

Matthew Chapter 17 Continued

Matthew 17:22 "And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men:"

“And while they abode in Galilee”: for they passed through it, when they departed from hence; (see Mark 9:30), and as they were going to Capernaum, and onward, to the coasts of Judea, in order to be at Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover. Where, and when, Christ was to suffer, and observing that the time of his death drew nigh, he inculcates it again to his disciples a third time, that they might be prepared for it, and not be discouraged and terrified by it.

“Jesus said unto them, the son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men”: some copies read, "sinful men"; and so the angels report the words (in Luke 24:7), by whom may be meant the Gentiles. Who, by the Jews, were reckoned very wicked men, and called sinners of the Gentiles.

Now Christ intimates, that the son of man, meaning himself, should be betrayed by the Jews, into the hands of the Gentiles. Which, with the Jews, nothing was reckoned a fouler action, or a viler crime.

Matthew 17:23 "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 explain to them that this was the salvation plan that had been worked out from the beginning of the earth.

He was trying to make them understand that this was victory, not defeat, because He would rise again. They really could not receive the fact that He had to die this cruel death. They were saddened knowing of His eminent death to the world.

Verses 24-27: Jesus, the glorified Son of God, is greater than demons and also the temple itself. The two incidents following the Transfiguration clearly reassert His supremacy. “Tribute money” (literally, “two drachmae”), is a technical term for the tax of half a shekel which every Jew over 20 was expected to contribute to the upkeep of the temple.

“Prevented,” meaning “preceded,” that is, to speak first, “of strangers:” The subject races were taxed first and most heavily. The “children,” the king’s own race, were “free”. Jesus Christ was the Lord and owner of the temple, and therefore it was not for Him to pay the tax.

However, our Lord would not give offense by seeming to be a lawbreaker. “A piece of money” (Greek stater), the silver tetra drachma, was equivalent to the shekel and therefor the exact amount of the tax for two persons.

Matthew 17:24 "And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute [money] came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute?"

“Tribute money”: A half-shekel tax (equivalent to about two days’ wages) collected annually from every male over 20, for the upkeep of the temple (Exodus 30:13-14; 2 Chron. 24:9). As kings did not tax their own sons, technically, Jesus, as God’s son, was exempt from the tax (verse 26). But to avoid offense, He paid on behalf of Himself and Peter (verse 27; Rom. 13:1-7; Titus 3:1; 2 Peter 2:13-17).

To answer the question that the tax man asked Peter: Jesus had not been paying taxes up until this time. Peter spoke too quickly, again.

Matthew 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?"

“He saith, yes”: Without any hesitation, knowing it had been his master's practice; and therefore as he had done it, did not doubt but he would again. And when he was come into the house; that is, Peter, when he was come into his own house, or at least into that where Christ was, in order to talk with him about this affair, the collectors had been speaking of to him. Who seems to have been alone when they met with him; however, Christ was not with him.

Jesus prevented him; saying what he intended to say, on that head; for he being the omniscient God, though not present, knew what question had been put to Peter, and what answer he had returned; and therefore, before Peter could lay the case before him, he puts this question to him.

“Saying, what thinkest thou, Simon”? How does it appear to thee, to thy reason and understanding? In what light dost thou consider this matter? What is thy judgment of it?

Of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? “Of their own children, or of strangers”? What is the usual practice of earthly kings, whether of Judea, or of other countries? Do their own children, sons, and heirs, such as are of their own family, pay? Or is it only their subjects that are not of their family?

Matthew 17:26 "Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free."

"Peter saith unto him": Peter meant, and rightly expressed; the answer to Christ's question is, of strangers: meaning not foreigners, or such who formerly belonged to other nations, but were now taken captive, and brought into subjection. But their own native subjects, so called, in distinction from their domestics, their children, and those of their own family.

Jesus saith unto him, then are the children free? From paying custom, tribute, and taxes, and leaves Peter to make the application. And which he suggested might be made, either thus: supposing it was a civil tax, that since he was the son of David, king of Israel, was of his house

and family, and heir apparent to his throne and kingdom. According to this rule, he must be exempt from such tribute.

Thus; taking it to have respect to the half shekel, paid on a religious account, for the service of the temple worship; that since he was the Son of the King of kings, for the support of whose worship and service that money was collected; and was also the Lord and proprietor of the temple, and greater than that, he might well be excused the payment of it.

Matthew 17:27 "Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea, and cast a 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."

“Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them”: That is, lest they should think that we despise the temple and its service, and thus provoke needless opposition; though we are not under obligation to pay it, yet it is best to pay it to them.

“Go thou to the sea”: This was at Capernaum, on the shore of the Sea of Tiberius. “Thou shalt find a piece of money”: In the original, thou shalt find a stater, a Roman silver coin of the value of four drachmas, or one shekel, and of course sufficient to pay the tribute for two, himself and Peter.

Jesus was saying to Peter: we do not owe them anything, but even though we do not owe them, we will pay them, to keep from causing a problem. Jesus had already made His point to Peter, that they did not owe any thing. The word "notwithstanding" means nevertheless, or in spite of the fact.

Matthew Chapter 17 Continued

1. Who did Jesus tell that He would be betrayed?
2. Where were they at the time?
3. When they killed Him (Jesus), what would happen?
4. Did the disciples understand His death, or His resurrection?
5. How long had this been planned?
6. In what city were they when the tax collector came?
7. Who did the tax collector come to?
8. Kings collect taxes from whom?
9. In verse 26, the children were what?

10. What does the word "notwithstanding" mean?
11. What did He tell Peter to do?
12. Where would he find the money?
13. What type coin was it, probably?