appearance to judge. Jesus looks on the heart of the inner man. We are warned in other scriptures that we will give account for every idle word.. How many of you know Christians who tell dirty jokes or use sexual innuendo. These, and many other things, are examples of what Jesus is referring to here.

**19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:**

**20 These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.**

Sin starts in the mind. Before evil is ever acted upon it becomes a part of the thought process. This is where the principles and seeds of all sin are found. And iniquity is always conceived in the heart before it be spoken or acted. All wicked imaginations, carnal reasoning, lustful desires, and malicious intent, are included; which are devised, in the corrupt heart of man.

**21 Then Jesus went thence, and departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon.**

John has now been killed and there is more rejection by the religious leaders. Jesus is leaving Herod's jurisdiction and going into Phoenecia. This sounds like He just needs to get away for a while.

**22 And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.**

Notice here that this Gentile woman addresses Jesus as Lord and King.

**23 But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.**

This woman was a Syrian-Hamitic; in other words a black woman. I get this little nugget from Gen.9:25. In spite of the insults she persisted and had her prayer answered. Prayer is not always answered immediately and faith is strengthened by persistence.

**24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**

Here it is. Jesus did not come to personally carry the gospel around the world. He came to Israel only and that to offer the Kingdom to the Jews and to fulfill prophecy.

**25 Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.**

**26 But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs.**

I think the Lord is testing this woman's faith. She had plenty as she put up with insults until she had her prayer answered.

**27 And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.**

**28 Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.**

The point of this is that the Jews should have accepted Him and did not while this Gentile woman, who had no reason to believe in Jesus, did. Jesus finds great faith here where no one would have expected it.

**29 And Jesus departed from thence, and came nigh unto the sea of Galilee; and went up into a mountain, and sat down there.**

Do not get the feeding of this multitude confused with the feeding of the five thousand. This is a different time and place. Both Matthew and Mark give these accounts in a way that shows clearly that they were two separate events.

**30 And great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them:**

**31 Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see: and they glorified the God of Israel.**



This feeding took place after the crowd had been with Him for “three days” and were fed with “seven” loaves and “few little fishes” which were then distributed in a manner similar to the other feeding.

In (16:9-10), Jesus refers to both feedings as separate events, even referring to the different numbers and using the different words for the baskets.

**32 Then Jesus called his disciples unto him, and said, I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with me now three days, and have nothing to eat: and I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint in the way.**

The point of this is that Jesus can take care of the needs of the people no matter how little they have. A secondary lesson is that the disciples still have not matured in the faith.

**33 And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?**

**34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye? And they said, Seven, and a few little fishes.**

This time we have seven biscuits and a can of sardines.

**35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.**

**36 And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.**

**37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full.**

This time “seven baskets full” remained. These baskets were much larger than those back in chapter fourteen. These baskets were the kind used to lower Paul down the city wall in Acts 9:25.

**38 And they that did eat were four thousand men, beside women and children.**

Here there were four thousand plus women and children. In the account in chapter fourteen there were five thousand plus women and

children.

**39 And he sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the coasts of Magdala.**

There is a little tidbit here. He comes "into the coasts of Magdala." Was he seeking out Mary of Magdala, the one we call Mary Magdalene? I don't know of any account of her joining the company before this.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER SIXTEEN**

**1 The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.**

These two groups are political enemies but they come together to challenge Jesus. The Pharisees believed in the resurrection while the Sadducees did not. Notice that miracles alone never save anyone. They serve only to call attention to the message, which must be believed in order for salvation to be experienced.

**2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red.**

These people were excellent when it came to predicting the weather. Their ability to see spiritual matters was not nearly as good. They had the long promised and long-awaited Messiah there with them and refused to acknowledge Him.

**3 And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?**

There are at least thirty seven prophecies in the Old Testament, about the coming of Jesus, and these lifelong students of the Old Testament did not even realize that the fulfillment was standing before them. These Pharisees and Sadducees could even predict the weather by the physical signs in the sky; but had no spiritual discernment at all.

**4 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.**

Jesus rebukes both groups and accuses them of spiritual adultery. They have all the evidence they need that He is the Messiah, yet refuse to believe. When referring to Jonah Jesus is speaking of His own resurrection. As Jonah was in the whale three days, Jesus will be in the grave three days.

**5 And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.**

How do you forget your lunch? I suppose being in the physical presence of Jesus could have that effect.

**6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.**

Leaven is defined by the Lord as false doctrine.

**7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, It is because we have taken no bread.**

The thoughts of the disciples were so fixed upon their failure to bring lunch that they thought the remark about leaven contained a rebuke. Usually, when we let reason take over we leave the spiritual behind. Nothing about the scriptures is “reasonable”.

**8 Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?**

Notice that Jesus did not hear them but read their minds. Without hearing them he knew the doubts and unbelief. I think Jesus is saying “you act as if you will be famished and starved.

**9 Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?**

How soon we forget. Jesus has to remind them of feeding the five thousand. He also mentions feeding the four thousand.

**10 Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?**

**11 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?**

This might be a good place to mention “progressive revelation”. We don't have a problem understanding this parable but the disciples did. We know more than they knew even though they were in the physical presence of Jesus. We have the Book. Those who come after us, assuming the Lord tarries, will know more than we do. There are places in scripture that we do not yet understand. When it comes to any kind of knowledge, we stand on the shoulders of those who went before us.

**12 Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.**

Now they understand that it is the doctrine of the Pharisees, and not bread, that the Lord is speaking of.

**13 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?**

The answers to these questions reveal the personality of Jesus Christ. Many of the prophets were rough characters. If you doubt that statement, check out Elijah, Jeremiah and John the Baptist. Jesus was what we would call today, a “man's man”. You can ignore all those effeminate paintings, from the middle ages, by various gender confused artists. For a description of our Lord's physical appearance go to Isaiah 53:2 and the verses that follow. **{53:2} For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, [there is] no beauty that we should desire him. {53:3} He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were [our] faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.** Be sure to read further in that

chapter. It is one of the most beautiful passages of scripture. So, our Savior was not a handsome person. He was an ordinary looking individual. It is for that same reason that I believe Mary was not especially beautiful. God chose her for her character and love of Him. God always seems to use the less than perfect, the foolish things, for His purposes.

**14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.**

Sometimes people are ridiculous in what they will believe. John the Baptist has been beheaded, and Elijah and Jeremiah are long dead.

**15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?**

**16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.**

I believe Peter is speaking for all of the disciples here. The words in verse twenty seem to indicate that.

**17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.**

God the Father had opened Peter's eyes and revealed to him who Jesus really was. In other words, God had opened Peter's heart to this deeper knowledge of Christ by faith. This was a confession of Peter's personal faith, made possible by a regenerated heart. Carnal man does not have any idea who Jesus really is. True believers are the only ones who understand who Jesus really is. God must reveal it to us in our spirit.

**18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**

This verse is used as a proof text that Peter was the first pope. There is no indication that Peter was ever in Rome. Furthermore, Peter had a wife and children. All popes have, with the exception of Pope Joan, been single men. Who was Pope Joan? The website [history.com](http://history.com) says this: "The Vatican's official records state that all of the more than

260 Catholic popes have been men, but according to a medieval legend, a lady pontiff may have reigned for a brief period in the ninth century. As the story goes, this “Pope Joan” was a young woman who disguised herself as a man and entered into religious training. After distinguishing herself as a scholar, she rose through the church ranks and was elected Pope John VIII in the year 855. She went on to rule for more than two years, her gender always carefully concealed beneath her flowing holy robes. Her secret was only revealed in 858, when she unexpectedly went into labor during a papal procession. Some accounts allege that she died in childbirth, while others claim her enraged followers dragged her behind a horse and stoned her to death”. The Catholic church denies this.

Now let's discuss the “gates” of Hell. The commentators are all over the place on this one. Why not just accept what it says? Hell is a place with bars and gates and it takes a key to unlock them. Finally, the gates are to keep people in ,not keep people out. You won't need a key to get into Hell.

**19 And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**

Be sure to notice here that Peter was given the keys to the kingdom of heaven and not the keys to the church. This is another of those verses appropriated by some as applying to today's church. This binding and loosing was directed to Peter and not to the present day church.

**20 Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.**

This seems strange until you realize that if word had gotten out there would have been even more trouble from the Pharisees to say nothing of the Roman authorities. The Romans couldn't care less about prophets and teachers, but if someone is claiming kingship, that gets their attention.

**21 From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of**

**the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.**

Here Jesus gives the apostles ten details of His coming death.

**22 Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.**

Peter has good intentions but this is actually Satan speaking through Peter. Peter was always ready to defend Jesus but this time Satan took advantage of that trait.

**23 But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.**

Jesus reply is a stern rebuke. Peter is hindering God's purpose and plan. Jesus purpose was not to take the easy route but to follow the plan laid before the foundation of the world. It is good to remember that all this was planned long before these events occurred.

**24 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.**

**25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.**

Jesus is speaking here of those who will deny Him in order to save their lives. Those who are martyred for His sake are safe.

**26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?**

If it were possible to gain the riches of the whole world you would still not have the value of your soul. Another way to see this is ;at the point of death,if they could, wouldn't the richest person on this earth give it all up to save His,or her, soul? It just doesn't work that way.

**27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.**

When Jesus comes for the Second Advent it will be with the complete authority of His Father and with all the angelic beings at His disposal.

**28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.**

This verse causes a lot of confusion. The clue is in 2 Peter 1:16. **For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. {1:17} For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. {1:18} And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.**

There are two parts to this 2 Peter passage. The second part shows them on the mount of transfiguration seeing a glimpse of the kingdom.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER SEVENTEEN**

**1 And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,**

“After six days” is used by Matthew and Mark:note that this is more than six days. Luke says “some eight days. So,what do we have between more than six and some eight? Seven and God always does things by sevens. A day is to the Lord as a thousand years so we have here a reference to the length of time the earth stands. Six thousand years and one thousand for the millennium.

“Peter, James and John”are the inner circle closet to Christ and are often seen alone together with Jesus .**2 And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.**

“Transfigured”: Christ underwent a dramatic change in appearance, so the disciples could behold Him in His glory. He appeared to them as he appears now in all His glory.



**3 And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.**

Some claim that it was Enoch who appeared on the mount of transfiguration since he is the one person who never died(it is appointed to a man once to die). This is an heresy since the reason Enoch never died is that he is a type of the Raptured Christian. There is no other who fits that type.

**4 Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.**

Peter was expressing a wish to stay in that place. Imagine if they had built three tabernacles there. People would come from all over the world to worship there. Indeed they would worship the tabernacles. God has other ideas as we see from the next verse.

**5 While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.**

God knows that there is only one here who deserves a tabernacle and His tabernacle is the body of the born again Christian. Peter erred in placing Moses and Elijah on the same level as Christ.

**6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.**

“Fell on their face”,is a normal response to the realization that the Holy God of the universe is present This is the effect when anyone encounters God the Father in any way. The awesomeness of the Father instantly puts you on your face, and you are frightened.

**7 And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.**

The disciples were at some distance from Christ, but he observed their fear and came to their relief and assistance.;He is acting the part of a mediator between God and them, and lays hold on them to raise them up, where God's voice had put them on their faces.

**8 And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.**

Moses nor Elijah, were both gone signifying, that though the law and the prophets were in effect till this time, they were now finished and completed. These men appear no more, nor will they till they come as the two witnesses in the Tribulation. These three disciples, for all their lives, would have a better understanding of Jesus than any of the others, because they were allowed to look into the heavenly for just a short time.

**9 And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.**

The other disciples were not supposed to know of this, or they would have gone to the mountain with Jesus. Jesus was willing for the events of His crucifixion to take place. This experience, if told, might alter that. It is difficult to understand after Peter had seen this that he would deny the Lord Jesus Christ.

**10 And his disciples asked him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elias must first come?**

Christ confirms the still unfulfilled prophecy of (Mal 4:5-6): "Elijah shall truly first come and restore all things." Here, as in Malachi, the prediction fulfilled in John the Baptist, and that yet to be fulfilled in Elijah, are kept distinct.

John the Baptist had come already, and with a ministry completely in the spirit and power of Elijah. You see, even the disciples had listened to these Israelite laws and believed a certain amount of all this. They knew that Malachi 4:5, said Elijah would come before the Day of the Lord. Malachi 4:5 says this: **Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:** I believe this is speaking again of the two witnesses which does happen before the Second Advent.

**11 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things.**

This has a double meaning. First, John the Baptist had already come in the power and spirit of Elijah. He, John, had the same manner of dress, the same lifestyle and the same intolerance for evil. He was the forerunner of the Lord Jesus Christ at the first Advent. Second, he, Elijah, will return as one of the two witnesses in the Tribulation and will again act as a forerunner to the Lord Jesus.

**12 But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.**

The Elias that has already come is John the baptist and he has been beheaded. BTW, why isn't the term de-headed? Jesus is telling the disciples that He will also die but by another way.

**13 Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist.**

**14 And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying,**

This would have been the next day, when Christ and his three disciples, came down from the mountain to the other nine. "There came to him a certain man"; Who when he saw him, came up to him, and kneeling down to him and worshiping.

**15 Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water.**

According to Luke this was an only son. He was possessed with a demon and for this reason he was a lunatic and he suffered greatly. He fell suddenly and often, he was mute except when a seizure was coming upon him. for Luke says that when the evil spirit took him he cried out suddenly ; he foamed and gnashed with his teeth, and wasted away, or became poor and emaciated. That last shows that these attacks lasted for some time.

**16 And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.**

Do notice that the father had very little faith since he said "if thou canst do anything, help us". It's likely that he thought the Lord Jesus was a

prophet or some kind of magician. In spite of this the Lord healed the child.

**17 Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.**

Jesus scolded the disciples, and by extension all others who do not believe. Their lack of belief was overwhelming to Him. He was really saying, how long do I have to put up with your unbelief?

**18 And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.**

One word from Christ, and the demon leaves. The child was cured at once and for ever. There was no need for the boy to wait till he grew up. He was under the power of the devil while a child, and he was cured as a child

**19 Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out?**

This was a very proper question. When we fail, we need to own it and ask the Lord for help to correct the mess. When Christ sent the disciples out, He explicitly commissioned them to do these kinds of miracles, yet less than a year later, they failed where they had once succeeded. Christ's explanation for their failure was that they lacked enough faith. They were surprised that they could not cast out this demon. The problem probably lay in their failure to make God, rather than their own gifts, the object of their confidence.

**20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.**

True faith always involves surrender to the will of God. He was saying that both the source and the object of all genuine faith, even the weak, mustard-seed variety, is God. And "nothing will be impossible with God"

**21 Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.**

The NIV and the New World Translation remove this verse entirely. These verses have been stressing faith and faith is necessary. But, prayer must also be according to God's will.

**22 And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:**

Our Lord returned often to the subject of his death at the hands of men. It was on his own mind, and therefore he spoke of it to his disciples. They never completely believed He would die and rise on the third day. The disciples were still expecting Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom. His death would be a great trial to them, and he wanted to prepare them for it. resurrection. Our Lord used plain terms; but speak as he might, his followers could only in part understand his meaning; and that part made them "exceeding sorry."

**23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.**

Jesus did not want His death on the cross to come as such a shock to the disciples. He was trying to make them understand that this was victory, not defeat, because He would rise again. They really could not believe the fact that He had to die.

**24 And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute money came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?**

This tribute money was a voluntary payment to the temple. This was not a requirement of scripture but a man made tax put on by the priests.

**25 He saith, Yes. And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?**

As usual Peter gets ahead of himself and answers for Jesus without consulting Him. When he was come into the place where Christ was, Jesus prevented him; saying what he intended to say, though not present, knew what question had been put to Peter, and what answer

he had returned. In other words the Lord read Peter's mind even though He was not present.

**26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.**

The implication is that since Jesus is king he ,and His followers,should not have to pay the tax.

**27 Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee.**

Consider how great our Lord is. Millions of fish in the sea of Galilee and He knows which one has a coin in his mouth. Also notice that the Lord takes care of the debt for both of them.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER EIGHTEEN**

**1 At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?**

Humility is the greatest virtue. It is necessary for salvation and answered prayer.

**2 And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,**

Think of all the Christians you know. Who has absolute faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ? Who is in no way ashamed of Him? I am sure you will think of some Christian child.

**3 And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

There are two meanings here. Jesus is speaking of a regular child but is also referring to the new birth. We become babe in Christ when we are born again.

**4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the**

**same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.**

This is a perfect example of god doing things in a way that seems backward to humans. In the kingdom of heaven the least is the greatest. The most humble is the most exalted. So look at it this way. The toilet scrubber here will be at the top of the heap in Heaven.

**5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.**

Again, this is speaking of both children and new Christians. If you receive either of these in Jesus name, you receive Christ.

**6 But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.**

So, the proper punishment for a child molester is public drowning. If we did that we would have less child molestation.

**7 Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh!**

In Florida, an average of **5 children die every DAY** at the hands of an abuser

- .Every year, more than **50,000** children are victims of child abuse and neglect in Florida.

- .Every day **seven children** in South Florida are removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect.

- .Premature infants are **3 times more likely** to be abused than full term babies.

- .In 2014, **2,440 children** were abused or neglected in **Palm Beach County**.

- .Children who experience abuse or neglect are **9 times more likely** to become involved in **criminal activity**.

- .Children who experience abuse or neglect are **25%** more likely to experience **teen pregnancy**.

- .The 2 biggest reasons for child abuse are **family violence** and **drug addiction**.

- .About **90%** of child abuse victims know their perpetrators

These figures came from <https://www.grandmasplacepb.org>

**8 Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast**

**them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire.**

**9 And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire.**

Keep in mind that we are still speaking of those who offend children or new babes in Christ. Men and women should have their minds and spirits stayed upon God. Lust of eyes can certainly be the first step toward committing the actual sin.

**10 Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.**

We would say, from this verse, that children have an angel in heaven watching over them. I do not know of any scripture indicating that all of us have guardian angels but obviously children do.

**11 For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost.**

This is another and stronger reason, why these little ones should not be despised; because Christ came into this world to save these people. God had such great regard for these little ones, as to send his Son to obtain eternal salvation for them, then it is up to us to treat them properly. Still speaking of both children and babes in Christ. This is a place where the church fails miserably. A convert is won to Christ and we let them drift away into some heresy.

**12 How think ye? if a man have an hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray?**

Each soul is precious in God's sight. If God thus loves and preserves the redeemed, then surely man should not despise them.

**13 And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep, than of the ninety and nine which went not astray.**

The ninety and nine were secure and in no danger. The one who was lost and separated was in great danger. The delight of Satan is to get one separated from the others, that he might destroy the one. The Shepherd is not willing to lose even one.



**14 Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish.**

“Perish”: The word here in this context, refers to spiritual devastation rather than utter eternal destruction. This does not suggest that God’s children ever could perish in the ultimate sense.

**15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.**

This passage deals with the proper way to handle problems between members and problems in the church. The suggestion, in fifteen, to “talk it out, should settle it between true Christians.

**16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.**

If a face to face talk didn't work then have a meeting of the parties with two or three other trusted church members who will offer suggestions and act as witnesses to what was said in the meeting.

**17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.**

If the meeting, with witnesses, didn't work then the problem is brought before the congregation. The congregation voted to accept the person into membership and it is the congregations duty to put the person out. I have seen it done incorrectly and those pastors who do so will answer to our Lord. After the offending person is put out they are not to have fellowship with members until such time as they repent and ask forgiveness from the membership. If they do this they are to be restored to full fellowship.

**18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**

Verses eighteen and nineteen are still referring to church discipline. This means that any duly constituted body of believers, acting in accord with God’s Word, has the authority to declare if someone is forgiven or unforgiven. That sounds strange, but another way to look at this is, whatever they “bind” or “loose” on earth is already “bound” or

“loosed” in heaven.

**19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.**

Two believers is a small group but God listens. Instead of despising the verdict of so small a gathering, we ought to respect it, since God the Father does so. This is the power of combined prayer. Spurgeon says, “There is no excuse for giving up prayer-meetings while there are two praying people in the place; for two can prevail with God”.

**20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.**

When the church, however small, is gathered in his name. Jesus is there first. We are gathered together because we care, and our meeting is in the name of Jesus, and therefore He is near, not only to the minister, but in the midst, and therefore near to each worshiper.

**21 Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?**

Jesus responds that seven is not only insufficient but that one should forgive “seventy times seven,” in other words, unlimited forgiveness must characterize the true disciple.

**22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.**

Seventy times seven”: means innumerable times. Seven is the number of completion so seven times seventy just means to the ultimate. We will see in these next few verses, that if we expect God to forgive us, then we must forgive, also. This is not church doctrine but is a principal we should take for our own.

**23 Therefore is the kingdom of heaven likened unto a certain king, which would take account of his servants.**

**24 And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.**

Ten thousand talents was a huge sum equivalent to millions of dollars in our currency. It represents the debt of sin, which the sinner cannot

possibly pay by himself. The command that he be sold indicates his being sold into slavery.

**25 But forasmuch as he had not to pay, his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made.**

Ten thousand talents by our money could be an astronomical figure. In fact, so great an amount, that if the whole family worked their entire lives, there would be no way to pay it off. This is the size of the sin debt we owe. If we worked every day of our lives, we could not pay off what we owe God. Our only hope is that Jesus paid the debt for us. We have been forgiven the debt.

**26 The servant therefore fell down, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.**

This debtor thought he only needed patience, but he needed forgiveness! The debt was so great, and he had nothing with which to pay, but was utterly bankrupt. This is exactly our condition before we are saved.

**27 Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt.**

Watch these next few verses and remember that this is not church doctrine.

**28 But the same servant went out, and found one of his fellowservants, which owed him an hundred pence: and he laid hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest.**

As unbelievable as this would be, that is how unbelievable it would be for a Christian disciple, who has been forgiven a lifetime of sin, to be unforgiving of others. Notice that this unforgiving servant is called a “wicked servant” because no true believer would do such. A truly saved person would never behave like the man in the story. True forgiveness, from the heart, is one of the signs of genuine salvation. Saved people are both forgiven and forgiving. Unforgiving people prove that they have never been born of God.

**29 And his fellowservant fell down at his feet, and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.**

**30 And he would not: but went and cast him into prison, till he should pay the debt.**

Think about debtors prison for a moment. We had that in this country at one time. What if the law came and took you away ,to debtors prison,tomorrow. That's a no win situation. You can't pay because you are locked up and can't work.

**31 So when his fellowservants saw what was done, they were very sorry, and came and told unto their lord all that was done.**

Others could see the evil of his conduct if he could not. Much had been forgiven him, and much was expected from him. You can take this as a good principal to follow.

**32 Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me:**

**33 Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee?**

Back in the Sermon on the Mount we had this; **Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.**

Then in Ephesians we had this,and Ephesians is Church Age. **Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.**

No one appreciates cruelty. This servant was quick to ask for forgiveness for the large debt he owed, but the small debt his fellow servant owed him, he would not forgive.

**34 And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him.**

This verse is used to "prove" purgatory. There is no purgatory in the King James bible nor is it in any Greek manuscript. This is a man made place for those who are too good to go to Hell and not quite good enough to make heaven. That's works. It is absolute nonsense.

Paul-"to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord". The rich man-" And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments.....No purgatory either place.

**35 So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.**

Jesus has put a lot of emphasis on forgiveness in these last few verses. So,that said, even though this is not "church age " stuff,apply this to your life.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER NINETEEN**

**1 And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these sayings, he departed from Galilee, and came into the coasts of Judaea beyond Jordan;**

The area spoken of as "beyond Jordan" is a strip about ten miles wide on the east side of the river Jordan. It has a road running along the middle and provides a way north without passing through Samaria. The Jews avoided the Samaritans since they were regarded as defiled. The Samaritans were half Jew,half Gentile.

**2 And great multitudes followed him; and he healed them there.**

This was the last time Jesus would be in Galilee, until after His resurrection. There seems to have been less opposition to Him in these more remote areas.. Humble people seem accept the things of God more easily than more educated people, who think they already know everything. Here Jesus not only taught, He healed, He cast out demons, He raised the dead, and He had compassion on the people for even their physical needs.

**3 The Pharisees also came unto him, tempting him, and saying unto him, Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?**

Whatever Jesus might say, the Pharisees meant to use his verdict against him. Notice how carefully the question is "Is it lawful for a man

to put away his wife for every cause? In other words, can we put them away for any reason we choose? Their consciences should have given them the answer to that.

**4 And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,**

You men might want to remember that we were made from dirt. You ladies were not. Be sure not to miss the fact that He made them male and female.

**5 And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?**

In scripture, the Holy Spirit uses the term "one flesh" to indicate marriage, and He uses the term several times in various places. How about this one? Think about 1 Cor. 6:15 and 16 which says; **Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make [them] the members of an harlot? God forbid. {6:16} What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh.**

This, of course, works both ways.

**6 Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.**

Before we go further let's talk about the bible definition of marriage and divorce. God is not impressed by pieces of paper and standing before a preacher, and in the case of divorce, before a judge. He is concerned about vows that you make while doing those things. Bible marriage is flesh joining flesh, period. Bible divorce is flesh leaving flesh. With that in mind there are three recognized divorces.

Death, and no, we do not think of it that way but it fits the description. After all it is flesh leaving flesh. Adultery/fornication breaks the marriage because God makes it plain that it does and finally abandonment is another type because it is flesh leaving flesh. Before we leave this, be sure to notice in verse six that it is God that joins the couple together. Many people who say "I do" are not married at all in

God's sight. For a marriage to be approved by God, He must be the one we are saying our vows to, along with our spouse.

**7 They say unto him, Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?**

Marriage is fundamentally a covenant agreement between a man and a woman for life. The scripture for that can be found in Mal. 2:14, where the wife of thy covenant is mentioned.

**8 He saith unto them, Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so.**

Moses did not command divorce, rather he permitted it. God instituted marriage in the Garden of Eden but man came up with the idea of divorce. In order to protect the Hebrew women from being taken advantage of by a verbal divorce, Moses commanded that it be done with a “writing of divorcement,” an official written contract, permitting remarriage. Jesus gave one exception to the rule and that was “for fornication” which includes all types of sexual sin,

**9 And I say unto you, Whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery: and whoso marrieth her which is put away doth commit adultery.**

There is no getting around this verse. It means what it says. This does not mean that divorced people are “living in sin”. Committing adultery, like any other sin, can be forgiven. All sins of saved people are under the Blood.

**10 His disciples say unto him, If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not good to marry.**

To some, celibacy is better than marriage but this is unusual. Abstinence from marriage is a gift because it allows one's life to be completely dedicated to service to God. But to most, marriage is as necessary as it is honorable. Paul later says the same thing in one of his letters.

**11 But he said unto them, All men cannot receive this saying,**

**save them to whom it is given.**

This probably is speaking of those who want to be married, and are not, who are burned up with lust for the opposite sex. In that case it would be much better to be married. Two of the Pauline epistles also deal with this. They are: 1 Corinthians 7:2 **"Nevertheless, [to avoid] fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."** and 1 Corinthians 7:9 **"But if they cannot contain, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn."**

**12 For there are some eunuchs, which were so born from their mother's womb: and there are some eunuchs, which were made eunuchs of men: and there be eunuchs, which have made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake. He that is able to receive it, let him receive it.**

The apostle Paul put himself in that first category. So, the take away here is that if a person can remain single, without the need of a wife then he is better able to devote all of his time to the service of God.

**13 Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them, and pray: and the disciples rebuked them.**

Now we get back to the treatment of both young children and new Christians. Take this as a solid principal to take along on your Christian walk.

**14 But Jesus said, Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven.**

Absolute trust in the Lord Jesus Christ is the goal. Trust like that found in a little child.

**15 And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.**

They were brought that he might lay his hands on them and bless them, and that is what he did. This has been perverted by some to imply infant baptism but there is no scripture to support that view.

**16 And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what**



**good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?**

Now we shift to something else. What this young ruler is really asking is, "what must I do to be saved"? This is the same question asked by Nicodemus but the answer is very different.

**17 And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.**

The action of this young man in running and kneeling shows that he had great reverence for Jesus. He seemed to think, however, that heaven could be gained by doing some great work.. He made the mistake of thinking that eternal life is a reward for doing rather than for trusting Jesus. Notice that I did not say the "blood of Jesus. That hasn't been shed yet.

**18 He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness,**

Notice that Jesus changes the wording of the 6th commandment from "**Thou shall not kill**" to "**thou shalt do no murder**". There is actually a big difference there. That let's soldiers and policemen off the hook.

**19 Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**

Honor thy father and mother is the commandment with the promise of long life for obeying. Be sure to notice that it does not qualify the fitness of the parent. Good, bad or indifferent we are commanded to honor them. Also notice that it does not say love them. So, say you had an abusive parent you are to honor them but love is not required. In the second part of this verse is the commandment to love your neighbor. Jesus later says this in another way and adds love the Lord God with all your heart. These two things summing up all the commandments.

**20 The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet?**

So, this young ruler was willing to keep the law and work for his

salvation. Apparently he was a very good person, the kind you would want for a neighbor.

**21 Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.**

Though this young man had attempted to do what was right, he still had no peace. Doing works does not bring peace. A personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ is the only way to find peace and happiness. The young man was earnest in asking, if there was one other thing that he could do that would insure him a life in heaven?

**22 But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions.**

The young man (Mark calls him a ruler), was not blameless as far as the law was concerned, because he was guilty of loving himself and his possessions more than his neighbors. He lacked true faith, which involves a willingness to surrender all at Christ's bidding. Jesus was not teaching salvation by philanthropy, that is giving away what you own, but He was demanding that this young man give Him first place. The main thing Christ required was that the young ruler follow Him.

**23 Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven.**

**24 And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.**

The lust of the eyes and the pride of life can both be satisfied with money. A rich person has both power and possessions. There is no humility and no need of prayer. If everything else fails they still have money to fall back on. So, rich people can be saved but there are less compelling reasons, in their mind, than the poor who have nowhere to turn but to the Lord.

**25 When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?**

**26 But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible.**

In the Old Testament, wealth was a sign of God's favor. Noah, Abraham, Job, David, and Solomon were all very wealthy men. Wealth was a blessing from God. In the New Testament wealth is no longer a sign of blessing. God can even get that camel through the eye of a needle.

**27 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore?**

After seeing the rich young ruler, who kept all of the law, rejected, Peter and the others are concerned. Peter points out that they had already done what Christ demanded of the rich young ruler. They had given up everything and followed Christ. Notice that Jesus did not rebuke Peter for his expectation of reward.

**28 And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

Here was the promise that the disciple's rewards were not for the here and now. They were for the time when Jesus shall reign and sit on His throne. They will rule with Him. They will rule over physical Israel, the descendants of Abraham in the flesh. **"In the regeneration"**, refers to the renewed world of the future, the kingdom of righteousness yet to come. While the term is used for individual rebirth in the book of Titus, here it looks to the future regeneration of the earth.

**29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.**

**"And everyone that hath forsaken houses"**: Not only the disciples of Christ then, but any other believer in him, whether at that time, or in any age, that should be called to leave their homes, their families and their friends. Think of missionaries and evangelists. So this is one of those principals which can certainly be applied to the Church Age.

**30 But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.**

There's that church toilet cleaner again. He, or, more likely, she, will be first in heaven. Those who have not sacrificed to the level of the twelve disciples, will also be rewarded in heaven, for they have given up personal things in this life for Jesus' as well.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWENTY**

**1 For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire labourers into his vineyard.**

In this parable the householder is the Lord Jesus. Day laborers, even today, gather at certain known places in hopes of being hired for the day. In our area it is usually the Home Depot parking lot. The contractor goes there and loads his truck with whatever number of unskilled people he needs for that day. This fills a need at both ends. The contractor gets his workers and the laborers, many of whom are people with very questionable backgrounds or others with creative entry into the country get to earn a living. The only loser here is the government which seldom sees any taxes from this arrangement.

**2 And when he had agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard.**

A penny a day is not literally one copper cent. Instead, it represents a day's wage at that time. As we go through this please understand that what we are really speaking of is not hired laborers working for day wages but Christians who are saved in different church periods and Christians who are saved at different times in their lives. In the first instance, you are entitled to the same rewards as those saved at the time of Christ's public ministry. In the second instance, a person saved at five years old is just as saved as the one "born again" at ninety five and either of these extremes is just as valued by the Lord Jesus Christ.

**3 And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace,**

The third hour is 9:00 A.M. They were standing idle, not because they were lazy, but because no one had hired them.

**4 And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way.**

No one negotiated the day's wages. They simply went to work and expected fair treatment as to pay.

**5 Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise.**

Now he goes out at noon and again at three PM and hires more. Again there is no discussion of wages.

**6 And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?**

**7 They say unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.**

One has to wonder why these people came so late. The question is often asked, by unbelievers; "how can anyone believe in those fairy tales". The real question, for those of us saved for a long time is the reverse; "how can anyone not believe it". So, this can apply to the Christian saved late in life and can also apply to Christians in this church period who are near the end.

**8 So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the labourers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first.**

Don't miss the fact that the last is first again. This is a theme which occurs over and over in the New Testament. God uses the poor, the disabled and the cast offs for His purposes. He uses the bottom of the barrel scrapings of humanity, the Gentiles, to build His Church.

**9 And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny.**

Had those first hired been first paid, they would have departed satisfied, and the point of the parable would have been lost. The last that were hired signify either such, as are called in old age or Gentile sinners that will be called by grace, at the end of the world. Whether called sooner, or later, all are given the same eternal life and happiness. They are all loved with the same everlasting love by God.

**10 But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and they likewise received every man a penny.**

What basic promise does God make to every saved sinner? That we will spend eternity in His presence. We all get that. Other rewards depend on service.

**11 And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house,**

**12 Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.**

As soon as the penny was in their hand they began to complain. This is human nature at work. It was a fair wage, and what they agreed to take. His only fault was that, as a good man, he was too good to the short-timers. "The Lord does often greatly bless men whose working lives are short, and even those who are saved late in life. He does not measure up work as we do, by the rod, or by the hour. He has his own gracious way of estimating service, and the reckonings of grace are not like those of law". Those who had worked all day were envious. The Lord had not cheated them but had prospered others at the same rate. He had used his own money as he pleased, even as God dispenses grace as he wills. He is never unjust to any; but in gifts of bounty he will not be bound by our ideas. of equity. Had their hearts been right, they would have been happy that they had been able to give to him a fair day's work, since they had borne the burden and heat of the day. At any rate, it is a great privilege to be serving the Lord throughout a long life, and those who have enjoyed this high favor are deeply indebted to the grace of God.

**13 But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?**

Everyone received a full day's wage. The man was acting generously to those whom he overpaid. This was no slight against those whom he paid a full wage for a full day's work. That was precisely what they agreed to in the beginning. But it was his privilege to extend the same generosity to all

**14 Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee.**

Notice that he did not argue with the group but selected one, probably the leader. He is calm and reasonable. If the Lord rewards us graciously for what we do, we are not wronged because another who has done less receives more. None of us are quite free from this legalistic spirit. It seems part of our proud nature.

**15 Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil, because I am good?**

Now he has bestowed these gifts and privileges in a more abundant manner for a long time on the Gentiles, whilst the Jews despise and reject them. Special grace is his own, which he gives to whom he pleases. He has given this country special grace and blessing for over 200 years and we have repaid it by kicking God out of our schools and legal system. Ninety five percent of our ,so called,Christian churches are teaching heresy and false doctrine. Homosexuality is rampant and increasing, and we have now murdered over sixty million unborn babies. We are overdue for God's wrath.

The Church is a vineyard, because it is a place of labor, where none of us are to be idle. Each of us is engaged to labor in this vineyard and it has been correctly said that there is no retirement from Christian service.

**16 So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen.**

There is that phrase, the last shall be first and the first last, again. I have looked at this before as the lowest worker getting the greater

position in heaven, but there is another way to take this statement. In other words, everyone finishes in a dead heat. No matter how long each of the workers worked, they each received a full day's wage. Similarly, the thief on the cross will enjoy the full blessings of heaven alongside those who have labored their whole lives for Christ. His followers and workers are the workers in this story. The true story behind all of this is no matter whether you are saved at a very tender age and work all your life for God; or whether you are saved on your death bed, the pay is the same; eternal life in heaven with Jesus.

**17 And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them,**

As the final events of His life draw nearer, the Lord again seeks to enlighten His disciples. This was not a message for everyone. This was just for His chosen twelve. This begins His final journey to the cross.

**18 Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death,**

He thought it wise to tell them yet again of the dark future which was now drawing very near, so he took the twelve disciples aside. Possibly, in this, his human soul was seeking fellowship but he found little among his feeble followers!

**19 And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again.**

This was the third time Jesus told the disciples of His death, plus three of the disciples had overheard Jesus discussing His death with Moses and Elijah at the Transfiguration. Jesus, in giving this message to His friends, spoke almost as if He was speaking of someone else. He did not use "I" in His explanation. This may very well be because this was not an attack on Him as a man, but rather, on what He stood for and on Him for who He really is. We need to look at His crucifixion as a perfect Lamb sacrifice that will do away with the sin of the world, once and for all time.



**20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedees children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him.**

This is a mother doing what mothers do. In Marine Corps bootcamp it was not uncommon for a mother to get in touch with her Senator, or Representative and try to get special treatment for her son. When that happened, the recruit's file was marked with a big PI for (political influence) and that would affect his promotions negatively for the rest of his enlistment. These two, by the way, were James and John.

**21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.**

The other disciples were displeased and this showed that they were ambitious as well. Doubtless, they wanted to fill the positions, that the mother of James and John asked for them. She approached the Savior reverently, worshipping him. Yet here she was asking for an unnamed thing. Our Lord here sets us the example of never promising in the dark. He said unto her, "What wilt thou?" Know what you promise before you promise. Do notice that this woman had great faith in the Lord's ultimate victory and rise to the throne. If she knew and understood all that Jesus had just said, she was willing that her sons should share the lot of Jesus, both as to his cross and his crown. Her request had in it much trust, and much of loyalty to Christ.

**22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.**

She did not understand truly what she was asking. Jesus was about to go through the worst suffering imaginable, followed by having the sins of the world placed on Him. His mental suffering was worse than the physical. I think we sometimes lose sight of that part of His suffering while we focus on the physical suffering of the cross. Jesus Himself, when praying to the Father for this cup to pass Him, even sweats drops of blood knowing the agony. He was about to drink the cup of God's wrath, yet He submits to the Father's will.

**23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.**

Here Jesus is telling them that they will all, with the exception of John, suffer a martyr's death. There is no indication that they understood this. Everything about our Lord's Kingdom is divinely arranged and fixed; nothing is left to chance or fate. Even Jesus will not interfere with the divine appointment concerning his future kingdom.

**24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.**

The text says; "Moved with indignation": No doubt this was jealousy. They all would have petitioned Jesus for the exalted, favored positions, given the opportunity. Jealousy had raised its nasty head among the disciples.

**25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.**

They were comparing His kingdom with the ordinary government of men, so they dreamed of being great, and exercising power in his name. While it is true, that to be his followers was a highly honorable thing, and made them partakers of a kingdom, but it was not like earthly kingdoms. In the earthly kingdoms, princes ruled by authority and force, but in his kingdom the rule would be one of love, and the dignity would be that of service. He who could serve most would be the greatest.

**26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;**

Whoever would be great in the kingdom of Christ, must be a minister to others if he desires to be truly great in the eyes of God, and of men. He must do great service for Christ and to the souls of men; and seek to bring glory to God, by faithfully ministering the word, and by denying himself worldly honor and glory, and by serving others. This is one of those principals carried forward into the Church Age.

**27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:**

The following is a quote from Charles Spurgeon. He says it this way. "We must for ever quit hunting after honor, office, power, and influence. If we aim at greatness at all, it must be by being great in service, becoming the minister or servant of our brethren".

**28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.**

A "ransom" is a price paid to redeem a prisoner or captive. Our redemption does not involve a price paid to Satan. Rather, the ransom is offered to God, to satisfy His justice and wrath against sin.

The price paid was Christ's own life, as a blood atonement. Heb.9:22 says **And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.** This then, is the meaning of the cross. Christ subjected Himself to the divine punishment against sin on our behalf. Suffering divine wrath in the place of sinners was the "cup" He spoke of having to drink. Really, there is no place in Christian work for jealousy. To be great in God's sight, we must humble ourselves to the place of servants. Jesus is our example, and He humbled Himself to the most shameful of deaths, the death on the cross. He came asking nothing and giving everything.

**29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.**

**30 And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David.**

One of these is Bartimaeus. They could not see Jesus, but they could hear. They had taken up a hopeful position by the way side, for there they would be likely to hear any good news, and there they would be seen by the compassionate. When they learned that Jesus was passing by, and believing that he could restore their sight, they grew earnest in prayer to him: they cried out. Their plea was "have mercy on us." Their appeal was to the heart of Jesus: "O Lord, thou son of

David." Our Lord was interrupted by the repeated outcries of these two blind beggars, but this never displeased him. So, how do we know that one of these was Bartimaeus? The other two synoptic gospels tell us that but they do not mention the second beggar. Also be aware that there are two Jerichos. One is on the mound of the ancient city (the ruins of which may still be seen today), and the other, the inhabited city of Jericho close by. Jesus may have been going out of old Jericho and entering new Jericho. This is important because one gospel says, "going out of Jericho and one says, "coming into Jericho. God does this to confuse college professors.

**31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou son of David.**

You can't shut these two up and I don't blame them. In their minds there is a chance to have their sight restored. Don't fail to notice what they call Him. They know He is the Messiah. FWIW you can still hear them today, two thousand years later. It's right here in the Book.

**32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?**

Jesus made a full stop, when he was near where these blind men sat. This shows the strength of faith, the force of prayer, and the great regard Christ has to both. They threw away their garments, that is, their long upper garments, which might be a hindrance to a quick motion. At least Bartimaeus did; so that they might get to Him sooner.

**33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.**

This question he put, not because He did not know what they wanted but to show both his power and willingness to do anything for them they should ask. The life of a blind beggar, in those days, must have been a horrible thing.

**34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him.**

He pitied their miserable and distressed condition. Mark relates, that "Jesus said unto him (Bartimaeus), go thy way, thy faith hath made

thee whole": The fact that they immediately received sight is a clear proof of the omnipotence of Christ, and of his deity.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWENTY ONE**

**1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,**

This event is generally known as the triumphal entry, when Jesus officially offers Himself to the nation of Israel as their Messiah. However, the day ended with Jesus public prediction of His rejection by His people.

**2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.**

Notice that they are told to bring both the jenny and the colt. This ass is the picture of a lost person. It is tied in bondage to sin and needs to be loosed. The colt is by a door in a place where two roads meet. The Lord Jesus Christ is the door and the two roads represent the right way which leads to Heaven, and the wrong way which leads to Hell.

**3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.**

Having just arrived in Bethphage, Jesus would have had no opportunity to make arrangements for the use of those animals. Yet He knew precisely the location of the animals and the disposition of the owners. Such detailed foreknowledge reveals His divine nature. Jesus was to fulfill the prophecy to the very last letter. Not only were they to get an ass, but the colt of an ass, as well. Many feel that the spiritual implication here, was that the older animal represented the Jews and the younger animal represented the Gentiles.

Jesus sent for both Jew and Gentile. The Jews rejected Him as a whole. This man, who had the animals, was either someone who was already a follower of Jesus, or someone God had divinely placed at this place at this specific time for this specific purpose. It had been prophesied by Zechariah, in chapter 9, that He would be riding on the colt of an ass. These two disciples were to walk up to the first ass with a colt and just unloose them and bring them to Jesus. This had to be preplanned of God.

**4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,**

The disciples were sent to the neighboring village for the ass and colt, and they brought them, and Christ rode upon them. This was not because of the distance of the place from Jerusalem, for he was just at it; or because He was weary, or it would be very fatiguing to Him to walk there on foot; for He was used to traveling on foot. It had one purpose: **“That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet”: Zechariah 9:9 Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he [is] just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.**

**5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.**

This was the first of two entries into Jerusalem. This was two days before the one in Mark 11:1-3.

**6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,**

The house was just at the entrance of the village. The colt was fastened at the point where the two roads met so this was a public place. The colt was easily seen, and could not be taken away without being observed, as it was by the owners. And as Jesus commanded them; they loosed the colt; and while they were untying it, the owners asked them, what they meant by doing so? They gave the answer what Christ had directed them to give and the owners were satisfied and let them go. There is another account in Mark at 11:14.

**7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.**

Matthew is the only gospel writer who mentions the jenny. All mention the young age of the colt , or state that no man had ever sat on him. The mare was brought along, possibly to induce the colt to cooperate. The disciples never questioned, they just did what Jesus told them to do. They knew that whatever He told them to do, it was right. They took their clothing and made them into something like a saddle blanket for Jesus to sit on, on the colt. This was humbleness to the utmost.

**8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.**

This was a common way of honoring conquering generals and princes. Most of the people still expected Jesus to deliver Israel from the Roman army.

**9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.**

Hosanna is the Hebrew word for “save now”. This word has been used in services of both Christians and Jews. “Blessed is he” along with the messianic title “Son of David” make it clear that the crowd was acknowledging Christ’s messianic claim. The date of the entry was on Sunday in A.D. 30, exactly 483 years after the decree of Artaxerxes mentioned in Dan. 9:24-26. Remember that prophecy?

This multitude with Jesus were not only His disciples, but many of them who had been healed by Jesus. This was a very triumphant entrance into Jerusalem. Their worship of Him was so great that they removed their garments and put them on the road for the ass and colt to walk over.

**10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?**

This event was foretold precisely, to the day, in Daniel’s prophecy of the Seventy Weeks. That is found in Daniel 9:24-27. That prophecy foretells Christ’s crucifixion and the eventual rise of the Antichrist.

**11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.**

Notice in verse ten, that the people of the city did not recognize Jesus but the multitude knew who He was. There were probably many people from Galilee there who had seen the many miracles that were done in that part of the country.

**12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,**

This was a source of corruption by the family of the high priest who controlled this activity. The whole atmosphere was like what we see at the local flea markets. Tithes had to be paid in sacred coinage so that was one source of extortion. Doves were sold for sacrifice. When a person brought an animal for sacrifice it was often rejected by the priests so that

one of theirs could be sold to replace it. This is the kind of religious mess that Jesus could not tolerate.

**13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.**

In John 2:16 calls the temple “**my Fathers house**”, but here He calls it “**my house**”. That is a direct claim to deity. It is interesting that in Matthew ch 23:38 He calls it “**your house**”, indicating He has left the synagogue, both spiritually and physically.

**14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.**

There is a big lesson here. The coming into the temple of blind and limping beggars, the equivalent of our homeless, was no defilement to the holy place. Jesus, in his Father's name, welcomed this motley crew, and healed them. Some people seem to think that, if the very poor come into places of worship, they are out of place; but this is wicked pride. The poorest and the most sinful may come to Jesus. We, too, came into the assembly of the saints at one time, spiritually blind and lame; but Jesus opened our eyes, and healed us of our lameness. If he sees anything amiss with us now, we are sure he will not drive us away, but he will heal us at once. The synagogue then and the church now is a house of prayer, where God is to manifest his goodness and power in giving sight to the spiritually blind, and feet to the lame. The Church or chapel in which the spiritually blind and the lame are not healed has no Christ in it.

**15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased,**

The crowd in Jerusalem for the Passover would have included a large number of 12-year old boys, who were there to celebrate their first Passover, just as Jesus Himself had done. This was simple jealousy by the priests and scribes.

How dare God come into the place of worship and actually heal people. How dare the people praise God and cry, because they were touched by Him.

**16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?**



His enemies saw all the wonderful things that Jesus did yet still rejected Him. This was God's last attempt to impress Israel with their Messiah.

**17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.**

Because of their rejection He did not spend even one night in the city that God has chosen. Perhaps He stayed with his friends Lazarus, Mary and Martha who lived in Bethany. He stayed two days between His entries into the city.

**18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.**

A very human trait. He wanted breakfast. Probably neither he, nor his disciples, had anything but what they got from public charity. This is after the Sabbath spent at Bethany and is His second entry.

**19 And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.**

Though trees are not mortal beings they are still subject to the word of God. This tree withered almost immediately after being cursed. Christ had the power to do whatever He said, and promised that same power to His disciples.

**20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!**

These disciples were not amazed that He cursed the tree but at how fast it withered. Since the fig tree is often used, in scripture, to represent Israel, He was giving them a picture of what would happen to Israel in the future.

**21 Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.**

To the first disciples the power of absolutely working miracles was given by our Lord. God may not work obvious miracles for us, but he will do all that we need in accordance with our faith. But here also the faith that we exercise in him must be free from doubt

**22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.**

This message is directed to the disciples. This is not possible concerning things not according to His divine will.

**23 And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?**

The real issue in life is authority. God has authority since He is the creator of life. Satan craves this authority and this is the reason he continually fights against the things of God and the true Church. You do not need to look any further than the revisions of the bible, and the apostasy in the modern church, to see this in action.

**24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.**

Our Lord's conditions were fair and reasonable: "If ye tell me, I in turn will tell you by what authority I do these things." Apparently, the questioners raised no objection, for Jesus at once stated his question to them. To this I would add that the scribes and Pharisees were apparently slow learners. They had never been able to trick the Lord with one of their questions.

**25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?**

They realized that Jesus was taking great authority in the temple this time. They also had no idea who they were speaking to. The Sanhedrin had quickly met, and decided they must stop Him any way they could. Instead of realizing these miracles that He performed were authority enough, they were trying to trap Him into saying that God authorized Him, so that they could call this blasphemy.

**26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.**

The Sanhedrim were afraid of the multitude. If they should say that the authority by which John acted was human, they would immediately rise up against them. Luke says, "stone" them: so high a regard had they for John, and so dear was his memory still unto them as they still held "John as a prophet".

**27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.**

The words "**We cannot tell**" was a direct falsehood. They could have told; and the answer should have been, "We will not tell." The reason they said that they could not tell, was they would not acknowledge that John was a prophet. For if they did, they saw he could easily show them by "what authority" he did those things and that was by his authority as Messiah. John came as his forerunner, pointed him out to the people, baptized him, and bore his public and solemn testimony to the fact that he was the Messiah. If they acknowledged one, they must the other. They were no match for Jesus. They were trapped again. They had not ever questioned the validity of John the Baptist's ministry. John had proclaimed Jesus as Messiah (the Lamb of God).

**28 But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.**

Of these two sons, one of whom was disobedient, and insolent, but who afterwards thought on his ways, and returned to his duty. The second was a hypocrite, who promised all, and did nothing.

Our Lord points out, on the one hand, the tax-gatherers and sinners of all descriptions, who, convicted by the preaching of John and that of Christ, turned away from their iniquities and embraced the Gospel. And, on the other hand, the scribes, Pharisees, and self-righteous people, who, pretending a zeal for the law, would not receive the salvation of the Gospel.

**29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.**

This is a perfect picture of a lost sinner who refuses to accept the gospel but later accepts Jesus and is saved.

**30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not.**

Here we have the picture of a lost church member who is a "pretend" Christian. All the words and practices are there on Sunday but during the week they live like Hell.

**31 Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.**

Jesus pointed out that the publicans and the harlots were like the first son; while the chief priests and elders of the people, with all their pretty professions, were deceitful and disobedient like the second son. They had professed great reverence for the divine Word; but when it came by John, they did not repent and believe him. Open sinners, who had seemed to refuse God, did actually believe him, and so, by heeding John's ministry, went into the kingdom of God before the Pharisees. What must these self-satisfied priests and elders have thought when they heard publicans and harlots placed ahead of them?

**32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.**

Publicans and the harlots who were the lowest of Jewish society, and were publicly despised by the chief priests and elders, had found salvation while the self-righteous leaders had not. Jesus here, made these hearers be their own judge. The man in this, who had two sons, was symbolic of God. The two sons were symbolic of the Pharisees and sinners. These Pharisees claimed to keep the law perfectly. They had nothing to do with the spirit, just with the letter of the law. The others knew nothing of the law, but eventually accepted the spirit. You could also see the Gentiles in the first son and the Jews in the second. Gentiles-rebellious, but came to repentance. The Jews having the law and eager to obey fell short, because of self-righteousness.

**33 Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:**

This vineyard is the nation of Israel. The land of Palestine is the holy ground where the vineyard is planted. The servants are the prophets of the past and the heir is the Lord Jesus Christ. The householder is God the Father, and the husbandmen are the scribes and Pharisees who seek to kill Him.

**34 And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.**

The householder sent his servants to receive the fruits of it, and bring them to him. These servants, as the lord's representatives, ought to have been

received with due honor; but they were not. The leaders of the Jewish nation for a long time rendered to the Lord no love, or service. Prophets were sent by God to Israel, but their message was refused by the rulers of the people.

**35 And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.**

Matthew often blends and simplifies details. From Mark's account, we learn that in Jesus' telling of this story, three different slaves came individually. The tenants "beat" the first one, "wounded" the second, and "killed" the third. This corresponds to the Jewish rulers' treatment of many of the Old Testament prophets.

**36 Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.**

True disciples of Christ have been persecuted in all ages, and the greatest share of the persecution has come from religion. There have always been good and bad husbandmen, and the latter have persecuted the former. Notice who was doing this to the prophets. It was not the ordinary people, but was rather the ones unto whom God had let out His vineyard (church), to. We know these self-righteous people did not want to hear the messages of the true prophets. They beat them, and accused them of not being truly sent of God.

**37 But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.**

The words ,last of all, indicates that Jesus was God's final emissary to Israel. None has ever appeared since Him, and none ever will until the Jews recognize Christ as their final Prophet and Messiah. The desire to kill the rightful heir of the Father had already been expressed by the Jewish leaders. Jesus clearly foretells His coming rejection and death with the statement "they slew him."

**38 But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.**

In their hearts they hated Jesus, because they knew that he really was the Messiah. They feared that he would dismiss them, and assume possession of his own inheritance, and therefore they would make an end of him: "This

is the heir; come, let us kill him." Once get him out of the way, they hoped to keep the nation in their own hands.

**39 And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.**

Though the sentence of death was pronounced on him by Pilate, a heathen governor, and was executed by the Roman soldiers. Yet it was through the instigation and at the pressing of these, the Jewish rulers; and who were afterward frequently charged by the apostles with the murder of him.

**40 When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?**

**41 They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.**

With their reply they are unwittingly condemning themselves by showing their own attitude toward Jesus. The "other" husbandmen are the Gentiles. So, with that, God has committed His vineyard to us and He expects to receive souls.

**42 Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?**

The stone rejected refers to His crucifixion; and the restoration of "the chief corner stone" anticipates His resurrection.

**43 Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.**

This was fulfilled at Pentecost where the kingdom was taken from them and passed to the Gentile church. Those who stumble over Christ, the chief corner-stone of the Church, are injured: but He remains unhurt. Opposition to Jesus is injury to ourselves. Those upon whom he falls in wrath are ground to powder.

**44 And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.**

This stone, the Lord Jesus Christ is "a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over" to unbelievers. The prophet Daniel pictured Him as a great stone "cut

out of the mountain without hands," which falls on the kingdoms of the world and crushes them. That is Dan. 2:44-45 for those of you taking notes. The cornerstone fastens and holds securely two walls together. These two walls are symbolic of the Jew and the Gentile. God is the architect. The builder might reject this stone for the corner, but ultimately, the architect has the say and the builder has to bow to His wishes.

**45 And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.**

By evoking so much familiar messianic imagery in verses 42-44, Christ made His meaning clear to the chief priests and Pharisees.

**46 But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.**

They feared the multitude which they knew would take the part of Christ against them. Their lives, had they attempted anything of this nature, would have been in a great deal of danger. The people took him for a prophet because of the doctrines which he taught, and by the miracles he wrought. Perhaps not all of the multitude believed He was the Messiah but it was exceeding obvious, that he was a teacher sent of God. So that, as Mark says, "they left him, and went their way"; to consult together what should be done, and wait for a better opportunity to seize him.

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## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWENTY TWO**

**1 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,**

He is speaking not only to the multitude, but to the chief priests, elders, Scribes, and Pharisees. These parables are all directed mainly to the scribes and Pharisees. The parables just increase their resentment.

**2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,**

Jesus told a similar, but different, parable in Luke 14:16-23. There, the banquet was a wedding feast for the king's own son, making the apathy and rejection of those invited much more of a personal slight

against the king. Also, there they actually mistreated and killed the king's messengers

**3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.**

This parable is also a good picture of why God turned away from the Jews and turned to the Gentiles. Jesus has paid for His bride with His shed blood. God has sent out invitations to the wedding. The sad thing is that most of the invited will not come. They are so busy with things of this world they are not interested in coming to this marriage.

**4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.**

This illustrates God's patience and forbearance with those who deliberately spurn Him. He continues to extend the invitation even after His goodness has been ignored or rebuffed.

**5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:**

Most of the Jewish people gave small heed to apostolic preaching: they made light of it, counted it of less importance than the worldly things they were engrossed in. In making light of the gospel, they really were making light of the Son of God. The doctrine of the cross was a stumbling-block to the Jews. The rebels seemed to say, "Let the King do as he likes with his dinner; I am going to look after my farm, or to attend to my merchandise." Carnal men love carnal things, and "make light of" spiritual blessings.

**6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.**

Saul of Tarsus, before his conversion, was a type of the fanatical Pharisees and religious rulers who were, as he confessed to King Agrippa, "exceedingly mad" against Christ's followers. In many cases, they tortured, imprisoned and even killed them. Stephen was the first martyr after his Lord's crucifixion;



**7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.**

This is a prophecy concerning the destruction, of Jerusalem, by Rome in 70 AD.

**8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.**

The Jews were like the invited guests who were called but not chosen. Chosen is an odd choice of words since chosen, in this case, depends on what the called one does in response to the call. So the King turns to others, both good and bad, in His search for "guests".

**9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.**

The rejection to Jesus by Israel, freed God from His responsibility to them. Now He can turn to all mankind, good or bad. One thing stands out. The King's subjects certainly did not love and respect Him. He was unpopular. That is the way things are in the world today.

**10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.**

The best gathering into any church will be sure to be a cross section of imperfect humanity; there will be some admitted who ought not to be there. Tares will grow among the wheat. goats will get in among the sheep; the gospel net will enclose fish of every kind, "both bad and good."

**11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:**

There is a ridiculous heresy taught by the "Baptist bride" people that says these "guests" are saved people outside the body of Christ, that is, non Baptists, and these can lose their salvation. Think about this inconsistent mess. Baptist Bride position means no one but Baptist can be saved. Yet here they say those others are saved but can lose it.

**12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.**

Since these garments would have been supplied by the King, the fact that he was without one indicated deliberate rejection. This one without a wedding garment can represent both Satan or an unbeliever. This is a perfect picture of someone trying to slip into Heaven by a door other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

**13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

The picture here is of a lost person being cast into Hell or the lake of fire. Be sure to notice that in verse twelve that the person was speechless standing before the Lord. You will not get to the judgment and argue with God.

**14 For many are called, but few are chosen.**

This gets right to the heart of the matter. Many, you might even say all, are called but only those who accept the call to come to Christ are chosen.

**15 Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.**

They wanted to deliver him unto the power and authority of the Roman governor Pontius Pilate, should he say anything against Caesar. They wanted to set the people against him, while protecting themselves. Their main point was the delivery of him into the hands of the civil government for treason and sedition, so they could have him put to death.

**16 And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.**

The Herodians were a political party that favored Herod and Rome. They cared nothing for religion and were usually bitter enemies of the Pharisees. These statements in verse sixteen are insincere flattery.

**17 Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?**

Their question is intended as a trap. If Jesus answers yes He could be held up to the people as a traitor. If He answers no then He can be denounced to the Roman authorities.

**18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?**

Since these people did not realize they were dealing with God in the flesh, they didn't realize He could read their minds. Jesus saw right through their little scheme and rightly called them hypocrites. They said they believed He taught truth, but they really did not believe in Him at all.

**19 Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.**

We have talked about this "penny" before. It is not the little brown coin that we use, but was a day's wage in that time.

**20 And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?**

This tribute money was not a shekel of Jewish coinage, but money of the Roman empire. This was a plain proof that, whether they liked it or not, they were Roman subjects, and Caesar was their ruler.

**21 They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.**

The Lord means that we are to give the civil magistrates all that is due to them, as long as it does not interfere with the honor due to God. He just said, if you owe any tax to the civil government, pay it. If you owe God anything, pay Him. When they saw that they could not trap Him,

they just left. Anytime they tried to trap Jesus, they wound up being trapped themselves.

**22 When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.**

They have now been thoroughly humiliated, so they leave.

**23 The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,**

Next come the Sadducees. They never learn. These are the left wing liberals of the first century. They did not believe in the supernatural, nor angels, nor the resurrection. As it turns out these were more severely humiliated than the last group. They might have taken warning from the experience of the Pharisees and the Herodians; but no doubt they felt so sure of their own position that they expected to succeed though the others had failed.

**24 Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.**

“Moses said” is a reference to Deuteronomy 25:5, where the unmarried brother is required to take his brother’s widow to be his own wife. The absurd hypothetical case that follows is an attempt to discredit the legitimacy of the resurrection, which the Sadducees rejected. This extreme example must have been thought by them to be the ultimate proof of the foolishness of the doctrine of resurrection. All seven brothers had been married to her, “Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven?” She has buried seven. I wouldn’t want to be married to her.

**25 Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:**

The reason for this Levitical law was to insure that family lines were kept intact and widows were cared for. It seems ridiculous to us but in those times a woman without a husband was in serious trouble. No social security, no jobs available and no welfare system.

**26 Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.**

These Sadducees may have known such a case as they stated, though it is extremely unlikely. Most likely, this was one of the stock stories they were in the habit of telling in order to cast ridicule on the resurrection. They had no belief in spiritual beings; therefore, they supposed that, if there were a future state, it would be similar to the present.

**27 And last of all the woman died also.**

**28 Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.**

They were probably laughing as they asked this question but the smiles were soon wiped off their faces. No doubt they thought that this question would puzzle Christ, but he had no more difficulty in answering this than he had with the previous group.

**29 Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.**

These Sadducees had set up a hypothetical situation, first of all, to try to catch Jesus in error. They really did not want an answer to their question. They were just trying to prove by Jesus, that there could not possibly be a resurrection. These Sadducees were trying to fit the laws of this physical earth into the heavenly.

**30 For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.**

All angels are men so some use this verse to teach that every saved person, in Heaven, will be male. If you use this verse to teach all male in Heaven then it is equally valid to say that since we are to be the bride of Christ then we will all be female. We do know this; the resurrected body of the born again believer will be a sinless, glorified body, like the Lord Jesus Christ.

**31 But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,**

**32 I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.**

"God is not the God of the dead, but of the living." Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had long been dead when the Lord spoke to Moses out of the burning bush but Jesus implied that the patriarchs were still living. His covenant was made with those who still existed. Though out of their earthly bodies, they still live. Jesus does not argue about it, but he states the fact as beyond all question. The living God is the God of living men; and Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are still alive, and are the same persons who lived on the earth.

**33 And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine.**

Jesus here showed that the truth made known in the Scriptures is a very personal matter. You need to read and study, for yourself and not depend completely on others. This message was spoken to these Sadducees and what they did not realize is that it was spoken by God.

**34 But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.**

The multitude talked to one another about the marvelous way he answered all questions; but none admitted that He was the Messiah. Even the scribes, who complimented Christ upon his answer (Lu 20:39), saying, "Master, thou hast well said," did not follow up that confession by becoming his disciples.

**35 Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,**

This lawyer, an expert in the Old Testament Law and was equivalent to a doctor of theology today. The phrase "tempting him", implies that he is trying to draw Jesus into an argument regarding the Pharisees' extensive interpretations of over 600 laws. Instead, Christ summarizes the two tables of the law. Responsibility to God and responsibility to man. That is; "love the Lord thy God" and "love thy neighbor as thyself."

**36 Master, which is the great commandment in the law?**

**37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.**

Salvation by the words of the Law is clearly an impossibility, for we cannot obey even the first commandment. There is only One who has obeyed it, and the obedience of Christ is counted as, the obedience of all who trust him. What is required of us is to do our very best by the power of the Holy! Spirit, who dwells within us.

**38 This is the first and great commandment.**

Be sure to notice that love of God is placed first. This same thing was required of the angels before man was created.

**39 And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.**

Christ adds more to His answer. The lawyer asked only what the great commandment was. This is where many modern churches get it wrong. They spend all their time and energy helping people and neglect winning souls. Soul winning should always come first.

**40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.**

The entire moral teaching of the Mosaic Law is summed up in these two commandments. Man's love for God is demonstrated by his love for God's word. The greatest command is to love your God ahead of your fellow man.

**41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,**

Jesus turns the tables on the Pharisees and asks them a trick question. "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?" By asking them who is the Messiah, He gave them a clear opportunity to acknowledge Him. The Pharisees' response, "the son of David," was the common teaching of the scribes who accepted the Davidic lineage of the Messiah. Jesus then calls their attention to Psalm 110. This psalm, whose Davidic authorship Jesus affirms, was given "in spirit," that is, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit; in it David refers to the Messiah as his Lord.

**42 Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David.**

“The son of David” was the most common messianic title in Jesus’ day. Their answer reflected their conviction that the Messiah would be no more than a man, and Jesus’ reply was another assertion of His deity. This is really the problem in our churches today. Most do not realize who the person of Jesus is. We limit Jesus, because we do not truly understand who He is.

**43 He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,**

The quote from psalm 110 follows in verse 44.

**44 The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?**

If the Pharisees could have denied that the Psalm had reference to the Messiah, it would have been easy for them to reply to Christ's question; but no man was able to answer him a word.

**45 If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?**

David would not have addressed a merely human descendant as “Lord.” The inescapable implication is that Jesus was declaring His deity. You see, the Spirit of Jesus Christ is eternal. He has used many different names from time to time, but they are all the same Spirit. The only time He used the name Jesus Christ, was for His short stay on the earth. When He returns, we will know Him as Lord of Lords and King of kings. One of His names in heaven was the Word of God. Whatever name He uses describes the job He is fulfilling at the moment. He is the second person of the Godhead. So, even though He was counted in the line of David, He was David's Lord.

**46 And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.**

They saw the dilemma they were reduced to, either to acknowledge the deity of the Messiah, or confess their ignorance. They were unwilling to do either, so decided it to be the wisest part to be silent.



From this time forward, to the time of his sufferings, which was not very long after; for this was the third day before the Passover.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWENTY THREE**

### **1 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,**

What most of this passage amounts to is Christ passing judgment on these scribes and Pharisees. Before the chapter is over Jesus includes the entire Jewish population in His condemnation. This now represents His final and official rejection of them at the temple.

### **2 Saying The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:**

In other words, the scribes and Pharisees have taken the authority of Moses and add to the law given to Moses. Moses had the good of the people in mind while these Pharisees care only for themselves and their position.

### **3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.**

These scribes and Pharisees knew the letter of the Law of Moses perfectly. They are quick to preach that everyone had to keep the law. They were without excuse, because they sinned with full knowledge that it was wrong. Jesus said it was okay to listen to them, but don't pattern your life after theirs.

### **4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.**

This is one of the two "meanest" chapters in the Bible. The other is Jer.23. In both the Lord is attacking false religious leaders. These false leaders like to call themselves Rabbi, if Jewish, Holy Father if Catholic and Reverend if Protestant. In Psa. 111 vs 9 say this speaking of the Lord Jesus; **He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend [is] his name.** This is the only time the word reverend appears in the KJV.

If you think I object to Protestant and Baptist ministers running around calling themselves Reverend, you are right.

**5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,**

The word "phylacteries" is one we don't see often. Phylacteries were small, cube shaped, leather boxes that hung on the front of the garment, or were worn on the forehead or on one arm.. They were used to carry verses of scripture. These Pharisees made theirs larger to appear more spiritual and educated. These, along with the enlarged borders of their garments were for 'show'. Modern equivalent; the bigger, and blacker, the bible the more spiritual you are.

**6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,**

In this day they did not sit as we do but reclined on pillows to eat. Whenever we read in the New Testament of "sitting" at meals, it always means reclining in this manner. The chief seat, or the "uppermost" one, was the middle couch at the upper end of the table. This the Pharisees loved, as a post of honor or distinction. The chief seats in the synagogues were usually occupied by the elders of the synagogue, near the pulpit. The meaning is, they love a place of distinction and loved to be seen by others as being important.

**7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.**

This was the fatal flaw in their character: So long as they stood well in the sight of their fellow men, they cared little or nothing how they appeared to the eye of God. They were very particular about the literal observance of certain Mosaic commands, but completely missed the spiritual meaning of them:

**8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.**

In the Church, all titles and honors which exalt men and give occasion for pride are here forbidden. In the Christian church we should seek to

realize true equality. He who is called "Rabbi" robs Christ of his honor as the only Master or Teacher of his disciples: "for one is your Master, even, Christ." He also takes from his fellow-Christians the privilege that they share equally with him since we are all called brethren. Those who use such titles as Holy Father and Right Reverend Father, would have a difficulty in explaining our Savior's words in the next verse.

**9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.**

Call no man your Father does not, of course, forbid us to apply the term to our earthly father. Worship requires all proper honors to be shown to Him. The word "father" also denotes "authority, eminence, superiority, a right to command, and a claim to particular respect." In this sense, it belongs completely to God, and it is not right to give it to people. Christian brethren are equal. Only God has supreme authority. He only has a right to give laws; to declare doctrines that shall bind the conscience; to punish disobedience.

**10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.**

Here again, we see that we should not try to raise ourselves to the position of God the Father, or God the Son. We must not try to bring them down to our level or try to push ourselves up to their level. These verses, then and now, prohibit the disciples of Jesus from seeking or receiving mere empty titles, implying authority to control the opinions and conduct of others, and claiming that others should acknowledge them to be superior to them.

**11 But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.**

Our Lord had to repeat many times this law of His. "He that is greatest among you shall be your servant." You are all equal; but if there is one amongst you who claims to be the greatest, he shall be the servant of all.

**12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.**

Nothing is more hateful in Gods' sight than pride; to bring it into everlasting contempt, God was manifest in the flesh. He who was in the likeness of God took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of man, and humbled himself unto death. 1 Peter 5:6 says; **"Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may exalt you in due time."**

After this, can God look upon any proud man without contempt? Spiritual lordship and domination, ecclesiastical luxury, pomp, and pride, must be an abhorrence in the sight of that God who gave the above advice to his followers. That is why Scripture says: **"God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble"**. That's James 4:6 if you are taking notes.

**13 But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.**

This is the first of eight "woes", in which the Lord Jesus both foretells the doom of the hypocrites gathered before him, and reveals the depth of his pity even for them. In seven of the eight "woes" he calls them "hypocrites", in one he addresses them as "blind guides." This first "woe" was pronounced against them because, as far as they could, they "shut up the kingdom of heaven against men."

**14 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.**

"Ye devour widows houses" is an interesting way to put this. In modern redneck this would be, "you steal the living from widows and orphans". There is a denomination today that charges widows to pray their loved ones out of purgatory. These corrupt priests will receive the greater damnation. This verse is completely removed from some of the new "bibles". The second part of that verse hits close to home as well. You hear these long prayers made at revivals and camp meetings by those wishing to present themselves as spiritual. After about ten minutes of that stuff, God has left the building. How about the prayer that isn't a prayer but a recitation of scripture verses? The one that goes; Lord you said bla bla bla, and God you said yada

yada,yada and so on. There is no prayer in that, just a person showing off his memory for scripture verses. God knows what He said,and what He wrote.

**15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.**

This is straight from the mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. We see this going on in the cults of today. They pull people,especially young people, out of Christian assemblies and put them on a path to Hell.

**16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!**

These scribes and Pharisees made a good living from the tithes to the temple. Their focus is more on the gold than on the Temple. God is interested in righteous living and on justice and judgment against sin.

**17 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?**

To sanctify is to make holy. The gold had no holiness but what it derived from the temple. If in any other place, it would be no more holy than any other gold. It was foolish then, to suppose that that was more holy than the temple, from which it received all the sanctity which it possessed.

**18 And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.**

The altar of burnt-offerings, in the court of the priests. It was made of brass, about 30 feet in length and breadth, and 15 feet in height. You find that in 2 Chronicles 4:1. On this altar were offered all the beasts and bloody oblations of the temple and there were literally thousands of them. The gift upon this altar was always beasts and birds.

**19 Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?**

**20 Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.**

Christ was not approving swearing here since He forbids it in other places, but if a man did swear by the altar, he ought to know, and consider that he not only sweareth by it, but by all the gifts, and offerings that are brought, and laid upon it,

**21 And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.**

Who dwells in the temple? God does so this amounts to swearing by God. The temple was his house, his dwelling. In the first, or Solomon's temple, he dwelt between the cherubim in the most holy place. He manifested himself there by a visible symbol, in the form of a cloud resting on the mercy-seat.

**22 And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.**

Heaven is God's throne. It is so called as being the place where he sits in glory. Jesus says, here, that all who swear at all do in fact, swear by God, or the oath is good for nothing. To swear by an altar, a gift, or a temple is of no force unless it be meant to appeal to God himself.

**23 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.**

Sometimes you will hear it said that tithing is not for the New Testament. Well, right here, Jesus says it is.

**24 Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.**

This is exactly what the bible changers of today are doing. They make a major issue of an archaic word and use that as an excuse to change whole verses.

**25 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.**

**26 Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.**

**27 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.**

The reason given for the seventh "woe" reveals what the scribes and Pharisees really were like in Christ's sight. " The annual whitewashing of the sepulchres had recently taken place, so the burial-places looked at their best; but inside the tombs corruption was doing its necessary work. Our Lord certainly did not flatter the scribes and Pharisees by this comparison; but the more closely it is examined, the more appropriate to their horrible character it will be proved to be. However much they might "outwardly appear righteous unto men", "within" they were "full of hypocrisy and iniquity."

**28 Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.**

Their outward show and appearance of righteousness, was only "unto men", not unto God. They did not appear so to God, since God searches the heart and knows what is in man. He knows all the secret wickedness that was in them. For though they imposed upon, and deceived men, they could not deceive God.

**29 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,**

"Woe unto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites": This is the seventh and last time, in which these words are delivered in this exact form by our Lord, in this chapter; and expresses the certainty, both of their sin and punishment.

This shows the hypocrisy of these persons, and supports the character given of them and also furnishes a sufficient reason, why a woe is denounced upon them. Now that business of building, and garnishing the tombs is not wrong in itself but because they did all this, that they might be thought to be very innocent and holy men, and far from being guilty of the crimes their forefathers were. Especially when they were of the very selfsame blood thirsty, persecuting spirit; and did, and would do the same things to the prophets and apostles of the New Testament, their fathers had done to the prophets of the Old Testament.

**30 And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.**

Watch these reprobates trap themselves with their talk as they mention that their fathers killed the prophets. In spite of all this pretense of piety, they knew in their consciences and were witnesses to themselves, that it was hypocrisy, and that they really approved the conduct of those who slew the prophets.

**31 Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.**

This is a prediction of what they were about to do. He would have them act out their true spirit, and show what they were, and show to all that they had the spirit of their fathers. This was to be done by putting him to death, and persecuting the apostles.

Jesus is saying to them, by killing me, fill up what is lacking of the iniquity of your fathers until the measure is full; until the national iniquity is complete. With the crucifixion of Jesus God will have had all that He can bear from this nation. These scribes and Pharisees had not only rejected the prophets, but they had gone even further and had rejected the very Son of God. It is so easy to say what you would do, if you do not have the decision facing you. These scribes and Pharisees were quick to criticize, but they would make a much more serious denial when they participated in the crucifixion of Jesus the Christ the Son of God. Their cup of iniquity would be more than full.

**32 Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.**



In the next verse Jesus uses the phrase, "Damnation of hell": Beyond a doubt this refers, to future punishment. So great was their wickedness and hypocrisy, that if they persevered in this course, it was impossible to escape the damnation that should come on the guilty. This chapter contains the strongest language that Jesus ever used to wicked people, but it by no means authorizes ministers to use such language to sinners now. Christ knew what was in the heart and He had an authority which no one now has. He had authority to declare certainly that those whom he addressed would be lost. We have no such authority.

### **33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?**

Now the lord uses sarcasm, insults and vilification on these scribes and Pharisees. This is not the mild mannered Jesus preached in most churches today. He is comparing their actions to the sneaky, poisonous actions of a venomous snake.

### **34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:**

"Prophets, and wise men and scribes": that is, the disciples, as well as the prophets, evangelists and pastors who followed them. Ironically it is the Roman Caesars and later, the Roman Church which has done most of the killing and torture of evangelists and Christians who followed those original disciples.

### **35 That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.**

In case you do not remember Zechariah, he is found in 2 Chron. 24:20 and 21. **And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, Thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? because ye have forsaken the**

**LORD, he hath also forsaken you. {24:21} And they conspired against him, and stoned him with stones at the commandment of the king in the court of the house of the LORD. Do notice that phrase, "because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you. That friends, is America today.**

**36 Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.**

Jesus' lament over Jerusalem and His removal of the blessing of God from the temple, strongly suggest that the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 was the judgment He was speaking about

**37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!**

Our Lord knew that his earthly life was soon to end; he was, in fact, about to utter his last farewell to the people gathered in the temple. But, before leaving them, he delivered this message: "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes." No one but the Lord Jesus could speak this without it being blasphemy. The destruction of Jerusalem was more terrible than anything that the world had ever witnessed. The Lord foretold the time of the end: "Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." It was before that generation had passed away that Jerusalem was besieged and destroyed. But God left sufficient time for the gospel to be spread by the apostles and missionaries of the early church.

**38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.**

This is a little more prophecy here. Jerusalem will be destroyed in 70 AD and the Jews driven out into the four corners of the world. The land of Israel is literally left desolate. It turn into desert with nothing left but a few Arabs and some goats.

**39 For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.**

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Jesus is saying that when the Jews see Him again, at the end of the tribulation, They will be glad to accept Him as their Messiah.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWENTY FOUR**

**1 And Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to shew him the buildings of the temple.**

At the time of Jesus public ministry the temple was probably the most beautiful building in the world. It was made of massive blocks of stone, ornamented with gold. The first temple was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 BC. The second temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD and the third temple will be destroyed by the Antichrist and his demons at the end of the Tribulation.

**2 And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.**

The phrase, "Not be left here one stone upon another", was literally fulfilled in A.D. 70. Titus, the Roman general, built large wooden scaffold"s around the walls of the temple buildings, piled then high with wood and other flammable items, and set them ablaze. The heat from the fires was so intense that the stones crumbled. The rubble was then sifted to retrieve the melted gold, and the remaining ruins were thrown into the Kidron Valley. Jesus was speaking prophetically of the destruction of the temple. This was the temple where He had driven the money changers out. He had taught reverence in the house of God, that it should be a House of Prayer.

**3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?**

The “Mount of Olives,” is a small range of several summits whose highest elevation is 2,723 feet, running north-south for two and one half miles. The range overlooks Jerusalem from the east, across the Kidron Valley. Jesus often went to the Mount of Olives to teach and to rest. On the western slope, near the base, is a spot known as the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus agonized in prayer on the night before His crucifixion. Jesus used Olivet to deliver one of His major prophetic discourses. We had that in the last chapter. It is from the Mount of Olives that He ascended into heaven, and to it He will return at His second coming. The disciples had questions. They asked, “when will the temple be destroyed”? The physical temple would be destroyed in less than 40 years. The temple of His body would be destroyed in just a few days. Then they asked, “What will be the sign of thy coming”? The disciples still “supposed that the kingdom of God was going to appear immediately.”

**4 And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.**

Though Jesus was addressing the disciples, His statement applies to us today, and will apply to the Jews in the Tribulation. We are all to be aware that there are many false preachers and teachers out there. Some of these people serve Satan deliberately but most are simply ignorant and unable to rightly divide the word.

**5 For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.**

One of the major signs of the end of the age will be the deception of Christians by those, in the church, posing as Christians (tares). These false teachers would not be able to fool Christians except they are posing as Christians themselves. We are seeing this everywhere today. Some of these people do not even realize what they are doing. Paul, in Galatians 1:8 says; **But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.** Most of these false teachers of today could not even tell you what Paul's gospel was. Most would say something like, “we are working to bring in the kingdom, or tell everyone about Jesus, or love everybody and help the

poor. There is nothing wrong with some of those things but they are not the gospel for this age and anyone preaching these for the gospel is preaching "another gospel. According to Paul, these people are going to Hell. The gospel, for the Church, is clearly defined in 1Cor 15:3-4.

**6 And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.**

There were no wars nor rumors of wars in Jesus day since Rome had conquered the known world. This is speaking of the end time.. We certainly hear plenty of this today through the evening news.

**7 For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.**

**8 All these are the beginning of sorrows.**

One would think that there was plenty of sorrow in wars and famines and pestilence and earthquakes, but Jesus said that "all these" were only "the beginning of sorrows". If these are the beginning what must the end be like. This prophecy is concerning the Tribulation and what can be expected as it starts.

**9 Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.**

Again, this is Tribulation writing but can also easily be applied to both the disciples and to Christians throughout history.

**10 And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.**

Isn't this happening today? I'm thinking of political correctness and hate speech and the things that go with this. It now seems you must watch all of your words to make sure you do not offend some small group somewhere.

**11 And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.**

I realize this applies to the Tribulation but we can see parallels in our

own time. I am thinking of the fake faith healers, cults and just plain false religions started by people like Mary Baker Eddy and Joseph Smith. You can probably think of many others to add to that list of false prophets. The messages and services, in most churches today, are appealing to the flesh. Many are being deceived. The only way not to be deceived is to know what the Bible says yourselves. Read it every day. Ask God to help you. Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and help you to discern right from wrong.

**12 And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.**

I believe the “iniquity” spoken of here applies to persecution from outside the believers. For many “on fire” for the Lord, when facing torture or prison it would be easier to let the fire go out.

**13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.**

There are no Christians mentioned here. This is speaking of the Tribulation period where Israel will have to endure to the end. This is another clear case of being able to “lose it” during the Tribulation.

**14 And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.**

This is specifically speaking of the 144,000 Jewish male virgins who preach during the tribulation as well as Moses and Elijah who are also witnessing at that time. Now, that said, this is also our “great commission”. This is one area where the modern church has done a reasonably good job with the huge number of missionaries that have been sent out over the years.

**15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)**

This is one that is absolutely clear. The Antichrist will turn against the Jews in the middle of the Tribulation period, take over the Temple and declare himself to be God. He will offer sacrifices on the alter which will be either pigs or humans.

**16 Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:**

One of the things which will happen when the Antichrist breaks the covenant with the Jews is that he will begin to wage full war against Israel. The Jews will have to flee to Petra and to other Gentile countries.

**17 Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:**

Things will have to be done in a hurry. All Israel will have to do is run. There will be no time to collect valuables, or even clothing. Those dwelling in the corners of the housetops (see Pr 21:9 and 25:24) just jump off and go as quickly as they can.

**18 Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.**

**19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!**

It will be especially hard on women with small children and pregnant women. The men will be in the field working and will have to leave from there so will not be available to help. The Antichrists army will be moving swiftly and killing all the Jews they can catch. They are not taking prisoners but killing all that they overtake.

**20 But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:**

Winter would make this flight even harder. The law of the Sabbath says that the observant Jew can not travel more than one mile on the Sabbath. Now, there is a choice for you. Break God's law or die. I thank God I live in a different dispensation. There are a couple of other things to mention before we move on. God does intervene and opens the earth to swallow a large part of the Antichrist's army. This allows a remnant of Jews to escape. This is also the time where the sheep and goat nations, who are judged later, come into play. The sheep nations will be those who help the Jewish people during this time. The fact that there are "sheep" nations does indicate that the Antichrist does not have complete control of all the nations.

**21 For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.**

This is the mid point of the Tribulation and begins the part known as "the great Tribulation. Things have been bad but now they get much worse. Notice that Jesus says this will be the worst tribulation since the beginning of the world. That includes Noah's flood where almost all life was destroyed.

**22 And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.**

The "elect" here are saved Jews. The phrase "those days shall be shortened", is a mystery. Four periods are given for the last half of the Tribulation. Both Dan.7:25 and Rev.13:5 give the time as 1260 days. Dan.12:11 gives the time as 1290 days. Dan.12:12 gives the time as 1335 days and Dan.8:14 gives it as 2300 days. As odd as it may sound, all of these times are correct. The different times are times that God will use at the end of the Tribulation for things like the battle of Armageddon and the setting up of the millennial kingdom.

**23 Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not.**

During the Great Tribulation, God will pour out His wrath on mankind and will judge all of creation, just before the peace of the Millennium is ushered in.

It would be easy for Christians to become discouraged if we did not know that we will be taken out before the Tribulation begins. The realization of what awaits the unsaved following the Rapture ought to motivate every believer to win souls before it is too late.

**24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.**

This is a quote from Charles Spurgeon." One of the saddest signs of the times in which we live is the ease with which "the very elect" are deceived by the smooth-tongued "false Christs and false prophets" who abound in our midst. Yet our Savior expressly forewarned his



followers against them. It was true in Spurgeon's day and it is just as true today.

**25 Behold, I have told you before.**

He did tell them before in Matthew 24:5. When those things came to pass; it would be further proof that Jesus is the Messiah. None of the false prophets will be able to predict the future.

**26 Wherefore if they shall say unto you, Behold, he is in the desert; go not forth: behold, he is in the secret chambers; believe it not.**

No one should consider the claims of self-styled messiahs because all of them are false. When Christ returns, no one will miss it.

**27 For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**

He will come like the lightning, quickly and without warning. One other thing to notice here is the direction. The gospel has always traveled east to west. Abraham traveled east to west. East to west is a direction that never ends. You can travel west forever and never reach east.

**28 For wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.**

The birds of prey gather wherever dead bodies are to be found. It has been reported in the news, that vultures and buzzards are increasing in number around the vicinity of Jerusalem. This is taken as a sign, by end time believers, that the Battle of Armageddon, at the end of the Tribulation, is getting closer.

**29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:**

Christ's coming will be the source of untold joy to believers; but it will bring unparalleled sorrow to his foes: "then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn." When Jesus comes, he will find the nations still

unsaved, and horror will be their eternal portion.

**30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

This reference to the events immediately after the tribulation. Jesus went to heaven on a cloud, and the angels told the disciples that were looking on, that He will come back the same way He went. Here is the fulfillment of that prophecy. He truly will come back in the clouds. Then He will not be as of one of us, but in Power and Great Glory. This is when we will see Him in all of His heavenly attire. Then He will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

**31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**

All the “elect” from heaven and earth are gathered and assembled before Christ. This is the culmination of world history, ushering in the millennial reign of Christ. What a contrast between the gathering together of the vultures to devour the rotting carcass and the gathering together of Christ's elect at the great trumpet-summons of his holy angels. Don't confuse this with the Rapture. This is just before the Millennial Kingdom is set up. Now Christ is gathering both Jew and Gentile.

**32 Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:**

When the final labor pains begin, Christ's return is near, “even at the door”. While it is clear in Scripture that Israel is symbolized at times by the fig tree, the usage here simply seems to be that as these events reach their fulfillment, the actual and ultimate return of Christ follows immediately.

**33 So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors.**

There is a change in our Lord's words here, which clearly indicates

that they refer to his last great coming to judgment. He added that, not only does no man know of that day and hour, but it is hidden from angels also. What the angels do not know has not been revealed to them. Even Christ, in his human nature, so voluntarily limited his own capacities that he knew not the time of his Second Advent. It is enough for us to know that he will come. Our great concern should be to be ready for his appearing whenever he shall return.

**34 Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.**

If you read through this verse too quickly you might get the generation Jesus is speaking of in the wrong place. It seems best to interpret Christ's words as a reference to the generation alive at the time when those final hard labor pains begin. If you refer back to the last verse this makes sense. This is speaking of the generation in whose lifetime all these signs occur. That generation will not pass away until "all these things be fulfilled." In other words, the previously listed signs will continue to multiply throughout the church age and reach their ultimate climax at the end of the Tribulation.

**35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.**

Heaven and earth shall indeed pass away at the end of the millennium but God's Word goes right on out into eternity.

**36 But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only.**

Here, we are given a comparison to the "days of Noah", which illustrates the condition of humanity at the time of Christ's return. The last generation, like the one of Noah's day, is pleasure-oriented and self-gratifying by "eating and drinking." The reference to "marrying and giving in marriage" probably refers to carrying on the normal course of life without heeding the impending judgment.

**37 But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**

Christ's coming, like the flood, will be sudden, unexpected, universal

in its effects, and terrible to the ungodly, although they will be utterly unconcerned. Those things which are lawful and right, under other circumstances, becomes evil when they take the place of preparation for the coming of the Son of God. Though written about Tribulation Jews there is a good lesson for us in this.

**38 For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark,**

It is lawful to eat and drink, provided it is in moderation, and not to excess; and to marry, and give in marriage, when the laws, and rules, are observed. Therefore this must be understood, either of their wholly giving themselves up to the pleasures of life, and lusts of the flesh, without any concern about the worship and glory of God, the welfare of their souls and their approaching danger, of which Noah had given them warning.

**39 And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.**

You know, if people could look up in the eastern sky and see Jesus in the clouds, they would believe. Jesus doesn't want us to believe in our minds in something we can see. Faith is what He wants from us, faith is believing something we cannot see.

**40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.**

**41 Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.**

The division between the godly and the ungodly, at the coming of Christ, will be very precise. Companions in labor will be separated for ever in "that day": The believing laborer shall be taken by the angels to join the hosts of the redeemed, while his unbelieving fellow-workman shall be left to the judgment that will be poured out upon him. "Two women shall be grinding at the mill;" they may be fellow-servants, or they may be mother and daughter or two sisters, but however closely they may have been attached to one another, if one is saved, and the other is still lost, "the one shall be taken, and the

other left." This separation will be eternal; there is no hint of any future reunion.

**42 Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.**

Be always on your guard, that you may not be taken unawares, and that you may be properly prepared to meet God. This will be an individual calling. You cannot hang on to someone and take them with you. Each individual will be judged, whether they will be with Jesus, or be tossed into a lake of fire..

**43 But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.**

Though this is Jewish there is a practical lesson for Christians here. Christians must watch for the Lord. We must not decide that He is delaying His coming and get lax in our worship. Some so called Christians today are falling away pretty rapidly. Some are still sitting on the pews of the church building, but just in form only. They are looking for entertainment in the church.

**44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.**

We do not know, we cannot even guess, when Jesus second coming will be. Though it isn't too much of a stretch to apply this to the Rapture, this is not a "Rapture" verse. We also do not know when that event will take place."In such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." This is in the the present tense again, "the Son of man cometh," he is coming; his own words are, "Behold, I am coming quickly." Christ's coming to the world will be like that of the thief, when it is not suspected or expected, and therefore when due preparations for his reception have not been made; but his true followers will not let "that day "overtake them "as a thief " .

**45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?**

This passage is in fact, "a parable," though it is not expressly called that. The design is to show that his disciples should act as if they were each moment expecting his return. This is illustrated by the conduct of a servant who did not expect his master to return so soon.

**46 Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.**

This portrays any servant of Christ, whatever his calling may be, doing the work that his Master has appointed him, just as he would wish to do it if he knew that his Lord was coming at that moment to examine it. Such a servant of Christ is blessed; he is a happy man to be found by his Lord doing His will.

**47 Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods.**

I believe this is also a picture of what we can expect, in Heaven, as regards our rewards. The more rewards the higher in the pecking order you will be.

**48 But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;**

The man being discussed is a servant and not a part of the Body of Christ. He is a tribulation Jew operating under Old Testament law.

**49 And shall begin to smite his fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;**

**50 The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of,**

If we were to apply this to Christian ministers, it means that they are to feed the flock of God, to "minister" to their needs, and to do it as they need it. He should be found doing and acting the faithful and wise part, ruling the household of God well; giving to all wholesome spiritual food, a proper portion of it, and that in the right time.

**51 And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

This guy is not a Christian. This is a tribulation Jew and this guy had it

and he lost it and went to hell. He did not endure to the end(that's verse thirteen of this chapter).

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWENTY FIVE**

**1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.**

The virgins picture the Jews of the Tribulation who have an element of works attached to their salvation. The oil represents the Holy Spirit who can leave a wicked servant,during the Tribulation, as He did in the Old Testament times (the Mosaic Covenant).

**2 And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.**

**3 They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:**

Why wouldn't the wise virgins lend some oil to the unwise virgins. Why not help someone in need? This is a picture of saved and lost. It is personal and must be done individually. Personal faith,personal holiness,repentance,personal service and personal preparedness can not be borrowed.

**4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.**

These virgins took extra oil in addition to what was in their lamps. Since oil,in scripture,is a type of the Holy Spirit this would indicate that these virgins were "extra" spiritual. In other words,they were closer to the Lord through study and prayer.

**5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.**

Remember that we are talking about types here. If we apply this to ourselves ,we,the Church,are asleep while Jesus tarries.

**6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.**

Jewish weddings were usually held at night and started as soon as the evening star was visible. In this case there had been some delay

so the bridegroom came at midnight. The friends of the bridegroom ran ahead of the party and announced his coming.

**7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.**

Those of us old enough to remember oil lamps know what trimming their lamps meant. You trim the burned part off the wick and top off the oil.

**8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.**

The foolish virgins are about to find out that they are too late. They waited too long. In the case of even true believers, the delay in Christ's coming causes disappointment, and weariness. His Church falls fast asleep, when she ought to be watching for her Lord.

**9 But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.**

They could buy oil for their lamps but you can not buy the Holy Spirit. No believer has more grace than he, or she, needs. "The wise" virgins had no oil to give away. They gave the best advice they could under the circumstances,

**10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.**

Jewish weddings followed a strict protocol. The Jewish man came for his bride and took her to his father's house. There the marriage was consummated and that was announced to the waiting guests. Then the marriage supper started and lasted for seven days. Why is this important? Because there is the Rapture and the marriage, and marriage supper of the Lamb. The Lord Jesus was, and is, a Jewish man. He took His humanity back to Heaven with Him.

**11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.**



**12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.**

Jesus told the 5 foolish virgins that He knew them not. Many claim to know Christ but are not obedient and do not live their lives for Christ. They remain in the world living in the flesh, claiming to know Christ, but in reality, their knowledge was head knowledge only and not heart knowledge.

**13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.**

The coming of the Savior is certain. The precise time when he will come is not certain. As the virgins should all have watched and been ready, so should we. They who are Christians should be ever watchful; and they who are not should lose no time to be ready, for in such an hour as they think not the Son of man shall come. We just need to live in anticipation of His coming. All ten of these virgins are symbolic of people who proclaim to be Christians in this world. What is wrong? He (Jesus), is coming back for a church that is without spot or wrinkle. Where is this bride without spot or wrinkle to be found? There is such irreverence in Church today that if Jesus was to visit, the first thing He would need to do, is clean house.

**14 For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods.**

There are similarities between the parables of the talents and the pounds. But, it is the contrasts that reveal doctrine. The money and its amount are different and the kingdoms are different. Things different are not the same. Think about how close some of the corrupt "bible" translations are to the King James version. Things different are not the same. The parable of the talents is clearly the case of servants in the Tribulation who must endure to the end.

**15 And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.**

The point of this parable is that a person must use what he has. All of us have something to use in His service. The Lord does not expect the same results from everyone but He does expect our best effort.

**16 Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents.**

He was the judge of the ability of each of his servants, and he made no mistake in his allotment of the talents to them. We may rest assured, if we are the Lord's servants, that he has bestowed upon us as many talents as we can rightly use, and quite as many as we shall be able to account for when he returns. The all-important matter for us is to be faithful to the trust committed to us. He has gone, and we, his servants are left behind to make the best use they can of his gifts until He returns.

**17 And likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two.**

For the ministers of the word, and that is all of us, whether good or bad, are described in this parable. The Gospel, and gifts to preach it is that treasure He has left with us. Just before He was ready to go, He gathered his disciples together, and renewed and enlarged their commission to preach the Gospel. Remember the "great commission? Go into the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

**18 But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money.**

He buried it; that is, he neglected the gift that was in him, he made no use of it, either to his own advantage, or to the good of others, and the interest of his Lord. They were not fearful. Fear is not of God. They had faith, and did what they had, probably, already been doing when their master was handling the money; and so, they increased what the master had entrusted them with. The servant, who received just one talent, had probably already shown his master that he was fearful and had no faith.

**19 After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them.**

Keep in mind that one day, we will all be standing in the same spot these servants were in.

**20 And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold, I have gained beside them five talents more.**

Have you and I, who have received five talents from our Lord, gained another five for Him? Have we double the grace we had at first? Twice the patience with our fellow believers?

**21 His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.**

The wise servants will inherit the millennial kingdom, (it's speaking of Jews), while the wicked servant will be tossed into the lake of fire.

**22 He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them.**

It has been a long time since our Master came and checked on us, close to 2,000 years. There is going to be a day of reckoning. A day will come when we and our works will be judged of Jesus.

**23 His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.**

Do be sure to notice that both the servants who showed increase were rewarded equally. The amount of increase did not seem to matter in this case.

**24 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed:**

**25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine.**

At the day of judgment, the unfaithful as well as the faithful have to give account of their stewardship. This man is full of excuses. He said

that his lord was a hard man, yet he confessed that the talent he brought back had been given to him by this master whom he represented as severe and unreasonable. He also admitted that it was his lord's money that he had hidden in the earth. He says, I have not lost it, nor given it away; I have brought it back, and there it is. He seemed to speak as though this was all that could be rightly expected of him. All the excuses of sinners are useless, and the effect is to cheat themselves out of heaven.

**26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:**

If the servant really believed the master to be the kind of man he portrayed, that was all the more reason for him not to be lazy. His accusation against the master, even if it had been true, did not justify his own laziness.

**27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.**

It would have been so simple to put the money in the bank and to make a little interest. That would have been the lazy way to do it but at least there would have been some increase. As it was he had nothing to show.

**28 Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.**

The servant who had gained five talents to his lord's five was allowed to keep them all as well as the unused talent of the bad servant. There is a great lesson for Christians in this parable. He, or she, who uses well that which is entrusted to him shall receive more from the Lord. He doesn't just give you a couple of talents to start with and that's it. He continues to add to you as you use what He has given.

**29 For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.**

Work never hurt anyone. When Jesus comes back, we must be found working, not sitting around wringing our hands in fear. Some are so afraid they will do something wrong, that they are not doing anything at all.

**30 And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

The parable of the talents proves that it isn't money, nor the lack of it, that send you to Heaven or Hell. It not how much you have that counts; it is what you do with what you have. Faith in Jesus Christ is what saves us. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. You can easily see what happens to those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. They are cast into hell, the place of eternal torment.

**31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:**

This judgment precedes Christ's millennial reign, and the subjects seem to be only those who are alive at His coming. This is sometimes referred to as the judgment of the nations, but His verdicts also seems to address individuals in the nations as well.

**32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:**

This is often misapplied to the last judgment which it is not. This is the judgment of the Gentile nations at the end of the Tribulation. The sheep are those who help the Jews while the goat nations are those who betray and mistreat the Jews. The sheep go into the millennial kingdom while the goat nations go into the lake of fire.

**33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.**

At this judgment, all Gentile nations , stand before Christ who then separates the sheep (the saved), from the goats (the lost). Note that these are living nations, whereas the Great White Throne judgment is one of the wicked dead whose bodies are resurrected to face the final judgment of the lost. Finally, we know from the following verses that it

is individuals from among the nations who are selected, and not whole nations.

**34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:**

These are verses you can take from Matthew and apply to our Christian walk. They are reaffirmed in the Pauline epistles. Ephesians 1:4-5 **"For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love" "Having predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will"**

**Romans 8:29 "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren."**

So the good deeds commended in verses 35-36, are the fruit, not the cause of their salvation.

**35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:**

He considers favors shown to his people as shown to himself, and will reward them accordingly. They show attachment to him, and love for his cause.

**36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.**

Among the Jews they were called "naked" who were clad in poor clothing, or who had on only the "tunic" or inner garment, without any outer garment. These would have been the very poor. **"I was in prison, and ye came unto me"** is a statement which has applied to many saints through the years. Think of the Apostle Paul, who had this respect shown him by many of the people of God. You may remember Epaphroditus, who brought him a gift from the Philippians, when he was in prison. You can be sure this will be remembered another day.

**37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink?**

Keep in mind that these things apply to Jews in the Tribulation but we can certainly apply these principals to our lives.

**38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee?**

When we do anything to help someone else, Jesus counts it as we doing these things for Him. We cannot directly do these things for Him, but everything, regardless of how small it is, that we do for our fellowman is counted as being done for Jesus. God really smiles on those who help women and children who cannot help themselves. James 1:27 put it this way; **Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, [and] to keep himself unspotted from the world.**

Also while we are at this verse don't miss the fact that Jesus is called God here. See that phrase **"God and the Father"**?

**39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?**

**40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.**

Some would apply this to national Israel, others to needy people in general. Here Christ is specifically commending "those on His right" , for the way they received His emissaries.

We read love your neighbor as yourself. This is not a principle that the world understands. But besides getting a reward stored up in heaven for the good things we do, doing good makes us feel good about ourselves.

**41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:**

If anyone ever tells you that Hell is temporary, or that a just God would not really send anyone to Hell, point them to this verse.

**42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:**

**43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.**

It is easy to tell, from these verses, that It is pleasing to God when we do things for others. Jesus says, in another place; If you love me keep my commandments. This is one of those commandments, and while it is not directed specifically to the church, we can still use it as one of the ways we can please our Savior.

**44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?**

**45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me.**

This is a good place to point out that sins of omission are still sins and just as wicked. Rejecting the Lord Jesus is a sin of omission that will send a person to Hell.

**46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.**

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## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWENTY SIX**

**1 And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,**

Like the passover lamb, in Egypt, whose blood covered the doorpost and lintel, and protected the Israelites, Now it would be the blood of Jesus that would protect all believers going forward.

**2 Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.**



Jesus has been telling His disciples ,all along,that He would be crucified but they did not understand nor believe Him. I think this is the point where they finally get it.

**3 Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,**

Two years after the crucifixion of Jesus,Caiaphas committed suicide. Don't you know that Caiaphas has a special place in the lowest,and hottest,part of Hell.

**4 And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him.**

At the very time that Jesus was telling the disciples about His coming crucifixion, the chief priests, scribes and elders were plotting trying to capture Jesus and kill Him. The chief priest was really a "go between" for the Romans who had given him this job. They planned to get Jesus as quietly as possible and do away with Him the same way, so they would not start a fight with His followers.

**5 But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.**

Many of Jesus' supporters from Galilee would be in Jerusalem during this time, the leaders did not want to upset the crowd, whose emotions were already high. The Jewish leaders, who had been eager to kill Him for so long, decided to postpone their plot until a more politically opportune time,but they could not; God's chosen time had come.

**6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,**

This is probably one of the lepers that Jesus had healed earlier. The fact that Simon was cured is implied by the fact that the meeting was in his house. This would not have been possible,under Jewish law,had he not been free of the disease.

**7 There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.**

In Mark's gospel he sets the value at "over three hundred denarii, which is nearly a year's wages. Even the expensive flask was broken (Mark 14:3), making the act that much more costly.

The Gospel of John tells us this woman was Mary, sister of Martha and Lazarus. Martha and Mary were evidently serving the meal for Simon the leper. Both Matthew and Mark mention that she anointed his head and John adds that she anointed His feet and wiped them with her hair. A similar act of worship is related in Luke 7:36-38, but the differences in timing, location and other details make it clear that the two occasions were different. Mary loved Jesus, and this was no sacrifice to her. Mary, on several occasions, called Him Master.

**8 But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?**

The Gospel of John says Judas was the one who voiced the complaint, and that he did it for hypocritical reasons. Evidently the other disciples were quick to voice sympathy with Judas' protest.

**9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.**

Judas was the one that carried the purse and this perfume was worth about 300 days' wages. Mary was apparently a very wealthy woman who could well afford this. It was hers, and no one else really should have a say in what she was to do with it. This was her Lord and nothing was too good for Him.

**10 When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.**

The pouring ointment upon the head of Christ was a token of the highest respect. Where there is true love in the heart to Jesus Christ, nothing will be thought too good to bestow upon him.

**11 For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.**

Jesus revealed here that there is a higher priority than any other earthly ministry, and that is worship rendered to Him. This would be an

utter blasphemy for anyone less than God, so yet again He was affirming His deity

**12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.**

This does not necessarily mean that Mary was consciously aware of the significance of her act. It is doubtful that she knew of His approaching death, or at least how close it was. But this was an act of pure worship, her heart was moved by God to perform a sacrificial and symbolic act. It seems as though the disciples still did not understand what was about to take place, even though Jesus had told them several times. Jesus took up for Mary and told the disciples to leave her alone.

**13 Verily I say unto you, Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.**

Which gospel? This is speaking specifically of the gospel of the kingdom here, but even in our Gospel of Grace age she is still mentioned. I just read about her 2000 years later and you heard me read about her.

**14 Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,**

Judas Iscariot has to be one of the most interesting characters in the Bible. Here he seems to be an ordinary person, but later is said to be a devil. Further, when he commits suicide, he is said to go to his own place. That place is not Hell, but the bottomless pit where he is said to be king. He surfaces again during the Tribulation.

**15 And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.**

Thirty pieces of silver was the price of a slave at that time. After he had made that wicked bargain, Judas had time to repent, and to revoke it.

**16 And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.**

**17 Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto him, Where wilt thou that we prepare for thee to eat the passover?**

The Feast of Unleavened Bread followed immediately after Passover and the entire time was often referred to either as "Passover", or as the Feast of Unleavened Bread. Jesus said over and over that He came not to do away with the law, but to fulfill it. He also observed the Passover. The room where the Passover was to be observed had to be prepared ahead. To remove the leaven (sin).

**18 And he said, Go into the city to such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples.**

Jesus sends His disciples to find the man in whose home they will eat the passover meal. Apparently Jesus has made some arrangements with the man ahead of time.

**19 And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they made ready the passover.**

It says, "they made ready the Passover". They went and bought a lamb; they carried it to the temple to be slain in the court, where it was presented as a Passover lamb for such a number of persons. They had it cut up, the fat taken out, and burnt on the altar, and its blood sprinkled on the foot of it.

Then they brought it to the house where they were to eat it; here they roasted it, and provided bread, and wine, and bitter herbs, and a sauce, into which the herbs were dipped. In short, everything that was necessary was made ready.

**20 Now when the even was come, he sat down with the twelve.**

Our Lord remained in seclusion until the evening, and then went to the appointed place, and reclined at the table, with the twelve. These people did not sit at a table as we do but reclined on couches placed around a table. As they ate, he said, "Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me." Remember that, at first, the Passover meal was eaten standing, with their staff in their hand, to show the need to get quickly away from Egypt. By this passover the custom had changed.

**21 And as they did eat, he said, Verily I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me.**

This meal of bread, wine, and bitter herbs was to be Jesus' last meal with the disciples before His crucifixion. Here again, Jesus was speaking prophetically when He said that there was one of His own who would betray Him. Remember now, Jesus knew exactly what would befall Him in Jerusalem, but He came anyhow. He knew what His mission was, and He is willing to perform it.

**22 And they were exceeding sorrowful, and began every one of them to say unto him, Lord, is it I?**

Such a revelation was enough to produce the deepest emotions of sorrow and sadness among the apostles. It is a beautiful trait in the character of the disciples that they did not suspect one another, but every one of them inquired, "Lord, is it I?" No one said, "Lord, is it Judas?"

**23 And he answered and said, He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.**

During the Passover feast the head of the Jewish household took bread in his hand and said, "This is the bread of affliction which our fathers ate in the land of Egypt," meaning, of course, that the one represented the other.

By His words the Lord changed the whole significance and emphasis of the feast from looking back to the redemption from Egypt to faith in the redemption from sin accomplished by His death. The bread and wine are only outward symbols of our Lord's death. Nothing in the Bible indicates that these were to be viewed as a means of grace, or sacraments, or that they were physically necessary for one's salvation.

**24 The Son of man goeth as it is written of him: but woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed! it had been good for that man if he had not been born.**

The doom of Judas is worse than non-existence. To have been in the company of Christ as he had been, and then to deliver him into the

hands of his enemies, sealed the traitor's eternal destiny. As if anyone needed proof that Judas was lost, this is it.

**25 Then Judas, which betrayed him, answered and said, Master, is it I? He said unto him, Thou hast said.**

Judas appears to have been the last of the twelve to ask the question, "Is it I?" Notice also that Judas did not address Christ as "Lord", as the other disciples had done; but called him Rabbi, "Master". Probably the Lord's reply reached his ear alone, and if he had not been a hopeless reprobate, he might still have repented. He had sold himself to Satan before he sold his Lord.

**26 And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body.**

Here Jesus is introducing the blood atonement for sin. The fruit of the vine is grape juice, a picture of the blood of Christ. The unleavened bread represents Christ's body.

**27 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;**

Three cups were passed around by the Jewish householder during the Passover meal; the third, which is probably the one referred to here, being known as "the cup of blessing." This cup, Luke says, he took "after supper" - that is, after they had finished the ordinary celebration of "eating" the Passover. The "bread" was taken "while" they were eating, the cup after they had finished eating.

**28 For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.**

Here is a clear statement that the death of Jesus was necessary to enable God to forgive sins. It, in fact, made it right or morally justifiable for Him to do so.

We should never take the communion cup lightly. We must take it reverently with a pure heart, remembering His great sacrifice.

**29 But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom.**

Jesus is referring to the marriage supper in Heaven. Fruit of the vine can refer to either alcoholic wine or grape juice. Notice that Jesus calls it “new wine” which is grape juice.

**30 And when they had sung an hymn, they went out into the mount of Olives.**

The Mount of Olives was one of Jesus favorite places. The Garden of Gethsemane was there. This is also where Jesus will return to Earth one day. The scripture says the Mount will split in two when His foot touches it.

**31 Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad.**

Judas had already gone to do his dirty work. Jesus was speaking to the remaining eleven. He told them that for a time they too, would lose their faith and some would sin. Jesus is the Shepherd. The Shepherd leads His sheep. When the Shepherd is not there to lead them, the sheep scatter. Fear would overcome the disciples and cause them to flee as we see later, in verse 56.

**32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee.**

He was, of course seen by the apostles before He went into Galilee. Galilee is specifically mentioned because this is where He was seen by over five hundred of the brethren. Jesus continued to promise that He would rise again. The disciples seemed to just ignore this, or else they did not believe Him. Finally, this is the Lord getting in a little jab at Peter. He knows Peter will go back to fishing after his denial and that fishing will be done in Galilee.

**33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.**

It is easy to talk bravely when you aren't facing anything too bad. Peter was brave at this point, because Jesus had not yet been taken

by the authorities. We will see in the face of death, and a cruel death at that, if he would still feel as brave. Sometimes we hear Christians say things like; "I am ready to go any time God wants to call me home". When you are actually faced with death you may feel differently.

**34 Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.**

See how specific this is. Jesus wanted there to be no mistake when Peter heard that rooster crow.

**35 Peter said unto him, Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said all the disciples.**

There are several things to notice about this verse. First Peter was still bragging. The verse also says ,all the apostles said the same thing. Now,before we get too rough on Peter,consider that most of us in this room would probably do the same. Christians through the ages have proved that. Some few bravely die a martyr's death but most compromise.

**36 Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder.**

Gethsemane was a lush garden east of the city on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. Jesus often went there for peace and quiet. He took the same inner circle as at the Transfiguration,Peter, James and John,as He went further into the garden.

**37 And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy.**

**38 Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.**

Notice that when prayer really gets serious, it is usually one alone with God. Alone is when you can pour out your real feelings to God.



**39 And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.**

This is real prayer that comes from a burdened heart. Jesus did not dread the pain and death He would suffer. He was in mental agony about the wrath and rejection of God when the sins of the world were placed on Him. God's wrath on sin temporarily broke the fellowship between the Father and the Son.

**40 And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour?**

It may seem remarkable that in such circumstances, with a suffering, pleading Redeemer near and surrounded by danger from Satan., they should have fallen asleep. This is probably a good picture of how prayer should be. That is with one praying and several others backing that one up in prayer.

**41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.**

The humanity of Jesus needed their caring and they let Him down. Peter had just bragged that he never would. These three disciples' human weakness was showing. This statement comes to have doctrinal significance later, in the Pauline epistles, where Paul discusses the two natures of man.

**42 He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done.**

He repeated the command, "Watch" for that was the special duty of the hour; and he added, "and pray," for prayer would help them to watch, and watching would aid them in praying. Watching and praying were commanded for a special purpose: "that ye enter not into temptation." He knew what temptations were coming to them in the near future. The cup of suffering, spoken of here, are the sins of the world being placed on Jesus. While no one likes physical pain, that

can be endured and will eventually end. What Jesus dreaded most was the wrath of God and the mental anguish of the sins of mankind being placed on Him.

**43 And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.**

No sooner was he gone but they fell asleep again, and he found them asleep a second time. Mark adds, "neither wist they what to answer him". That is Mark 14:40 if you are taking notes.

**44 And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words.**

**45 Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.**

Jesus was not being sarcastic when he said, "Sleep on now, and take your rest." He allowed them to take a little sleep while he sat by, and watched. This did not last long since, through the trees he could see the approaching torches, and hear the approaching temple guards, and other bottom feeders approaching. He wakened his disciples by saying, "Rise, let us be going:" adding words that must have struck terror to their hearts: "Behold, he is at hand that doth betray me".

**46 Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me.**

This was not to run away from the enemy, but to go and meet him. It seems that from this point going forward, Jesus was free from those agonies and dreadful apprehensions of things, he suffered in the garden. Likewise, this signifies his willingness to be apprehended, and to suffer, and die.

The phrase, "He is at hand that doth betray me", shows his omniscience. He not only knew, as he did from the beginning, who should betray him; but he knew when he would do it; and he knew where the betrayer was. He does not mention Judas by name; nor did he ever, when he spoke of him as the betrayer.

**47 And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people.**

These are mainly the temple guards but there are probably some Roman soldiers and rif-raff in the mob. It is interesting that ,in Luke,the disciples asked Jesus if they should fight,indicating that they could fight if necessary. Jesus said no,the time has come.

**48 Now he that betrayed him gave them a sign, saying, Whomsoever I shall kiss, that same is he: hold him fast.**

It is a fact that we do not read, in the New Testament, that any one of the twelve, except Judas ever kissed Jesus. This sign of Judas was typical of the way in which Jesus is generally betrayed!. When men intend to undermine the inspiration of the Scriptures, how do they begin their books? Always with a declaration that they wish to promote the truth of Christ and make it easier to understand.

**49 And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, master; and kissed him.**

There is that title Master again. Master,in this context,simply means teacher. As far as we can see from the scriptures Judas never addressed Jesus as Lord. One day he will.

**50 And Jesus said unto him, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Then came they, and laid hands on Jesus and took him.**

Jesus spake not as most of us might have done under such circumstances. His first word, after receiving the traitor's kiss, was, "Friend!" He did not denounce him as the lowest of mankind, but quietly called him friend. In these circumstances,Jesus may have even felt some pity for Judas since He has perfect knowledge of what awaits Judas in the future.

**51 And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear.**

We know,from the other gospels, that this was Peter and the one whose ear was cut off was Malchus. This was Jesus last miracle

before the crucifixion. So, Peter was armed. He did not run out and buy that sword and he did not borrow it from one of the soldiers.

**52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.**

**53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?**

One legion was 6000 angels. This would have been 72,000 angels and since we know, from Isaiah 37:36, that one angel can kill 185,000 soldiers, then this number could have easily wiped out mankind. I sometimes wonder why God keeps on trying with man.

**54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?**

Jesus is saying that even though I could do this, I can not, or the scriptures will not be fulfilled and all of mankind will die in their sin. What is going to happen must be done.

**55 In that same hour said Jesus to the multitudes, Are ye come out as against a thief with swords and staves for to take me? I sat daily with you teaching in the temple, and ye laid no hold on me.**

This was the manner in which they would have sought to take a common criminal when they could easily have arrested Him in the temple where He taught daily.

**56 But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled.**

Jesus was not surprised that all the disciples left him, and fled. He had foretold that they would do so. He knew them better than they knew themselves. All ran for their lives. Not even the loving John nor the boastful Peter stood the test that night. Human nature is poor stuff, even at it's best.

**57 And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled.**

The conspiracy was well planned, so that “the scribes and the elders”, that is, the Sanhedrin, were already “gathered” at Caiaphas’ house and ready to try Jesus. The time was sometime between midnight and the first rooster’s crowing. Such a hearing was illegal on several counts. Criminal trials were not to be held at night; and trials in capital cases could only be held at the temple and only in public. For political reasons, Caiaphas had asked for the death of Jesus. These scribes and Pharisees wanted His death, as well. You have to wonder how they feel today. It is always good to keep in mind that everyone is still alive somewhere.

**58 But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest's palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end.**

The instigators of this crime were conservative, fundamental religious priests. There was a progression to Peter's backsliding. He boasted, then slept instead of praying. He relied on the flesh, then left Jesus and ran off. He followed from afar then kept company with the Lord's enemies. He became discouraged and gave up hope. He was afraid of men. Finally, he lied, then he cursed.

**59 Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death;**

The Sanhedrin was the Supreme Court of Israel, consisting of 71 members, presided over by the High-Priest. They met daily in the temple to hold court, except on the Sabbath and other holy days. Technically, they did not have the power to administer capital punishment. In this case they intended to use the Romans to do the dirty job.

**60 But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses,**

Without at least two witnesses it was impossible to give even the appearance of proof. The Jews likely pretended to conform to the law as to the number of witnesses required to prove one guilty of a crime. Even though many were willing to perjure themselves, the Sanhedrin could not find a charge that had enough credibility to indict Jesus.

Evidently the “false witnesses” could not even agree between themselves.

**61 And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.**

These chief priests and elders were really not interested in the truth. They just wanted to get rid of Jesus. They were even willing to hire false witnesses to produce enough false evidence to get the Romans to pronounce sentence on Him. The Bible itself, says by two witnesses a thing can be established. They did not understand that the temple that Jesus had spoken of was His body.

**62 And the high priest arose, and said unto him, Answerest thou nothing? what is it which these witness against thee?**

What was the use of answering? There really was nothing to answer except deliberate lies. Jesus already knew that the council was determined to put him to death. Then there was another prophecy to be fulfilled: **"He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth."**That's Isa. 53:7 if you are taking notes.

**63 But Jesus held his peace, And the high priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God.**

**64 Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.**

It was now time for Christ to speak. First he answered the high priest's question and declared that he was "The Christ the Son of God." There was no longer any reason for concealing that fact. Then he uttered a prophecy that must have startled the onlookers. He stood there bound, apparently alone and helpless before his powerful enemies, who expected soon to put him to death; yet the Lord Jesus Christ declared that they should be witnesses of his future glory, and see him "sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." His hearers rightly understood him to claim to be divine.

**65 Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy.**

Can't you just picture this idiot tearing his clothes apart as he pretended to be offended by what Jesus had just claimed.

**66 What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death.**

**67 Then did they spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms of their hands,**

**68 Saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who is he that smote thee?**

Sarcasm. Here they stand spitting and striking the one who spoke the universe into existence. How will these people feel when thy stand before Him at the Great White Throne Judgment.

**69 Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee.**

Now the scene switches to what was not Peter's finest hour.

**70 But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest.**

This is the first denial. In the palace courtyard, the servants and officers had lighted a fire to warm themselves while they waited to see what would be done with Jesus. Peter joined the company, and a young woman, who had let him in at John's request, said to him, "Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee." But he denied Him before them all. Whatever the consequences of confessing Christ might have been to Peter, they could not have been as bad as this denial was. Consider this; there may not have been any consequences. since it is now apparent that John has publicly sided with Jesus.

**71 And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth.**

This is the second denial. His second denial differed from the first, in that he added an oath to the lie, and declared concerning Christ, "I do not know the man."

**72 And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man.**

**73 And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee.**

This is the third denial and this time Peter adds cursing.

**74 Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew.**

God's timing is always perfect. It does say immediately, so as the words left Peter's mouth the rooster began crowing

**75 And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly.**

Peter and Judas have very different experiences. Both sinned greatly. Peter repented and confessed to God. He then went on to lead a victorious Christian life. Judas confessed to a priest, then went and committed suicide.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWENTY SEVEN**

**1 When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:**

Pontius Pilate was the Roman procurator of Judea from 26 to 37 A.D. His usual place of residence was Caesarea, but he was in Jerusalem during the feast to deal with any insurrection or trouble. The Sanhedrin waited until daybreak to render their official verdict, possibly a token nod to the rule against criminal trials at night.

**2 And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.**



Pilate was a Gentile and this fulfills one more prophecy. Jesus had two trials, one Jewish and religious, the other Roman and secular. Rome reserved the right of execution in capital cases, so Jesus had to be handed over to the Roman authorities for execution of the death sentence. They had already decided to kill Jesus. This is not just one person, but the general council. This was Passover and Jesus was the Passover Lamb, so He must be killed, on this day, to fulfill the Scriptures.

**3 Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,**

This is one of those cases where repentance comes too late. Perhaps Judas expected that Jesus would miraculously deliver himself from his captors; and when he saw that he was condemned, remorse seized him, and he carried the silver back to his fellow criminals. Judas had been with our Lord in public and in private; and if he could have found a flaw in Christ's character, this would have been the time to mention it; but even the traitor, in his dying speech, declared that Jesus was innocent. The chief priests and elders had no more pity for Judas than they had for Jesus.

**4 Saying, I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. And they said, What is that to us? see thou to that.**

**5 And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple, and departed, and went and hanged himself.**

Peter says, in giving an account of the death of Jesus in Acts 1:18, that Judas, "falling headlong, burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out." Some try to see a difficulty in reconciling these two accounts, but there is really no necessary difference. Both accounts are true. Matthew records the method Judas used and Peter speaks of the result. Judas may have been in a hurry and chose a weak rope or, perhaps he hung there until really ripe, and then fell. We read in the Bible, in Galatians 3:13, "**Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is**

**written, Cursed [is] every one that hangeth on a tree."** Here, we see Judas, who hangeth on a tree.

**6 And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood.**

This is irony at it's finest. These priests could supply the money to betray Jesus, and that probably came from the treasury, but they could not accept it back into the treasury since it was now blood money condemned by the Torah. It is no wonder that Jesus condemned them as **"whited sepulchers full of dead men's bones"**.

**7 And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in.**

In Acts 1:18 it is said of Judas that "he purchased a field with the reward of his iniquity." The passage in the Acts simply means that he furnished the means of purchasing the field. It does not mean that Judas actually made the contract and paid down the money to buy a field to bury strangers in.

**8 Wherefore that field was called, The field of blood, unto this day.**

As, long as the Jewish government continued, it would be said, "This is the field that was bought from the potter with the money which Judas got from the high priests for betraying his Master. It was the price of the blood of an innocent man.

**9 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value;**

King James version critics imagine a contradiction here where there is none. It was written by Zechariah and spoken by Jeremiah. As my favorite bible commentator says: "things that are different are not the same". See Zech.7:7

**10 And gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.**

The fate of Judas should be a solemn warning to all professing Christians, and especially to all ministers. He was one of the twelve apostles, yet he was the son of perdition, and in the end he went to his own place. Each of us has his own place, heaven or hell;

**11 And Jesus stood before the governor: and the governor asked him, saying, Art thou the King of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest.**

Be sure to notice the way Pilate frames the question. He asks Jesus if He is king of the Jews but does not ask if He is king of Israel. That would have been the more politically threatening title. Jesus answer, "**thou sayest**" implies yes.

**12 And when he was accused of the chief priests and elders, he answered nothing.**

Jesus did not look much like a king as he stood before Pilate. Even in his humiliation there must have been so much of majesty that even the governor was prompted to ask, "art thou the King of the Jews?" There was no longer any reason why the King should conceal his true position, so he answered, "Thou sayest, which was equivalent to saying yes, I am the King of the Jews. The Jews rejected their King: The bible says, "**He came unto his own, and his own received him not.**" Yet was he their King although they refused to bow before Him.

**13 Then said Pilate unto him, Hearest thou not how many things they witness against thee?**

He might have cleared himself of every accusation that was brought against him, but that would have left the load of guilt on us, whose place he came to take; so he answered never a word.

**14 And he answered him to never a word; insomuch that the governor marvelled greatly.**

Notice that Jesus did not answer a single accusation from the Jews, and said very little to Pilate.

**15 Now at that feast the governor was wont to release unto the people a prisoner, whom they would.**

Pilate was really anxious to deliver Christ from his enemies; but, like most wicked men, he was a coward. He knew that for envy they had delivered him; and he may have hoped that Jesus was so popular among the people that an appeal to the masses would result in a verdict in Christ's favor, especially as the choice of one to be released lay between "the King of the Jews" and a notoriously wicked man, Barabbas. Surely they would ask for their King to be set at liberty!

**16 And they had then a notable prisoner, called Barabbas.**

The name Barabbas means "fathers son", (small f), and Jesus is the Fathers Son. There was a movie, years ago, where Barabbas was the main character, and was later saved. There is no such thing in scripture.

**17 Therefore when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ?**

Pilate offered that choice on purpose, believing they would choose Christ over such a scandalous person as Barabbas. He thought they would be ashamed to call for Barabbas release. His view was not to reproach Christ, by joining him with so wicked a man, but in order to save him. Pilate's intentions were good but he failed. He failed for the Lord Jesus and he failed for himself.

**18 For he knew that for envy they had delivered him.**

The love of money may be the root of all evil but envy is a close second. It is amazing how many times envy results in murder.

**19 When he was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him.**

Here was an unusual witness to the innocence of Christ. Whether the dream of Pilate's wife was a divine revelation of Christ's glory or not, we cannot tell; but the message sent by her to the governor must have made him even more anxious than before to release Jesus.

**20 But the chief priests and elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask Barabbas, and destroy Jesus.**

The people were greatly under the influence of the priests. Galileans among the citizens of Jerusalem were held in contempt. The priests turned the claims of Jesus into ridicule. So this easily excited multitude condemned Jesus where shortly before they had been shouting Hosanna.

**21 The governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas.**

What a fickle crowd! A little before they all hailed him as the Son of David, and acknowledged him as a gift from God; now they prefer a murderer to him! They did this at the instigation of the chief priests. We see here how dangerous wicked leaders are in the Church .

**22 Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified.**

The choice of the multitude is now made. Barabbas is preferred above Jesus. The Lord of glory had been sold by Judas for the price of a slave; and now a robber, and a murderer, is a greater favorite with the people than the Prince of life. Were there none out of all that multitude whose sick he had healed, whose hunger he had satisfied, who would remember him in that day, and ask that he might be spared? As far as we can tell from scripture, there were none in the crowd sympathizing with the Savior. They all said, "Let him be crucified."

**23 And the governor said, Why, what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified.**

Pilate is still trying to get Him released. A blind, unreasoning hate had taken possession of the people. They gave no answer to Pilate's question but only repeated the brutal demand, "Let him be crucified."

**24 When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it.**

Pilate knew Christ was innocent, he should have prevented his death. He had the armed force at his command, and should have dispersed this infamous mob. If he had been charged with freeing a seditious

person, he could have easily cleared himself, had the matter been brought before the emperor. He therefore, was inexcusable.

**25 Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.**

You don't have to be much of a student of history to see this in effect since the trial of Jesus. No people have ever been more persecuted. Remember Stalin and Hitler who have both killed millions. Then, there is the coming antichrist who will kill millions more. It is also very possible that nations like Iran will rise up and kill millions more even before the Antichrist comes to power. **“His blood be on us, and our children”**. Yes indeed; be careful what you wish for.

**26 Then released he Barabbas unto them: and when he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.**

The Roman scourging was one of the most terrible punishments to which anyone could be subjected, yet even this our Lord endured for our sakes. These were the stripes by which we are healed. Yet this scourging was just the beginning of the awful end: When he had scourged Jesus, he delivered him to be crucified.

**27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the common hall, and gathered unto him the whole band of soldiers.**

Ridicule is very painful to bear. In our Savior's case, there was great cruelty mixed with mockery. These Roman soldiers were men to whom bloodshed was amusement; and now that there was given up into their hands one who was charged with making himself a king, we can conceive what a subject for jest Jesus was in their hands. They sought to invent all manner of scorn, to pour on his head. He must wear the clothing of royalty, so they stripped him, and put on him some old soldier's scarlet or purple coat. The king must be crowned: when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it on his head. He must have a scepter: a reed in his right hand. Homage must be paid to him: and they bowed the knee before him. One future day they will, bow the knee again but this time it will be real.

**28 And they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe.**

**29 And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!**

These thorns were not “rosebush” thorns. They were thorns over three inches long.

**30 And they spit upon him, and took the reed, and smote him on the head.**

The prophecy in Isaiah 50:6 says, **“They spit upon him”**: **“I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting”**. A reed long enough to make a mock scepter would be firm enough to be extremely painful. John 19:3 says they hit Him with their fists as well.

**31 And after that they had mocked him, they took the robe off from him, and put his own raiment on him, and led him away to crucify him.**

There was a reason that Jesus should have His own clothing on him. This was so that nobody could say that another person had been substituted for the Savior. As they led him away, robed in that well-known seamless garment, woven from the top throughout, everyone who looked on him would say, “It is the Nazarene going forth to execution; we recognize his dress as well as his person.”

**32 And as they came out, they found a man of Cyrene, Simon by name: him they compelled to bear his cross.**

Perhaps they were afraid that Christ would die from exhaustion; so they compelled Simon to bear his cross. Cyrene was associated with Africa, so this means that Simon was a black man. This was not a voluntary act of Simon, but rather this job was put on him. There was no evidence that he was forced. Evidently the scourging had so weakened Jesus that He was unable to carry the cross. This is another picture of His humanity, beset with all human weaknesses except sin

**33 And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,**

Golgotha” may have been a skull-shaped hill, or it may have been so named because as a place of crucifixion, its accumulated skulls. None of the gospels mention a hill. That is something we seem to have added.

**34 They gave him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink.**

Most commentators say that a sedative was often given to the condemned, to take away something of the agony of crucifixion, but our Lord came to suffer, and he would not take anything that would at all impair his faculties. He did not forbid his fellow-sufferers drinking the vinegar mingled with gall. Mark says wine mingled with myrrh. That's Mk 15:23 if you are taking notes. but he would not drink it Jesus did not refuse this because of its bitterness, but to keep His mind clear.

**35 And they crucified him, and parted his garments, casting lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.**

This is a verse ,incorrectly used, to condemn gambling. While gambling certainly has plenty to condemn it,this verse is not about gambling. Casting lots was simply a way,in bible times,of deciding on an issue. Gambling requires that you risk something in order to gain something. Here ,nothing was risked by the participants unless you care to toss their immortal souls into the mix. This is the last mention,in scripture,of the casting of lots.

**36 And sitting down they watched him there;**

**37 And set up over his head his accusation written,This Is Jesus The King Of The Jews.**

The site of the crucifixion was beside a major roadway. Large signs were placed on a nearby cliff face telling what the crimes of the crucified were. This was done as a deterrent to crime. In addition there was a sign placed on the cross of Jesus. This 'king of the Jews'



sign was written in the three main languages of the people. This sign seems to have been the result of Pilate taking a stab at the Sanhedrin.

**38 Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left.**

Mere thieves were not usually crucified. These were probably much worse than ordinary robbers.

We will see that these two thieves, the one on the left and the one on the right, were very different. The difference was not in the sin they committed, but the fact that the one on the right repented and the one on the left did not. We read, in Luke 23:43, that Jesus promised the one on the right that He would be with Him in Paradise.

**39 And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads,**

It seems, the crosses were placed by the roadside. The people that came from Jerusalem, to see the sight, reviled him, or "blasphemed him". Wagging their heads: in derision and insult.

**40 And saying, Thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the Son of God, come down from the cross.**

They had missed His point. He was speaking of the temple of His body . He would not "come down from the cross," but it was not because He was powerless to do so. The proof that He was the Son of God came "in three days" when He rose from the grave, His body, rebuilt. These people were so blinded that they would not have believed, even if He suddenly were to get down from the cross.

**41 Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said,**

**42 He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him.**

Be sure to notice here that the priests and elders had followed Jesus to the cross to further insult him, and to see that the execution was strictly performed. Instead of rebuking and restraining the populace , they themselves stood mocking him. This was the whole Sanhedrin of the nation. It may seem strange to us humans that Jesus did not

perform some miracle to show that He was the Messiah, and come down from the cross. But the time had come for him to make an atonement. He had already given sufficient proof that he was the Christ. He had foretold his death, and the time had come; and now, amid revileings, and curses, and the sarcasms of an angry and apparently triumphant priesthood, he chose to die for the sins of the world.

**43 He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.**

That is, he pretended to be high in God's favor and esteem, and to have great faith and confidence in him. Let him deliver him now; directly, from the cross, and the death of it "If he will have him". In Psalm 22:8 these very words are prophesied to be spoken.

**44 The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth.**

Luke says in chapter 23 vs 39), that one of them did it, and that the other reproved him and was penitent. The account in Luke may, however, easily be reconciled with that in Matthew by supposing that "at first both" of them reviled the Savior, and that it is of this fact that Matthew speaks.

Afterward one of them relented and became penitent perhaps from witnessing the patient sufferings of Christ. It is of this one particularly that Luke speaks. What none of these people realized was that Jesus was completely in control of the situation, even though He was hanging on the cross. No one took His life from Him, He gave it willingly. Just as He did not have to prove anything to Satan, when Satan tempted Him for forty days and nights, He did not have to prove anything to these people either. They already had their chance to believe, and they rejected it. Jesus never will show us something physical so that we will believe. We must believe what we cannot see, from the heart.

**45 Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour.**

The crucifixion began at 9:00 A.M. on Wednesday morning, a high Sabbath. Jesus hung on the cross for six hours, which are symbolic of the six 1,000 year days that will be worked and then a 1,000 year day (millennium), of rest of the believers. Jesus was fulfilling every detail here. In six hours, His work was completed. This darkness from twelve to three is three hours that were symbolic of the three days in the earth. The darkness symbolized that the Light (Jesus), had gone out for a while.

**46 And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?**

This is the point where all the sins have been placed on the Lord Jesus and God the Father has turned away. This is the thing Jesus dreaded more than the physical pain He endured. God's wrath was poured upon His Son during this time of darkness. Here we have the high cost to Christ of His atonement for our sins, who was accursed of God as our sin-bearer.

**47 Some of them that stood there, when they heard that, said, This man calleth for Elias.**

They knew better but were still mocking Jesus as He died.

**48 And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink.**

A person in such agony as Jesus was suffering might have yielded up His spirit then but it was necessary for him to say, "I thirst," in order that another Scripture might be fulfilled. One of the soldiers, ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, from the vessel probably brought by the soldiers for their own use, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink. Why vinegar you might ask. Vinegar is useful against such things as cramps which, no doubt, Jesus was experiencing along with all the other suffering. Many of us use it today. Civil war soldiers received a small amount along with their daily food ration. Our professional football players have it available, on the sidelines, in the form of pickle juice. So, offering vinegar was not more punishment but, rather, an act of compassion.

**49 The rest said, Let be, let us see whether Elias will come to save him.**

The others, said to him that offered the sponge, let him alone, keep at a distance from him, give him nothing to drink. "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save him". This suggests that if Elijah came to save him, they would believe he was the Messiah.

**50 Jesus, when he had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the ghost.**

Christ's strength was not exhausted because his last words were uttered with a loud voice."It is finished"! Thousands of sermons have been preached on that little sentence. Christ's life was finished, perfected, completed; he yielded up His spirit, willingly dying, laying down his life as he said he would.

**51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;**

Hebrews 10:20 defines the veil as a type of His flesh. The way is now clear and we have access to the throne of grace. This is also symbolic of the wall being taken down between Jew and Gentile. It should also be noted that it was torn from the top to the bottom showing that it was done by God and not man.

**52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,**

Do notice that this is not all the bodies of the saved dead up to that point. This has to be actual bodies since it is the body that sleeps. Nowhere in scripture, are souls and spirits ever said to sleep in the earth. The phrase,"many bodies of the saints" indicates that,if these are Old Testament saints,then there are more to come up. If,and I do say if, these who come up are saints who have died during Christs earthly ministry,then some of these difficulties disappear.

**53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many.**

There is nothing said of the reason why they were raised. It is not improbable to suppose that it was, amid the other wonders attending the death of Jesus, to convince the Jews that he was the Messiah. What became of them after they had entered into the city whether they again died or ascended to heaven, is not revealed.

**54 Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God.**

These Roman soldiers had never witnessed such scenes in connection with an execution before, and they could only come to one conclusion. The prisoner they had put to death truly was the Son of God. It was strange that those men should confess what the chief priests and scribes and elders denied.

**55 And many women were there beholding afar off, which followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering unto him:**

Many women were there at the cross with Christ. Where was Peter, who had declared he would never be offended. Where were the rest of the disciples, who said the same things? None were there except John. Where were His half brothers? The Bible says many women, those of the, so called, weaker sex, were there. This was a rebuke of the vanity and confidence of the disciples, and of their present contemptible cowardice.

**56 Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedees children.**

Mary the mother of Jesus was also there. The mother of Zebedee's children was Salome. It is quite likely there were other women present as well.

**57 When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathaea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple:**

This rich man of Arimathea, named, Joseph, a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin, was Jesus's disciple, but kept it secret. Yet when his Lord

was actually dead, he found the courage to go boldly to Pilate and ask for the body of Jesus.

**58 He went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered.**

No one had a right to remove the body but by authority of the magistrate. Jesus was condemned to be crucified, and in common cases it would have been unlawful to have removed the body so soon. He begged the body so that he might bury it honorably otherwise, by the Jewish customs, he would have either been burned, or buried in the common place appointed for executed criminals.

**59 And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,**

The body of the Lord was not prepared properly for burial since this had to be done quickly before the Sabbath began,.

**60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.**

He was buried in a new tomb for a reason. This was so ordered, in the providence of God, doubtless, that there might be no suspicion about his identity when he rose; that it might not be alleged that another person had risen, or that he was raised by touching the bones of some prophet, as happened to the corpse that touched the bones of Elisha in 2 Kings 13:21. Farther, by being buried here an important prophecy was remarkably fulfilled. Isaiah 53:says;"He made his grave with the rich. The fulfillment of this is the more remarkable, because during his life he associated with the poor and was himself poor.

**61 And there was Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, sitting over against the sepulchre.**

These holy women, filled with that love for their Lord which death cannot destroy, came to the grave to see the end, and overwhelmed with sorrow and anguish, sat down to mourn.

**62 Now the next day, that followed the day of the preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate,**

These priests and Pharisees, who were so scrupulous about keeping the Sabbath, but did not mind profaning the day of rest by holding a consultation with the Roman governor. They knew that Christ was dead and buried, but they still stood in dread of his power. These men are afraid that He really will rise from the dead. They must have known that the disciples of Jesus would not steal him away, and say unto the people, "He is risen from the dead;" so they probably feared that he really would come forth from the tomb.

**63 Saying, Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again.**

**64 Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first.**

Pretending that he rose, will have a greater influence among the people than his pretending to be the Messiah. Reading through these verses there can be no doubt that many of these priests believed He truly was the Messiah but chose to kill Him anyway.

**65 Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can.**

Pilate says, "make it as sure as you can" indicating that he too believes there is a chance He is coming out of that tomb.

**66 So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch.**

His enemies, took every possible precaution to place his resurrection beyond the possibility of suspicion of fraud and imposture. And those precautions were the very means of furnishing the most striking proof that He did rise again. These scribes and Pharisees had seen enough that now they knew perhaps, this was the Son of God and perhaps, He would rise again. They figured out this scheme to secure the tomb. Jesus cannot be held by things of this earth. They could have had a thousand stones and it would have made no difference.

## **MATTHEW CHAPTER TWENTY EIGHT**

**1 In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre.**

Since the two women came at dawn we know that Jesus rose on Saturday evening. By Jewish reckoning the day ended at sunset and the new day began at the same time. Thus, Saturday night, by our reckoning, was actually Sunday by their calendar. Accordingly, the resurrection actually occurred sometime during the night, for by the time the women arrived “as it began to dawn” He had already risen from the dead. These women were the last to leave the cross and the first at the tomb.

**2 And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it.**

It was not merely one of the angelic host, but some mighty angel, “the angel of the Lord”, who came to minister to him on that resurrection morning. When the angel had rolled back the stone from the door, he sat upon it, as if to defy earth and hell ever to roll it back again. Christ has risen, and all his saints will rise, too.

**3 His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow:**

This must have been a sight. A great angel sitting on the stone as if to dare anyone to try to roll it back again.

**4 And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men.**

**5 And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified.**

Notice the difference in the reaction of the soldiers and the women. These Roman soldiers were not easily frightened but at the sight of this angel they fainted. No doubt these women had some fear as well



but they managed to keep it in check. These women were mistaken in seeking the living among the dead, yet their seeking ended in finding.

**6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.**

Eight words in that verse are the greatest in the Bible. **“He is not here: for he is risen”**. Finding the stone rolled away, the women entered the tomb, but found it empty. While they were still in the tomb, the angels, Mark 16:5 says there were two, suddenly appeared. The angel who spoke reminded them of Jesus’ promises, then sent them to find Peter and the disciples to report that Jesus was risen

**7 And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you.**

The angels said, tell his disciples”. Mark adds , "tell Peter." This was a message to Peter, who had so recently denied his Lord. It would serve to cheer him in his despondency, and to assure him that his sin had been forgiven. And it shows the tender love and remembrance of Jesus, even for his unfaithful friends. These women found out first about Jesus, because they were there. They cared for the Lord whether living or dead. The eleven disciples were not told first, because they had gone back to their old way of life. Some, had stopped fishing for men and had gone back to fishing for fish. The message they were to tell is still the same today, **“He is not here: for he is risen”**. Then we have the phrase, “There shall ye see him”. This does not mean they would not see Him until then. He was seen by the apostles several times before they saw Him in Galilee. But His greatest appearance, after the resurrection, was in Galilee, where “He appeared to more than five hundred brethren at once”.

**8 And they departed quickly from the sepulchre with fear and great joy; and did run to bring his disciples word.**

This is a strange mixture of emotions. Fear and great joy, yet the joy was greater than the fear. It was not joy and great fear, but “fear and great joy.” Fear and joy would both make them run to bring his disciples word. Either of these emotions gives speed to the feet; but

when "fear and great joy" are combined, running is the only pace that goes with the messengers' feelings.

**9 And as they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshipped him.**

This was when they left the sepulcher the "second" time. Jesus first appeared to Mary Magdalene when she was there alone. That's John 20:14 if you are taking notes.. "Afterward" he appeared to the other women, as related here by Matthew. They threw themselves down before Him, and worshiped him.. There was no question now, this was their Lord. They humbled themselves and bowed down to Him in reverence. These women had pure hearts, and they had found their master. Their sorrow had been turned into joy.

**10 Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid: go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me.**

This is the first time our Lord called his disciples brethren. They no doubt thought that their Lord would reproach them with their past cowardice and infidelity. But, in speaking thus, he gives them a full assurance, that all that was passed was buried forever. Jesus called them "brethren" to reassure them that in spite of their fear and abandonment of Him at the cross, He still loved them. He sent them word so that they would know what He prophesied had happened. He was alive. He said, meet me in Galilee, and I will show you.

**11 Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done.**

Some of the watch, having recovered from their fright, came into the city to report the things they had witnessed. It is noteworthy that they did not go to Pilate. They had been placed at the disposal of the chief priests, and therefore, while some of them remained on guard at the sepulchre, others of the soldiers went to the priests, and showed them all the things that were done, so far as they knew the particulars. This had to cause fresh terror to the priests, and led to further sin on their part.

**12 And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers,**

Now they add bribery to their other crimes. The bribery was necessary because the soldiers' story, if true, could cost them their lives. Since they were charged with guard duty under Pilate's personal orders. The Jewish leaders also promised to cover for the soldiers if the false story they spread leaked back to Pilate.

**13 Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept.**

The chief priests and elders were not afraid of Pilate hearing of their lie. If he did, they knew that their arguments would be as convincing with him as with the common soldiers. The soldiers acted just as many men have continued to do from their day to ours: They took the money, and did as they were told.

**14 And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you.**

**15 So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.**

Unbelievers still say the body was stolen. These high priests, scribes, and Pharisees should have been on their knees repenting, because they knew that they had been wrong. They wanted their earthly power enough to spend eternity in Hell for it. The Jews sent people everywhere scattering this lie, and it is still believed by most of them, even today.

**16 Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.**

Notice those words, the eleven disciples. There were twelve; but Judas, one of the twelve, had gone to his own place. Peter, who had denied his Lord, had been restored to his place among the apostles. The eleven went away into Galilee, to the place their Lord had told them.

**17 And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.**

The way I understand that is that some of the apostles doubted. How can that possibly be? It must be doubting apostles since no one else is mentioned.

**18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.**

On the basis of His authority, the disciples were sent to “make disciples of all the nations.” The sweeping scope of their commission is consummate with His unlimited authority. They are to do this in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost”: The formula shows the Trinity. Trinity designates one eternal God in unity, yet existing in three eternal persons. The members of the Trinity are equal in nature, distinct in person, and subordinate in duties.

Jesus is submissive to the work of the Father, yet equal in nature to Him. The Father is the source of authority; the Son is the channel, and the Holy Spirit the agent whereby authority is exercised. There is no shortage of biblical evidence for the deity of the Holy Spirit. He is spoken of in Scripture as God. The attributes of God are assigned to Him, He is engaged in the work of God, and He receives honor due only to God. Further, He was recognized as God by the early church in the baptismal formula. Finally, the words of the Holy Spirit are recognized as being the words of God.

The controlling purpose of the local church is to make disciples of all kinds of people. Those who are evangelized and converted should then be baptized, attesting to their identification with Christ and the local body of believers. The final phase of the Great Commission is to train disciples in Christian knowledge and for effective service.

**19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:**

“Baptizing” the converted disciples are the first step of outward obedience to the Lord. “Baptize” is an English transliteration of the Greek, and means to “dip,” or “immerse,” thus indicating its proper mode. Nowhere does this term ever indicate “sprinkling” or “pouring.” These converts are to be baptized “in the name of the

Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Finally, and equally important, baptism is one of the ways we publicly confess Christ.

**20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.**

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