

## MATTHEW 17:22 - 18:9

- A. Matthew 17:22-23 - And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: Matt. 17:23 And they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry.
1. They are beginning to get the truth that Christ would have to die, be buried and rise from the dead. It seems that this event (unable to cast out the unclean spirit) finally awakens them and if they do not get with this advanced revelation, they would not have any ministry. Understanding that Jesus would D.B.R.A. (leaving them) would cause them to fast and pray, which would give them their faith and power. Remember: Matthew 9:14-15 - [Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not? Matt. 9:15 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.]
    - a. \*|This would completely happen after Christ's ascension and the Spirit had empowered them in \*|Acts 2.
    - b. Note: Today the way, or source, to spiritual power is to get in the Word, find out what God has told you dispensationally, and then get on with obedience to that Word that He is revealing to you! Only then can we know how to walk in His strength.  
  
Example: Romans 6:4-7, 11 - Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. Rom. 6:5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Rom. 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. Rom. 6:7 For he that is dead is freed from sin. Rom. 6:11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.
  2. The fact/message was beginning to be grasped by the disciples and they are burdened and disturbed by that truth.
    - a. \*|Again, if they did not entirely understand the D.B.R. (and they didn't), what gospel had they \*|been preaching? They hadn't been telling the people about Christ's D.B.R. as good news for \*|salvation!
    - b. They then, and even after Jesus' D.B.R., proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom as the good news. It was that the long-awaited, promised Messiah had arrived and the healings were evidence of that fact.  
  
\*\*Then when He was crucified and risen, their message in Acts 2-7 was the same kingdom message to Israel: that the Father raised Him, Messiah was alive and on His Father's right hand, waiting to return when they would repent and believe in His Messiahship.  
  
Acts 2:22-24, 29-30, 32-33, 36-38; 3:19-21, 25-26; 5:30-31 - Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Acts 2:23 Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: Acts 2:24 Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it.

Acts 2:29 Men *and* brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Acts 2:30 Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; Acts 2:32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Acts 2:33 Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear. Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Acts 2:37 Now when they heard *this,* they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. Acts 3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; Acts 3:20 And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Acts 3:21 Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3:25 Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Acts 3:26 Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities. Acts 5:30 The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Acts 5:31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

\*(Stephen's Message in Acts 7)

B. Matthew 17:24-26 - And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute *money* came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? Matt. 17:25 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? Matt. 17:26 Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free.

1. When asked if Christ paid taxes (perhaps temple taxes), Peter said **yes** without hesitating. Peter was a good man, had a big heart, and he gives them a straight answer. Was Peter trying to **protect** the Lord?
2. As Peter enters the house, even before he opens his mouth, Jesus (knowing what Peter had said) gently rebukes him - or at least gives a **lesson** to Peter. Jesus asks **him** who does a king take the money from when he collects taxes - his own family or strangers? Peter says it is those outside his family. In other words, the king's children are **exempt** from **paying** taxes.

Lesson: Peter had forgotten that Jesus was the Christ-Messiah, the **King**-to-be of Israel. Should Christ then pay tribute? **No**. But apostate Israel had made Him the **outcast** or **stranger** to Israel. So Christ had to pay taxes as a stranger, as did His disciples at **this point in time** - because they were not children of Israel's **earthly** kingdom, but were children of the kingdom of **heaven**.

- a. Remember what Peter later said in I Peter 1:1 & 2:11 - [ Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 1Peter 2:11 Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;

- b. Both Peter and Christ had to pay taxes because of who they were - **rejected** and not recognized by apostate **Israel**.

C. Matthew 17:27 - 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.

1. In order not to offend them, Jesus sends Peter to go fishing for their tax money. **Wild!** Christ commands creation, and that fish that Peter caught had the **exact** amount of money needed to pay their taxes.
2. Genesis 1:26 - And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

\*The first Adam **lost** dominion, but Christ (the second-last Adam) had and will **restore** dominion over all creation.

Note: Also interesting is that Christ evidently did **not** have the money to just give to Peter. So much for the charismatics preaching that Jesus was a **wealthy** man!

D. Matthew 18:1 - At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

1. The disciples are arguing which one of them would be the **greatest** in the kingdom. There is fighting and contention between them. **Who** are they concerned about?
2. They are beginning to get a sense that Christ is leaving them and they will be receiving Christ's **mantle**. So, they want to know who is going to be the biggest of them in the coming kingdom?

Matthew 20:20-21, 25-26 - Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him. Matt. 20:21 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. Matt. 20:25 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. Matt. 20:26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;

- a. **\*\*They are not going to be like the Gentiles' kingdom, which was through dictatorship. They misunderstood the **nature** of the Christ Kingdom.**

Matthew 20:27 - And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:

Isaiah 61:6 - But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: *men shall call you the Ministers of our God:* ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.

- b. They were thinking greatness was ability, strength, courage, sacrifice (they had left it all-what do they **get?**), knowledge, etc.

E. Matthew 18:2-5 - And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, Matt. 18:3 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. Matt. 18:4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 18:5 And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me.

1. The Lord gives them a **lesson** on humility. Jesus takes a little child, sets him in their midst, and then explains that this child had none of the qualities that they thought described greatness. However, God considered the child's humbleness as greatness. This child was help**less** in and of himself - being dependent upon his parents for food, water, safety, everything. This was true with these disciples in regards to their God. So, they needed to **stop** bragging and expecting so much - then they could be great.

2. If one received this child, Jesus said they were receiving Him, and whoever received Him would be great in the kingdom. It is not about the disciples, but it is about Him!

**\*\*Jesus is saying,** "If you stay humble as this child, totally dependent upon Me (not living or thinking of your **own** qualities and abilities that you think make you the greatest) and you humbly follow Me (be the **least** of others and be their servants-ministers), it is **only then** that you will be honored."

Matthew 23:11-12 - But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. Matt. 23:12 And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

\*Some of them thought they were big shots, but Jesus **bursts** their bubble.

3. There is also a spiritual, literal truth when Christ uses the term [little child].

a. Luke 12:31-32 - But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. Luke 12:32 Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

b. In the upper room (John 13:33), Jesus calls His disciples [little children].

c. In Matthew 18:2-5, the little child here represents the Little Flock, the believing **remnant** amongst the old apostate Israel.

4. Childlike humility is the **first** prerequisite for learning Bible truth.

Luke 10:21 - In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

II Chronicles 7:14 - If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

Micah 6:8 - He hath shewed thee, O man, what *is* good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

F. Matthew 18:6-9 - 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. Matt. 18:7 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! Matt. 18:8 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. Matt. 18:9 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.

1. It is going to be tough on the one who causes [one of these little ones] to falter. Offences come because of living in a **fallen** world, but Jesus says there is still no excuse and **woe** to the offender. Christ takes care of His own Little Flock. He is not talking about **self**-mutilation, but figuratively. He is talking about salvation, faith plus **works**. Salvation here is not like today.
2. Just because they are a Little Flock does not mean they are **un**important. The 12 had been looking at things the same way the **world** looks at things. They thought to have a great kingdom, it would need great people like them. But Jesus tells them that it is just the **opposite**.

Acts 4:13 - Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.

3. Again, since we live in a fallen world, lost people will harm us at times. But remember their **end**. It says in verse 8 - "everlasting fire", in verse 9 - "hell fire", and in Mark 9:43 - "hell fire and everlasting fire".

\*\*When Christ **returns**, He will set on fire a piece of real estate south of the Dead Sea. That fire will melt from the top of the earth to the **depths below** the mountains. This will be in the Millennial Kingdom - a **shaft**, an opening, a tunnel or a doorway to hell with gates and locks.

- a. It is located in Palestine, south of the Dead Sea. You cannot see it now because it is spiritual and **earth** covers it up. But when Jesus returns, that portion of earth will be melted down - burning out an **opening down** to hell.
- b. In the Millennial Kingdom, **wrongdoers** will be punished immediately. Sinners will be executed and **thrown** into hell [cast into everlasting hell].

Note: When the nations (world) come to Jerusalem to worship, they will look out there where men's **carcasses** are thrown into the **fire**.

Zechariah 14:16 - And it shall come to pass, *that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*

Isaiah 66:23-24 - And it shall come to pass, *that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. Isa. 66:24 And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh.*

\*It will be a monument of everlasting burning, a monument to the eternal **wrath** of God against sin.