

## A Study of Matthew 17

### I. Outline.

1. Transfiguration of Jesus (Matthew 17.1-13; cf. Mk 9.2-13; Lk 9.28-36).
2. Healing of a Boy with a Demon (Mt 17.14-21; cf. Mk 9.14-29; Lk 9.37-43).
3. Jesus Again Foretells His Death (Mt 17.22-23; cf. Mk 9.30-32; Lk 9.43-45).
4. Miracle of the Payment of the Temple Tax (Mt 17.24-27).

### II. Summary.

“**AFTER SIX DAYS.**’ Days of silence. No record have we of what transpired in those days. The strange declarations of the Cross had crushed the hearts of these men. Now to three of their number, as special training for special work, was granted this wondrous vision of glory. The true force and meaning of all this they did not comprehend until the Spirit came. That then the value of the experience was appreciated is evident from Peter’s reference to the vision (2 Peter 1:16-19). Again a contrast! There the mountain; now the valley. There glorified saints; here the lunatic. There the King in His heavenly glory; here His representatives baffled and beaten. And why? For lack of faith! Not for lack of intellectual assent—though even that today seems in danger of vanishing—but for lack of that living faith which yields the whole being to the King’s unquestioned control. Wherever there is such faith, even though small as a grain of mustard seed, the mountains become plains. Yet how glorious it is that when need can find its way beyond the failing disciples to their Lord He is never beaten or unable. With what quiet and Kingly majesty He accomplishes all we fail to do. That is the great comfort” [G. Campbell Morgan, *Exposition on Bible*, an e-Sword Module].

### III. Chronology.

**BIBLE PERIOD:** The Period of the Christ.

*If you are not familiar with the **15 Bible Periods**, please click here:*

<https://maplehillchurchofchrist.files.wordpress.com/2018/05/15bibleperiods.pdf>

### IV. Aids in Exposition.

Matthew 17.1... **AN HIGH MOUNTAIN APART**—“Mount Tabor, the traditional ‘high mountain,’ lies south of Galilee; but it is not at all ‘high’ (about 1,900 feet), and going to it would have been a roundabout way of traveling from Caesarea Philippi to Capernaum (vv. 22, 24; Mark 9.30, 33). Moreover, according to Josephus it had a walled fortress at its summit (War II, 573 [ss.6]; IV, 54-55). Mount Hermon, rising above Caesarea Philippi, is the most popular alternative (9,232 feet); but it is so high and cold at its summit—if indeed they went to the top—it seems a strange place to pass the night (Luke specifies they descended the next day). Immediately after their descent Jesus and the inner three faced crowds that included ‘teachers of the law’ (Mark 9.14). This is almost inconceivable at Mount Hermon in Gentile territory. Liefield (p. 167, n. 27) has **plausibly suggested Mount Miron** (3,926 feet), the highest mountain within Israel and on the way from Caesarea Philippi to Capernaum. The ‘mountain’ calls to mind Moses and Elijah, both of whom received revelation on a mountain (Ex 19; 24; 1 Kings 19), though here part of the purpose was to ensure privacy (‘by themselves,’ Mt 17.1; ‘all alone,’ Mark 9.2)” [D.A. Carson, *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, 12 vols., Volume 8: Matthew, Mark, Luke, 1984, Zondervan, p.384].

**Matthew 17.2... TRANSFIGURED**—“...Jesus was changed in form (transfigured), yet He did not lose recognizable features although His face shone as the sun and His raiment was white as the light (Mt 17.2). Luke says **‘THE FASHION OF HIS COUNTENANCE WAS ALTERED’** (Luke 9.29; cf. Ex 34.29-35). The wondrous effect of such a marvelous shining metamorphosis must have been enhanced by the fact that it was night (Luke 9.32, 37). Later Peter pointed to his seeing the majesty, honor, and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ on the mount (2 Pt 1.16-18). The faithful happily anticipate seeing Him in His glory (1 John 3.1-2)” [Bobby Liddell, “The Church Was Promised by Jesus; His Transfiguration,” in *Studies in Matthew*, Edited by Dub McClish, 1995, p. 122—123].

**Matthew 17.3... THERE APPEARED UNTO THEM MOSES AND ELIAS TALKING WITH HIM**—“We can only speculate about the significance of their presence. ‘It may be that the presence of the two figures is meant to suggest that the witness of both Law and Prophets is being borne to Jesus’ (Hill, 267-68); or, it may be they were chosen because they were both linked to the coming Messiah (vv. 10-12; 11.14; Deut 18.15-18). How the disciples recognized them is not stated (did they overhear their names being mentioned?), but the appearance of these two should have assured the three that the way of the cross was consistent with the will of God. If Moses and Elijah could appear in glory after leaving the world (Moses through death, Deut 34.7; Elijah through translation, 2 Kgs 2.11, Heb 11.5), Christ’s death might not be as fatal to Himself or His kingdom as the disciples feared (Lk 24.26-27; 1 Pt 2.10-11)” [Kenneth Chumbley, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1999, pp., 310—311].

**Matthew 17.4... LET US MAKE HERE THREE TABERNACLES; ONE FOR THEE, AND ONE FOR MOSES, AND ONE FOR ELIAS**—“TABERNACLES. The Greek word is *skene*, which means ‘tent’ or ‘booth.’ It is used for the Tabernacle built at Mount Sinai (Heb 8.5; 9.2-3, 6, 8, 21). But that was a large structure, as tabernacles usually are today. What Peter had in mind was making small ‘booths’ (RSV) of branches” [Ralph Earle, *Word Meanings in the New Testament*, Baker Book House, 1982, p. 17].  
 |||| “Don’t try to make sense out of this; Luke 9.33 says Peter said this **‘NOT KNOWING WHAT HE SAID’**—if he didn’t know what he was talking about, we probably won’t figure it out either. Peter illustrates the fact that many people, with nothing to say, say it anyway” [Kenneth Chumbley, p. 311].  
 |||| “There was a divine attraction in the scene, a foretaste of heaven’s own glory, and no wonder that Peter exclaimed, **‘IT IS GOOD FOR US TO BE HERE’**!...It shows that men in the flesh are not prepared to judge of the fitness of things in the spiritual world. In all probability many of our most cherished conceptions of that world are as incongruous as that of the frightened Peter” [J.W. McGarvey, *New Testament Commentary, Vol. I—Matthew and Mark*, Gospel Light, p. 150].

**Matthew 17.5... A VOICE OUT OF THE CLOUD, WHICH SAID, THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED; HEAR YE HIM**—“The voice from the bright cloud (Matt. 17:5) showed that man’s ways are not God’s way (Isa. 55:8-9). What was the significance of saying **“HEAR YE HIM,”** an addition to the statement made at His baptism (Matt. 3:17)? The old law would no longer be valid after the cross (Col. 2:14). Moses represented the great lawgiver of the old law, and Elias (Elijah) represented its great prophet. No longer would Moses and Elijah be heard; that is, the system of which they were champions would be removed and the new law established (Eph. 2:12-22; Heb. 10:9-10). **“THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS WERE UNTIL JOHN: SINCE THAT TIME THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS PREACHED, AND EVERY MAN PRESSETH INTO IT”** (Luke 16:16). Thus God determined not three tabernacles, nor three to be honored, but one: the Son. Now, we are to hear Him (Heb. 1:1-3;

John 14:6)! The fear of the apostles (Matt. 17:6), considering what they had just seen and heard, is quite understandable” [Bobby Liddell, p. 123].

**Matthew 17.6... THEY FELL ON THEIR FACE, AND WERE SORE AFRAID**—“Put yourself in the place of the disciples: you had heard the Lord say he must suffer many things at the hands of his enemies at Jerusalem, be put to death and be raised the third day; you had heard him speak with Moses and Elijah about this same death; then this marvelous scene unfolds before your eyes, followed closely by the awesome voice of the Almighty. This was sure to send one to his knees in the deepest kind of dread and fear. Cf. Revelation 1:17—**AND WHEN I SAW HIM, I FELL AT HIS FEET AS DEAD. AND HE LAID HIS RIGHT HAND UPON ME, SAYING UNTO ME, FEAR NOT; I AM THE FIRST AND THE LAST.** Then came the reassuring touch and voice of the gentle Master. We cannot today hear the Lord's voice with our physical ears, nor feel his touch in that same direct way in which he comforted the disciples, but through his inspired word he gives comfort and assurance... (1) Hebrews 13:5-6: **‘Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, the lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.’** (2) 1 Peter 5:6-7: **“Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.”** (3) 1 John 4:17-18: **“Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. he that feareth is not made perfect in love.”** (4) 1 John 5:3: **“For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.”** [Bob Winton, *Book of Matthew*, p. 208].

**Matthew 17.9... JESUS CHARGED THEM, SAYING, TELL THE VISION TO NO MAN, UNTIL THE SON OF MAN BE RISEN AGAIN FROM THE DEAD**—“Silence was commanded because nine of the apostles had not witnessed the transfiguration, and there was a possibility of jealousy developing among them, as indeed it did a little later; also the primary reason, as noted earlier, was the need not to compromise the Savior's death which he would soon accomplish in Jerusalem. An extremely important supplement to Matthew's account is in Luke who gave the subject matter of the conversation between Jesus and Moses and Elijah. **‘(They) spake of his decease which he was about to accomplish in Jerusalem’** (Luke 9:31). This conversation was calculated to encourage and reassure the apostles who had been severely shocked and disheartened by the Savior's revelation of his death and sufferings, to be followed by his resurrection. It seems that the apostles focused all their attention upon his death and continue not to realize, though they had been told, that he would also rise from the dead. The subject matter during the transfiguration showed that the death of Christ was a part of the Master Plan and that it was of the utmost concern and interest on the part of all previous generations as represented by Moses and Elijah. It also revealed Christ as the Great Architect of the crucifixion. Evil men, dominated by Satan, would have their part in it, but only Christ would accomplish his death. These events, coupled with the sublime conversation, should have enabled the apostles more readily to accept the somber events of his approaching passion” [Burton Coffman Online, <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/matthew-17.html> , Visited: 160527].

**Matthew 17.10... AND HIS DISCIPLES ASKED HIM SAYING, WHY THEN SAY THE SCRIBES THAT ELIAS MUST FIRST COME?**—“Their ignorance is apparent by their question. Their glimpse of Elijah (v. 3) prompts them to ask about the scribal teaching that he must precede the Messiah (Mal 4.5). From their perspective, it seemed Christ (Mt 16.16) had preceded the prophet. Confused, they want to

know where Elijah fits into the picture—had he come unnoticed or were the scribes wrong?” [Kenneth Chumbley, p. 313].

**Matthew 17.12... ELIAS IS COME ALREADY, AND THEY KNEW HIM NOT, BUT HAVE DONE UNTO HIM WHATSOEVER THEY LISTED**—“It is as if Jesus said, ‘*Although the scribes do correctly tell you of the coming and restoration of Elijah, they do not tell you of the suffering of the Christ, but the SCRIPTURES DO. You have as much Scriptural reason to expect the despised and suffering Messiah as you do the coming Elijah, and should not lay so much emphasis on the one to the neglect of the other.*’ While on the basis of Scripture the scribes were perfectly orthodox in insisting that **Elijah must first come**, they had totally missed its true, proper fulfillment in the person of John the Baptist. But these same theologians, so adamant in asserting that Jesus cannot be the Christ since Elijah had supposedly not appeared to lay the necessary groundwork for the Messiah, need to re-examine other Bible prophecies concerning the humiliation and suffering of the Messiah, to see that their theological grasp of the Messiahship was faulty. A correct reading of the Messianic prophecies might lead to a truer understanding of the Elijah of Malachi, and *vice versa*” [Harold Fowler, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Bible Study Textbook Series, College Press, An e-Sword Module].

**Matthew 17.13... HE SPAKE UNTO THEM OF JOHN THE BAPTIST**—“Malachi referred to John the Immerser, who came in the power of Elijah (Luke 1:17). Of John, Jesus said: **“FOR THIS IS HE, OF WHOM IT IS WRITTEN, BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER BEFORE THY FACE, WHICH SHALL PREPARE THY WAY BEFORE THEE ... AND IF YE WILL RECEIVE IT, THIS IS ELIAS, WHICH WAS FOR TO COME”** (Matt. 11:7-15). Premillennialists point to Matt. 17:11 as a supposed prophecy of future events, but the context plainly shows Jesus said **“ELIAS IS COME ALREADY”** (Matt. 17:11-12). The prophecy, a clear reference to John the Immerser and his work, had already been fulfilled (Matt. 17:13)” [Bobby Liddell, p. 123].

**Matthew 17.15... LORD, HAVE MERCY ON MY SON: FOR HE IS LUNATICK**—“Parallel accounts are found in Mark 9.14-29 and Luke 9.37-43. Mark’s record gives additional significant details, for example, that the scribes had been questioning with the nine disciples while Jesus and the other three were on the mountain. When he came down, he found a multitude of people who ran to him in amazement (Mark 9.15). Out of the multitude was a certain man who pleaded with the Lord to cure his only son (Luke 9.38) who was lunatic, which means ‘moonstruck.’ This term developed from the superstitious notion that the moon caused such maladies. Jesus did not lend credence to this idea, but knew that the cause was a demon which possessed the lad” [Bob Winton, pp. 209-210]. ||||| “The scribes, taking advantage of the absence of Jesus and the three chief disciples, were present and were questioning the nine disciples. They had tried to cast out a demon, but were unable to do so. The exulting scribes, the embarrassed and confused disciples, the amazed people, and the despairing father and afflicted son presented a very pathetic scene. When Jesus came into their midst, all eyes turned to him. The miracle he is about to work becomes a test of his power. ... While the disciples of Jesus were under a fire of questions and taunting by the scribes, this man came to Jesus and saluted him with joyful reverence. ... The scribes rejoiced at the failure of the disciples in healing the son” [H. Leo Boles, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew*, Gospel Advocate, p. 359].

**Matthew 17.16... AND I BROUGHT HIM TO THY DISCIPLES, AND THEY COULD NOT CURE HIM**—“The latent doubt planted in the apostles’ hearts by the Pharisees must surely have played a part in the inability to heal the lunatic. Their faltering faith, coupled with the double difficulty at hand,

made them powerless to effect a cure. These same disciples had once returned with joy over the fact that demons were subject to them in the name of Christ (Luke 10:17ff); but then they were powerless in the presence of that lunatic boy. This indicates the difficulty the apostles had in maintaining their faith under the rising attacks of the Pharisees, the revelation that Christ would suffer death, and the temporary absence of Jesus with three of their number on the Holy Mountain” [Burton Coffman].

**Matthew 17.17... O FAITHLESS AND PERVERSE GENERATION**—“When He hears about His disciples’ failure, Christ sharply rebukes them (He did not hesitate to criticize His own when they deserved it, Jer 1.17), characterizing them as unbelieving and perverse (*diastreopho*, crooked, corrupt). Both words introduce a moral element (Lk 23.2; Php 2.15); ‘perverse’ suggesting a twisted, distorted attitude. Those closest to Christ of whom more was expected, nevertheless reflected the unbelief of their age (Mt 12.39). In ‘a rare insight into the frustration of Jesus’ (France, 266) the Lord wonders how long He must put up with such incompetency The public nature of their failure was especially disturbing; when Christians fail to reflect Christ the negative fallout can be widespread, long lasting, and a stumblingblock to others (Rom 2.24)” [Kenneth Chumbley, p. 315]. ||||| “This lamentation, showing that Jesus had become wearied and saddened by the constant manifestations of insufficient faith among his disciples, was not addressed to the father of the youth, but to the disciples and the multitude. Some infidel writers have represented this speech as a manifestation of impatience and irritation inconsistent with a perfect human character. The rebuke itself was certainly just, and, under the circumstances, altogether proper; then why should the feeling which naturally accompanies such a rebuke, be improper? The perfection of human character consists not in the impassiveness of a statue, but in the just and harmonious exercise of all the emotions which belong to our nature” [J.W. McGarvey, p. 152].

**Matthew 17.19... WHY COULD NOT WE CAST HIM OUT?**—“This sentence guarantees the authenticity of this account, because the Gospel writers do not hide the weaknesses and failure of characters even this important in their narration. This shame, both in the presence of the multitude that day, as well as in the eyes of the present readers, is evidence of that stern truthfulness that must tell the facts as they occurred without embellishment even to save the influential. Lastly, this question and Jesus’ answer is proof positive that they had not failed to work miracles before this time. It was a totally new experience, since, presumably, He could have answered, “You could not cast it out for the same reason you failed before.” [Harold Fowler].

**Matthew 17.20... 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**—“The reasons for the apostles’ failure were (1) their lack of faith, (2) the double difficulty of the case at hand, and (3) their failure to exercise the privilege of prayer and fasting. At this place in Matthew, some very ancient authorities (KJV) include Matthew 17:21 which reads, ‘**BUT THIS KIND GOETH NOT OUT SAVE BY PRAYER AND FASTING.**’ Mark 9:29 reads, ‘**THIS KIND CAN COME OUT BY NOTHING, SAVE BY PRAYER.**’ The disciples had some faith, else they would not have tried to cast it out. The fact that they had previously cast out demons but could not cast out that one shows that some demons are more malevolent and stubborn than others. This opens a whole field of questions regarding the character and variety of demons, but the Scriptures afford little information on such a point. The necessity for prayer (certainly) and fasting (perhaps) was stressed. The child had long been

possessed by the demon, and the usual pattern of demonic destruction was evident in the danger incurred from falls into the fire and into the water. It is noteworthy that Satan's purpose, wherever revealed in Scripture, invariably appears destructive. In the cases of Job (Job 1:16), Judas (Luke 22:3), the swine (Matthew 8:32), and in many others, death and destruction always resulted quickly when Satan or his emissaries had a free hand to work their will" [Burton Coffman].

**Matthew 17.22-23... THE SON OF MAN SHALL BE BETRAYED INTO THE HANDS OF MEN AND THEY SHALL KILL**

**HIM, AND THE THIRD DAY HE SHALL BE RAISED AGAIN**—"The words of these verses, delivered in Galilee, contain the second announcement of the impending death of the Savior (Mark 9:30; cf. Matt. 16:21). In both cases the resurrection was mentioned. Peter, James, and John had seen the transfiguration, and all had witnessed the casting out of the stubborn devil. These observations should have strengthened their faith. Jesus of Nazareth announced that He was going to die. His death at the hands of wicked men, betrayed by one of His own, was no surprise to Him. He also knew He would rise from the dead to be the firstfruits of the resurrection (1 Cor. 15:23). His followers were exceedingly sorry, obviously understanding better, but still not completely, what awaited their Master (Luke 9:45; 24:45)" [Bobby Liddell, p. 124].

**Matthew 17.24... THEY THAT RECEIVED TRIBUTE MONEY CAME TO PETER, AND SAID, DOTH NOT YOUR MASTER**

**PAY TRIBUTE?**—"The half-shekel (*didrachma*) means the yearly atonement money to be collected from every Hebrew over 20 years of age, as an offering, originally for the service of the tent of meeting, and then of the temple. (Cf. Ex 30:11-16; Ex 38:25 ff; 2 Kgs 12:4; 2 Ch 24:5-6; 2 Ch 24:9; also Josephus, *Antiquities* III, 8, 2; XVIII, 9, 1; *Wars* VII, 6, 6). The one-third of a shekel of Nehemiah 10:32 may represent a temporary reduction due to the poverty of the people. Though it was called an 'offering,' it was nevertheless compulsory, not only because commanded, but also to serve as a ransom for the payer during the census-taking: **THAT THERE BE NO PLAGUE AMONG THEM WHEN YOU NUMBER THEM.**" (Ex 30:11-16) The plague during the census of David may be an example of this. (See 2 Samuel 24; 1Ch 27:23 ff). The monetary value of the Hebrew half-shekel was two Greek drachmas (the *didrachma*) or two Roman denarii, hence the equivalent of two days' work of a common laborer" [Harold Fowler].

**Matthew 17.25... JESUS PREVENTED HIM, SAYING, WHAT THINKEST THOU, SIMON? OF WHOM DO THE KINGS OF**

**THE EARTH TAKE CUSTOM**—"Peter was probably completely unaware of the dilemma posed for Christ in the matter of payment, or non-payment, of the half-shekel; but, in his quick and ready impulsiveness, he accepted the obligation for Christ and himself also. Jesus' speaking to Peter first showed that he knew what had taken place without need of any report from Peter. Only God has such omniscience; and this is therefore another instance in which the deity of Christ is implied and affirmed by all that was said and done. Where did Christ learn the skilled Socratic method of teaching by asking questions, thus drawing from Peter's own mouth the essential truth he sought to convey? His wisdom was from above, and he needed not that any man teach **HIM**. Peter had already confessed Jesus as God's Son, making him a Son of the King, in the highest and truest sense of those words. **The well-known fact that the children of kings' palaces were exempt from taxation was thus elicited from Peter that he might see that Jesus was exempt from the half-shekel tax.** The tax was for God, the true King; Jesus was his Son, therefore Jesus was exempt. Furthermore, the half-shekel was in the nature of a ransom or atonement; and how could he who came to give himself a ransom for all be required to pay this trifling temple tax as ransom for himself? Though Christ had perhaps paid this tax in the

past (based upon Peter's ready acceptance of the obligation), he was now the declared Messiah, and to pay it then would involve some inconsistency, hence the necessity for Jesus to be absolutely sure that Peter recognized his true status of exemption. In spite of all this, and to avoid focusing on an insignificant detail, Christ paid it anyway, although in such a manner that he could never be charged with having done so in any sense of renunciation of his high office as the world's only Redeemer" [Burton Coffman, Emphasis mine, DRL].

**Matthew 17.27... 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 HAS OPENED HIS MOUTH, THOU SHALT FIND A PIECE OF MONEY: THAT TAKE, AND GIVE UNTO THEM FOR ME AND THEE**—"In knowing Peter's thoughts (v. 25), in knowing he would catch a fish, in knowing the fish would have a coin in its mouth, in bringing about the logistics of the event (getting Peter and the fish together), and in knowing the coin exactly cover the tax owed by Peter and Himself, Jesus gave a striking demonstration of His omniscience and omnipotence at a time when the disciples needed the reassurance that He was in control" [Kenneth Chumbley].

## V. Lessons & Applications.

**Matthew 17.3... AND, BEHOLD, THERE APPEARED UNTO THEM MOSES AND ELIAS TALKING WITH HIM**—"Moses had been dead fifteen hundred years (Deut. 34:5-7). Elias (Elijah, ASV) had been departed from the earth nine hundred years (2 Kings 2:11). Yet both continued in existence in another place, an unearthly one. From the record of this occasion come these valuable lessons: (1) There is life after death. (2) Men do not cease to exist (1 Thess. 2:19). (3) There is consciousness after death, and the dead do not lose their identity (cf. Luke 16:19-31). Moses and Elijah knew they existed, and they knew who they were. Their identity was revealed to the three. Moses and Elijah also knew of Jesus' death to come, for the subject of their conversation was Jesus' crucifixion (Luke 9:30-31)." [Bobby Liddell, p. 122].

**Matthew 17.5... THIS IS MY BELOVED SON IN WHOM I AM WELL PLEASSED; HEAR YE HIM**—"Because: (1) He brought a message from the Father. 'I spake not from myself; but the Father that sent me, he hath given me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak' (John 12.49). (2) His message brings life. When people were leaving Jesus, he asked the disciples if they also would leave him. Peter replied, 'To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life.' (John 6.68). Jesus said the truth taught by him will make us free (John 8.32). And a knowledge of him and the Father as revealed by him is eternal life (John 17.3). (3) He has all authority in heaven and on earth (Mt 28.18). Those who despised the law given by Moses died without mercy, and Paul reasons that those who despise the authority of Christ will suffer sorer punishment (Heb 10.28ff). Those who reject the words of the apostles, as preserved in the New Testament, reject Jesus who sent them; and those who reject him, reject the Father who sent him (Luke 10.16). So it is a terrible thing to despise the authority of Jesus. (4) All who refuse to hear him shall be destroyed. Peter reminded the people that Moses promised a prophet from the people like himself, one whom they should hear in all things. 'And it shall be, that every soul that shall not hearken to that prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people' (Acts 3.23). What this destruction is may be learned from Matthew 25.41: Revelation 20.12-15; Revelation 21.8" [Roy H. Lanier, Sr., *Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1950, p. 289].

**Matthew 7.20... BECAUSE OF YOUR UNBELIEF: FOR VERILY I SAY UNTO YOU, IF YE HAVE FAITH AS A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED**—"The reason was unbelief [footnote: 'NOTHING will be impossible for you, must

*thus be interpreted as NOTHING Jesus has given you the authority to do, such as this exorcism'* [Blomberg, p. 268]. Based upon verse 21 it appears the disciples acted in a self-sufficient way. They apparently attempted to perform the exorcism by relying upon their own power. Instead of trusting in the 'power of God' (Mk 9.43), they trusted in themselves ('**Why could not WE**') with humiliating consequences. Whenever men rely on themselves instead of God, failure is inevitable. God is able to deliver us from every evil (Mt 6.13), but unless His power is accessed by faith, deliverance will never come. Conversely, faith as small as a mustard seed (Mt 13.31-32) can 'remove a mountain'—a metaphor for solving great problems. 'To "remove mountains" is to make difficulties vanish. The Jews used to say of an eminent teacher, he is a "rooter up of mountains"' (Carr, 218; 1 Cor 13.2). '**NOTHING SHALL BE IMPOSSIBLE UNTO YOU**' is not a guarantee of omnipotence, but a promise that through faith infinite resources are open to the believer (Php 4.13). Mountainous difficulties (Eph 1.19-20; 3.20: Heb 11) can be surmounted by faith—including the one that awaits at Jerusalem (Mt 17.22-23)" [Kenneth Chumbley, p. 316-317].

|||| "In order to work a miracle it was necessary not only to have a miraculous endowment, but also to exercise faith. This is declared in the Savior's answer, and it had already been indicated to the disciples at the time of Peter's attempt to walk on the water (Mt 14.31). The faith in question was the belief that what was commanded would be done—faith in the power with which they were endued. When they spoke doubtingly to the demon he had power to resist them" [J.W. McGarvey, p. 153].

Matthew 17.23... AND THEY WERE EXCEEDING SORRY—"The things which transpired when he went to Jerusalem are commonly known to us all today, but to the disciples, who were as yet ignorant of those details, this was extremely depressing news. Their conception of Christ and his kingdom was in error. ... However, they understood enough to be filled with sorrow on hearing it" [Bob Winton, p. 211]. |||| "Their sorrow arose partly from the disheartening thought of his death, and partly, no doubt, from the fact that he persisted in repeating an announcement which they knew not how to credit" [J.W. McGarvey, p. 154].

## VI. Questions.

### True or False

01. \_\_\_\_ This chapter includes a miracle involving fish.
02. \_\_\_\_ Jesus's face and clothing are described in this chapter.
03. \_\_\_\_ The prophecy about Elijah coming had not yet happened at the time of this chapter.
04. \_\_\_\_ The apostles never failed in casting out demons.
05. \_\_\_\_ The betrayal of Jesus is mentioned in Matthew 17.

### I Found it in Verse(s)

06. \_\_\_\_ For the second time Jesus mentioned His death and resurrection.
07. \_\_\_\_ Three tabernacles.
08. \_\_\_\_ Jesus tells the three apostles not to tell about what they saw on the Mount of Transfiguration till He had arisen from the dead.

09. \_\_\_\_\_ Someone who often fell into the fire.

10. \_\_\_\_\_ Faith as a grain of mustard seed.

**Short Answer**

11. The ones who asked: “DO NOT YOUR MASTER PAY TRIBUTE?”

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12. The two words used to describe the mountain where Peter, James, and John went:

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13. What Jesus did and said after the 3 apostles heard the voice of God and were sore afraid:

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14. The person described as “Elijah is come already” was:

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15. Words indicating the immediate cure of the demon-possessed boy:

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*Each Question is worth 7 Points*

**My Score is: \_\_\_\_\_**

*Answers will be found on next week's handout*

**ANSWERS to Matthew 16 Questions...** **01**—False (4); **02**—False (7); **03**—True (12); **04**—True (21); **05**—True (28); **06**—23; **07**—17; **08**—16; **09**—9; **10**—1; **11**—bread (5); **12**—perceived (8); **13**—John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, one of the prophets (14); **14**—that He was the Christ (20); **15**—deny himself, take up his cross, follow Jesus (24).

**VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle.** The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL

K N W E F A U B T H E N D  
 V J E S U S E R V A N T F  
 C S W E N T L O F F E N D  
 K A K C Y R I T H K C T W  
 H M A H F A T H E R A I N  
 V E R I L Y T E A F S M M  
 T N K L L L R V F T E H  
 A T M D H S E E E O R O V  
 K E H E A R S F N R E F B  
 E R K I N G D O M G S F E  
 H S A I D L O R D I P E T  
 F E L L O W S E R V A N T  
 N F J D H J C A M E S C E  
 A E T W R C J L O O S E R

ASTRAY	BETTER	BROTHER	CAME	CAST
CHILD	ENTER	FATHER	FELLOWSERVANT	FORGIVE
HAND	HEAR	HEAVEN	JESUS	KINGDOM
LITTLE	LOOSE	LORD	OFFENCE	OFFEND
SAID	SAME	SERVANT	TAKE	THEN
THEREFORE	TIME	TRESPASS	VERILY	WENT



**IX. EXTRA CREDIT FOR “SUPER” Bible Students...**

*Will you please consider answering these three SIMPLE questions based on the Bible text of this chapter? I will try to make use of your answers. Bring them with you next week. Tear out this last sheet from the Study Guide and be prepared to put it in a basket. I think it will be a great help to all of those in the class if you will do so. Thank you in advance for your marvelous cooperation!*

**W O R D: What word would you like to know more about in this chapter?**

**W O N D E R: I wonder what this phrase, verse, or series of verses means...**

**W I S H: I wish myself—or others whom I know or even don’t know—would understand this fact, principle, or concept from this chapter...**