

SCRIPTURE
THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

CHAPTER 17

(Transfiguration v. 1 to 13)

Mt 17:1. And after six days (or six days later) Jesus taketh (or took with Him) Peter, (and) James, and John his brother (or the brother of James), and bringeth (or brought) (or led) them up into an (or a) high mountain apart (by themselves),

COMMENTARY

CHAPTER 17

(Transfiguration v. 1 to 13)

Mt 17:1. The time period is 34 months into the ministry of Jesus. There is a bit less than 2 months before Jesus will be arrested and crucified. Six days have passed from Luke 9:27. Luke's Gospel mentions eight days. These eight days appears to have included the day at the beginning and the end, not just the 6 in between days as mentioned in Matthew and Mark 9:2.

Jesus took Peter, James, and John, that was the brother of James. These were what we may call the inner circle, regarding leadership of the disciples. There was the 3 of the 12. Then there was the 12 of the 120.

These same three were together when Jesus raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead-ref Lk 8:49-56. Also these same three were with him in the Garden of Gethsemane before He was crucified-ref Mk 14:32-34.

Jesus led them to a high mountain. The four of them were away from, or separated from, the others.

The mountain is not identified. The word "high," regarding the mountain, is not meant to imply several thousand feet or meters. There are no real tall mountains of 4000 or more feet in the area Jesus and His disciples were usually in.

The mountain should have been one that would have been easily accessible, which should exclude cliff-like slopes.

The mountains around the Sea of Galilee

Mt 17:2. And (there He) was transfigured (or transformed) before them: and his face did shine (or shown) as (or like) the sun, and his raiment (or clothes) (or garments) was (or became as) white as the light.

range up to about 600 to 3600 feet depending on the location. Mt. Tabor is about 1886 feet.

Some believe the mountain could have been Mt. Hermon, which is Israel's tallest mountain at over 9000 feet. It borders two other countries as well. However, the height of that mountain, and the time it would take to climb it is unreasonable. Also it has snow on it much of the year, and this was the time of year when it was cold and just beginning to warm up.

The melting snows from Mt. Hermon become the source of the Jordan River, which flows all the way to the Dead Sea.

The Sea of Galilee is also known as the Lake of Tiberias.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:1**, And after six days (or six days later) Jesus taketh (or took with Him) Peter, (and) James, and John his brother (or the brother of James), and bringeth (or brought) (or led) them up into an (or a) high mountain apart (by themselves),

Mt 17:2. Chapter 16 ended with the Son of man coming in His kingdom.

Chapter 17 begins with Jesus being transfigured, which gives us a picture of Jesus in His kingdom.

Peter, James, and John were with Jesus.

As already alluded to, there were the 3 of the 12, and the 12 of the 120.

The three that saw the transfiguration can represent the Jews that are waiting for the millennial kingdom.

Then something happened that was completely unexpected. Jesus was transformed from His current state to what some believe will be as He will be when He reigns and rules on the earth during the

Millennium, when He returns at the time of the Battle of Armageddon. That one day battle will immediately following the horrific Tribulation period, which is believed to be not too far off.

The face of Jesus became like the sun.

The clothes that Jesus wore became very, very bright, as the sun. It is not possible to look directly into the sun on a clear day, else one's eyes could be damaged, as it is far too bright.

As this happened, one can imagine that the three disciples became terrified, as the brightness came from within and not from without.

As this was happening, Peter and they that were with him were getting very tired. Then they fell asleep-ref Lk 9:32. When they awoke, they saw a sight that no man has ever seen.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:2**, And (there He) was transfigured (or transformed) before them: and his face did shine (or shown) as (or like) the sun, and his raiment (or clothes) (or garments) was (or became as) white as the light.

Mt 17:3. And (just then), behold, there appeared unto (or before) (or to) them Moses and Elias (or Elijah) talking with him (or with Jesus).

Mt 17:3. As this all happened, yet another event took place. Two people appeared also. It is, as out of thin air, they materialized.

These two were **Moses** and **Elijah**.

Moses represented the law.

Elijah represented the prophets, but can also represent the raptured saints that will soon come just prior to the Tribulation. The law and grace are represented here.

How the disciples knew who the two were is not given.

These two are believed to be the ones that will appear around the midst of the soon coming Tribulation. These are the two olive trees the Bible speaks of. These are two Jews. Some

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Mt 17:4. Then answered Peter, (or Peter answered) and said unto (or to) Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt (or if you wish), let us (or I will) make (or put up) here three tabernacles (or shelters); one for thee (or you), and one for Moses, and one for Elias (or Elijah).

believe Enoch might be one, but he was not a Jew, or as the Bible calls them "olive trees."

At this time, they were talking with Jesus. One might suppose they were speaking of what still was ahead for Jesus. Jesus would be going to Jerusalem soon and be crucified, but would rise from the dead.

A note of interest: Mt 17:3 can lead to v. 12, which says that Elias is come already, and they knew him not.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:3**, And (just then), behold, there appeared unto (or before) (or to) them Moses and Elias (or Elijah) talking with him (or with Jesus).

Mt 17:4. Moses and Elijah were and are both alive. This proves that when people die a physical death on the earth, they are not dead, but are still alive.

Some have said that Moses represented those that die and will be resurrected. Elijah can represent those that will not die, but will be raptured-ref Rev 4:17.

Again, we see Peter seems to be the most outgoing of all the disciples. Nearly always he seemed to have something to say. He didn't seem to be a person of few words. He just had to speak it seems, even if no words came to him to speak.

Peter took the initiative and indicated it was good for "us" to be here. Again, he was speaking for all the disciples.

Next Peter explains why he believed it was good for them to be there.

Next, Peter speaks of putting up three tabernacles or what are called "booths"-ref Lev 23:34-42. V. 42 mentions the booths or shelters. This was customary for this feast.

This indicates that **this was the date of the Feast of Tabernacles.**

It also sounds like Peter was prepared to stay there for a period of time, rather than moving on. It seems like he was trying to direct things, rather than waiting on Jesus to do so.

The last words and emphasis of God the Father were "Hear ye Him." It almost sounds like this was a subtle way of saying to Peter, "shut up, and listen to Jesus."

The Word of God, in the hands of many teachers in these latter days, is one of no fear and little respect.

Isaiah shows us how we ought to be regarding the Word of God.

THEN I SAID. WOE IS ME! FOR I AM UNDONE BECAUSE I AM A MAN OF UNCLEAR LIPS AND I DWELL IN THE MIDST OF PEOPLE OF UNCLEAR LIPS: FOR MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE KING, THE LORD OF HOSTS-Isa 6:5.

There are seven feasts that the Jews celebrate. Each feast is on a specific date that concerns or has to do with Bible prophecy. These 7 are a calendar of specific events that were to take place. These are all very familiar to the Jews; however, many Gentile scholars are not aware of the special events they represent.

The Seven Feasts of Israel

1-Passover

The 14th day of the 1st month on the Jewish Calendar.

Jesus was crucified on this exact date. Jesus became our Passover Lamb.

(This is Fulfilled.)

2-Unleavened Bread

The 15th day of the 1st month..

The middle loaf of bread of the Passover meal is hidden or buried.

Jesus was buried on this exact date.
(This is Fulfilled.)

3-Firstfruits

This is the Sunday following the feast of Unleavened Bread.

On this exact day Jesus was resurrected. He became the Firstfruits of them that died.
(This is Fulfilled.)

4-Pentecost

Also called the Feast of Weeks in the Old Testament.

This is the 50th day after Firstfruits. The Holy Spirit came in His fullness on this exact day.
(This is fulfilled.)

5-Trumpets

This is the 1st day of the 7th month.

This is the date of the **Rapture**. Two trumpets are blown. Two events happen. First the dead in Christ arise, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Gentile Bible scholars usually teach the Rapture can come at any time. **It is because they do not understand the Jewish feasts.**

The Rapture is expected to occur on the Feast of Trumpets as the fulfillment of this feast. It will be at midnight Jewish time. God set the dates. Behold, the bridegroom cometh.

(This is not yet fulfilled.)

6-Atonement

This is the 10th day of the 7th month.

This represents the repentance of Israel.

This is when they shall look upon Him, Whom they have pierced.

(Not yet fulfilled.)

7-Tabernacles

This feast is the 15th day of the 7th month.

This represents the coming state of rest, which is called the Millennium.

Mt 17:5. While he yet spake (or was still speaking), behold, a bright cloud overshadowed (or enveloped) them: and behold a voice out of (or from) the cloud, which said (or saying), This is my beloved Son, (whom I love) in (or with) whom I am well pleased (or love); hear ye (or listen to) him.

Jesus will reign on this earth for one thousand years as the King of kings and Lord of lords.
(Not yet fulfilled.)

Jewish people understand the feasts in part.

Born again Jewish people should understand the feasts much more fully.

Most **born again Gentiles**, including preachers, have **little understanding** of the seven feasts and what they represent. Gentiles have a need to understand these feasts and God's plan regarding their fulfillment.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:4**, Then answered Peter, (or Peter answered) and said unto (or to) Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt (of if you wish), let us (or I will) make (or put up) here three tabernacles (or shelters); one for thee (or you), and one for Moses, and one for Elias (or Elijah).

Mt 17:5. As Jesus was speaking, a bright cloud came over them. It seems to have appeared suddenly. Then a voice came forth out of the cloud. The voice was that of God the Father. The cloud prevented anyone from seeing from where the voice came.

God the Father spoke.

He said three things.

First, He said: This is My beloved Son, (whom I love).

Second, God spoke: (with) whom I am well pleased.

Third, God commanded the disciples: hear ye (or listen to) Him.

The emphasis from God the Father was on Jesus and for His disciples to listen to Him. It **was not** on Moses and Elijah.

One might consider that the disciples were terrified. They heard the voice of God the Father. They may have thought that if they actually heard the voice of God, they might die.

This event was spoken of by Peter later on in 2 Pe 1:16-18. It is written-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. 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.

And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:5**, While he yet spake (or was still speaking), behold, a bright cloud overshadowed (or enveloped) them: and behold a voice out of (or from) the cloud, which said (or saying), This is my beloved Son, (whom I love) in (or with) whom I am well pleased (or love); hear ye (or listen to) him.

Mt 17:6. So we see at the time the disciples heard the voice, they became very afraid.

The words: "very afraid" and "fell" on their face" indicates they were terror-stricken.

They fell on their face with their face toward the ground, hoping that this might protect them. Terror was in their hearts. We might say, it is like someone that would bury their face and place their hands on the back of their head.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:6**, And when the disciples heard it (or heard this), they fell on their face (or fell face down) (or fell on their faces) (to the ground), and were sore (or much) afraid) (or terrified).

Mt 17:6. And when the disciples heard it (or heard this), they fell on their face (or fell face down) (or fell on their faces) (to the ground), and were sore (or much) afraid) (or terrified).

Mt 17:7. And (or but) Jesus came and

Mt 17:7. Jesus saw how the disciples were

touched them, and (he) said, Arise (or get up), and be (or do) not (or don't be) afraid.

Mt 17:8. And when they had lifted up their eyes (or they looked up) (or lifting up their eyes), they saw no man (or no one), save (or except) Jesus (Himself) only (alone).

Chronologically, Mt 17:8 goes to Mk 9:2.

Mk 9:2 goes to Mk 9:8.

Mk 9:8 goes to Lk 9:28.

Lk 9:28 goes to Lk 9:36.

Lk 9:36 goes to Mt 17:9.

Mt 17:9. And as they came down (or were coming) from (or down) (from) the mountain, Jesus charged (or instructed) (or commanded) them, saying, (don't) Tell the vision to no man (or anyone) (or no one), (what you have seen) until the Son of man be (or has) risen (or has been raised) from the dead.

very afraid and how they fell face down on the ground.

He came and touched them, as if to say,
"It is ok. I am here.
There is no need to be afraid.
You can get up now."
It was a caring touch.
It was a touch of compassion and love.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:7**, And (or but) Jesus came and touched them, and (he) said, Arise (or get up), and be (or do) not (or don't be) afraid.

Mt 17:8. Upon hearing the words of Jesus they lifted up their heads and eyes. Undoubtedly, much to their surprise, they (Peter, James, and John) did not see anyone at all except Jesus. Jesus was standing alone, and all was peaceful.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:8**, And when they had lifted up their eyes (or they looked up) (or lifting up their eyes), they saw no man (or no one), save (or except) Jesus (Himself) only (alone).

Still 34 months into the ministry of Jesus

Mk 9:2 goes to Mk 9:8.

Mk 9:8 goes to Lk 9:28.

Lk 9:28 goes to Lk 9:36.

Lk 9:36 goes to Mt 17:9.

Mt 17:9. And, afterwards, they began descending the mountain. Again, what mountain it was is not made clear. As already alluded to, there are many mountains in various areas around the Sea of Galilee. Also, on the eastern side, which is the Golan Heights, there is a large plateau area.

God forbid, when the enemies of Israel

occupied this area they mounted a large machine gun that overlooked the Sea of Galilee. There they could assassinate the Jews below. The news sometimes contains information how the enemies of Israel want this area back. It is because it is a great place to place snipers that can kill people around the Sea of Galilee and destroy some of the tourism in Israel.

As they (Jesus and His disciples) went down the mountain, Jesus **commanded** those that were with Him that they were not to tell anyone what they had seen. This included their fellow disciples. Jesus called what they had seen a vision.

This command would remain in effect until Jesus had been raised from the dead.

The disciples had little or no understanding at that time what Jesus had meant, when He had said the Son of man has risen from the dead.

There was still about 2 months until Jesus would be arrested and crucified. In other words, it was now about 34 months into His ministry, which would last 3 years.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:9**, And as they came down (or were coming) from (or down) (from) the mountain, Jesus charged (or instructed) (or commanded) them, saying, (don't) Tell the vision to no man (or anyone) (or no one), (what you have seen) until the Son of man be (or has) risen (or has been raised) from the dead.

Mt 17:10. The disciples of Jesus wanted to know why the religious leaders were saying that **Elijah must** first come.

It was because the Scriptures foretold that Elijah would first come, and then the Messiah would follow. But, because the religious leaders did not understand that John the Baptist came in the spirit of Elijah, this became

Mt 17:10. And his (or the) disciples asked him, saying, Why then say (or do) the scribes (or teachers of the law say) that Elias (or Elijah) must first come (or come first)?

a stumbling block to them, so they did not believe that Jesus was the Christ.

Mal 4:5,6-Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse.

The disciples and people were expecting the millennial kingdom, as the King was now present. Little did any suspect at this time that Jesus would be crucified first. Then He would rise from the dead, and then ascend up to be with His Father for about 2000 years, and then return at the time of Armageddon, and then the 1000 year reign of Jesus as the King of kings and Lord of lords would take place.

Many, many, many are the stumbling blocks that everyone encounters when they seek Christ. Satan is the deceiver. He fills every person's minds with stumbling-blocks, and questions, and unbelief.

For this very purpose, Satan was created by God. People hear God's Word, and they hear Satan's lies in their mind. Their heart chooses which they will believe.

MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND QUESTIONS

As a person hears or reads God's Word, wrong thinking fills their heart.

The author has also gone through this time of questions and misunderstanding as probably every person seeking God does, although some do not recognize it.

So, the way it was dealt with is this.

He began to write down the numerous questions and misunderstandings on several sheets of paper. Many misunderstandings there were that were written.

Time passed. Years passed.

Then one day, it may be said, quite by accident, those old pages of questions were found. There were all those questions that the author had written many years prior that he did not understand regarding God's Word.

As he read the questions, he now knew the answer to every single one from God's Word.

The Bible teaches us to study diligently. God's Word is to be our everyday life, not "part" of our everyday life.

To live is Christ. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain-Phil 1:21.

22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.

Mt 17:11. And (He) Jesus answered (or replied) and said unto them, (To be sure) Elias (or Elijah) truly shall first come (or is coming), and (will) restore all things.

Mt 17:12. But I say unto (or to) you (or tell you), That Elias (or Elijah) is come already (or

29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;

30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

2 Tim 3:13-But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

This was the case with many of the scribes and Pharisees.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:10**, And his (or the) disciples asked him, saying, Why then say (or do) the scribes (or teachers of the law say) that Elias (or Elijah) must first come (or come first)?

Mt 17:11. Jesus answered their question, regarding the coming of Elijah first in this manner. He answered in such a way as to assure them, regarding what He was about to say. One translation uses the words, "TO BE SURE." In other words, have no doubts. Rest assured. Know positively.

Then He told those that asked, that Elijah shall come first and will restore all things.

Understand, Jesus shall return at the time of Armageddon, but Elijah shall return before Him. Elijah shall return during the midst of the Tribulation, but these things were not understood at that time.

Then He continues in the next verse.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:11**, And (He) Jesus answered (or replied) and said unto them, (To be sure) Elias (or Elijah) truly shall first come (or is coming), and (will) restore all things.

Mt 17:12. Now Jesus continues. He tells those listening that Elijah has already come. In

has already come) (or came), and they knew him not (or they did not recognize him), but have done (or did) unto (or to) him whatsoever (or whatever) they listed (or everything they wished). Likewise (or in the same way) shall also the Son of man suffer of them (or is going to) (suffer at their hands).

Mt 17:13. Then the disciples understood that he spake (or was talking) (or he had spoken) unto (or to) them of (or about) John the Baptist.

other words, the Scripture has already been fulfilled. It is already finished.

Elijah has come. But the people did not recognize him. Jesus continues by indicating they did to John everything they wanted. They had arrested John. They had put him in prison in horrible conditions. Then they had beheaded John simply because a girl had danced in such a way as to please Herod, who had promised to give her whatsoever she asked. She had asked for the head of John the Baptist, which was Elijah that was to first come.

Then Jesus goes on to say that the "Son of man" (which was Himself) was likewise going to suffer at their hands, the hands of the haters of Christ.

Jesus knows all things. He knew, if He would say this or that, exactly what others would say in return before they ever said a word.

The world hated Jesus then. The world hates Jesus now. The name of Jesus is regarded as a curse word in the mouths of millions of people every day throughout the world.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:12**, But I say unto (or to) you (or tell you), That Elias (or Elijah) is come already (or has already come) (or came), and they knew him not (or they did not recognize him), but have done (or did) unto (or to) him whatsoever (or whatever) they listed (or everything they wished). Likewise (or in the same way) shall also the Son of man suffer of them (or is going to) (suffer at their hands). Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.

Mt 17:13. After Jesus had spoken regarding that Elijah had come and related it to John the Baptist, then the disciples came to the understanding that the two were the same. At this time, John was already dead.

As **Elijah** had to come before Jesus, so he will also come during the midst of the Tribulation.

He will be one of the two witnesses that will stand up against the Antichrist on the Temple Mount and will testify for three and a half years. Only immediately after the Tribulation, shall he be killed. Moses shall also be the other witness it appears. That is why no man knows exactly where the body of Moses is located, only a general area.

They only know the general location. Satan would destroy that body, if he knew the location. This is because he wants to prevent the fulfillment of Moses and Elijah being on the Temple Mount during the second part of the Tribulation.

The Rapture (or caught up) and the Tribulation draw closer and closer every day.

Meanwhile, the preaching of God's Word gets more and more watered-down, with many Bible subjects no longer even taught. And, truly, the people of this latter day generation love to have it this way. The Word of God convicts people of sin, and sin in these latter days abounds.

Indeed, the time is soon coming when people's thoughts will be only evil continually. Does any of this fit you?

As it has been said in **Mt 17:13**, Then the disciples understood that he spake (or was talking) (or he had spoken) unto (or to) them of (or about) John the Baptist.

Still 34 months into the ministry of Jesus

Chronologically, Mt 17:13 goes to Mk 9:9.

Mk 9:9 goes to Mk 9:13.

Mk 9:13 goes to Mt 17:14.

(The lunatic man healed)

Mt 17:14. When Jesus and the disciples had come to the crowd of people, then a certain

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(The lunatic man healed)

Mt 17:14. And when they were come (or came) to the multitude (or crowd), there came to

him a certain man (or a man approached) (or came up to) (Jesus), kneeling down to him (or knelt before him) (or falling on his knees), and saying,

Mt 17:15. Lord, have mercy on my son: (he said) for he is lunatick (or is epileptic), and sore vexed (or is suffering greatly) (or is very ill): for oftentimes (or often) he falleth (or falls) into the fire, and oft (or often) into the water.

man also came.

He approached Jesus and then fell on his knees. Then he began to speak. In falling on his knees, he was acknowledging that Jesus was God. He was the Messiah.

The man was also desperate, as he needed help and did not know where else to turn. Jesus was his last hope and only hope left. The man was helpless and broken. The closer a person is to Christ, the more broken and humble he should be.

Whenever a person finds Christ, he is to lose himself or deny himself. Self must decrease more and more, and Christ in us needs to increase more and more.

Whenever the word "crowd" seems to be used, it can indicate anywhere from a crowd (or undetermined amount) to a few thousand people. This word is used in the Bible 205 times.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:14**, And when they were come (or came) to the multitude (or crowd), there came to him a certain man (or a man approached) (or came up to) (Jesus), kneeling down to him (or knelt before him) (or falling on his knees), and saying,

Mt 17:15. As the man fell on his knees before Jesus, he began to tell Jesus why he came.

He began by asking for **mercy** for his son. The man was interceding for his son.

Then he explained that his son was a lunatick. This word is in the KJV two times.

It means to be moon struck or crazy. It is generally referred to as being **epileptic**. A person with this has a disorder of the nervous system and of brain activity. This can cause a person to suddenly become unconscious or to have violent, uncontrolled movements (or

Mt 17:16. And I brought him to thy (or your) disciples, and they could not cure (or heal) him.

Mt 17:17. Then Jesus answered and said (or Jesus replied), O faithless (or unbelieving) and perverse generation, how long shall I be with (or stay with) you? how long shall I suffer you (or put up with you)? bring him (the boy) hither (or here) to me.

seizures) of the body that can vary from just a brief time to a long period of time.

Mk 9:17 calls it a dumb spirit and also mentions he was foaming at the mouth and gnashing with his teeth-ref Mk 9:18, 20.

The father of the boy was crying out for help for his son, for he was very ill. The father of the child explained that he may fall into the fire or even very often into the water.

This could indicate that they lived near some water, or perhaps a river, or even the Sea of Galilee.

As it has been said **Mt 17:15**, Lord, have mercy on my son: (he said) for he is lunatick (or is epileptic), and sore vexed (or is suffering greatly) (or is very ill): for oftentimes (or often) he falleth (or falls) into the fire, and oft (or often) into the water.

Mt 17:16. The man continues by saying that he had brought his son to the disciples of Jesus. However, the disciples could not cure or heal him.

This reflects that it is a more difficult disorder to heal than most other diseases or disorders.

The disciples had been healing people of all kinds of diseases, but this one was resistant to the power that the disciples possessed.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:16**, And I brought him to thy (or your) disciples, and they could not cure (or heal) him.

Mt 17:17. Then Jesus answered what had been said and replied with further information.

First, He indicated that the generation He was in was both **faithless** (or unbelieving) and perverse. In verse 20, Jesus talks about their **unbelief**.

Faithless indicates that the people's hearts were hard, like a rock, or, at best, there was a bit of softness, but that softness could be quickly overcome by this world.

Unbelieving means the people just did not believe.

These two words described Israel. Israel was faithless and unbelieving.

In addition, **faithless** indicates that the people's faith was dead. Faith comes by hearing God's Word, but then faith can also relate to the type of heart a person has. A person can hear God's Word, but the Word of God cannot penetrate as the person's heart is like a rock. God's Word can fall on rocky soil, and it can begin to grow, but then the roots cannot develop as the soil is too rocky.

Some have a wayside heart, or heart filled with the cares of this world, or the deceitfulness of riches, or a heart filled with the lusts of all sorts of things, or a heart filled with the desires for the pleasures of this life.

Unbelieving indicates the same thing.

Then Jesus calls that generation "perverse." Israel had twisted and perverted God's Word.

This is also the case in these latter days. God's Word has been twisted, and perverted, and redirected to mean a way of gaining riches, a way of guaranteeing success in the business world. Some preachers of God's Word in these latter days boast of their beautiful homes, elaborate furniture, and expensive cars, while some in their congregations may go home and have very little to eat.

Clergy may boast their faith has accomplished this.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:17**, Then Jesus answered and said (or Jesus replied), O

Mt 17:18. And Jesus rebuked (him) the devil (or demon); and he (or it) departed (or came) out of him (the boy): and the child (or he) was cured (or healed) from that very hour (or moment) (or at once).

faithless (or unbelieving) and perverse generation, how long shall I be with (or stay with) you? how long shall I suffer you (or put up with you)? bring him (the boy) hither (or here) to me.

Mt 17:18. Jesus commanded the demon that was in the boy. As a result, the child was totally healed from the very hour that Jesus did this.

The word "devil" is often used in place of the word "demon" in the KJV. This word is used in the KJV 61 times.

One can imagine the reaction of those standing by. No demon or devil, no, not Satan himself had the power to resist or prevent anything Jesus did. Over and over, Jesus proved that he is God, and there is none other.

How is it then that the world ignores the Bible, the very words of God? How is it that the world has no fear about taking God's name in vain?

Mankind is so tuned in to hearing Satan's voice in their thoughts almost continually, that they mistakenly think it is their own thoughts.

Every time Satan puts unholy and disobedient thoughts in our mind, it is a test. Will we obey God and His Word; or will we obey the thoughts in our mind that are not in harmony with the Word of God? Life is that test.

God's Word, the Bible, reveals God to us. This same book reveals clearly how Satan works in both our thoughts as well as through various situations. Apart from Jesus and God's Word (which are one), we are defenseless against the many schemes of the devil.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:18**, And Jesus rebuked (him) the devil (or demon); and he (or it) departed (or came) out of him (the boy): and the child (or he) was cured (or healed) from that very hour (or moment) (or at once).

Mt 17:19. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart (or in private) (or privately), and said (or asked), Why could not (or couldn't) we cast (or drive) him (or it) out?

Mt 17:20. And Jesus (or he) said (or replied) unto them, Because of your unbelief (or because you have so little faith) (or because of the littleness of your faith): for verily (or truly) I say unto you (or I tell you the truth), If ye (or you) have faith as (small as) a grain of mustard seed, ye shall (or can) say unto (or to) this mountain, Remove (from) hence (or here) to yonder place (or to there); and it shall remove (or move); and nothing shall be impossible unto (or for) you.

Mt 17:19. After the disciples failed to cast out the devil, but Jesus did cast it out, the disciples must have been perplexed.

They had been successful before, probably many times, but not this time.

So they came to Jesus, in private, and then asked Him as to why they couldn't cast out the devil.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:19**, Then came the disciples to Jesus apart (or in private) (or privately), and said (or asked), Why could not (or couldn't) we cast (or drive) him (or it) out?

Mt 17:20. Then Jesus replied to their question. The reason He gave as to why they could not cast out the demon was their unbelief. It was because of their lack of faith. Yes, they had some faith, but more was needed.

Jesus was, in a sense, instructing His disciples how to deal with this kind of situation in the future.

The words "Verily, I say unto you," precede words that Jesus wants to emphasize greatly.

A mustard seed is so small, it is hard to see. It is like a speck of dust. But it can grow greatly. A person may see these in various places in Israel, including the pathway alongside of the eastern gate wall in Jerusalem.

We might put it this way. Let us consider that you wanted to walk along a steep cliff to see the beautiful view of the mountains and towns in the distance.

You cautiously walk over near the edge, but are careful not to get too close to the cliff. You had faith you would not fall as you stayed back several feet from the edge.

But then you decide you want to get closer to the edge, but your trust that you can get any

closer to the edge, without falling over the edge, failed. You had faith to walk near the edge, but not faith to walk beyond a certain point.

When you got too near the edge, unbelief took over, and fear set in.

Strong faith is not always stronger faith. It is faith void of doubts.

Satan used fear to cause people to go astray. The Scriptures have much information about Satan and how he works in both the Old and New Testaments.

So what happens? A thought comes into our mind to read the Bible. Immediately, another thought comes into our mind that we need to go and do something else, such as watch a TV program, or clean the house, or go somewhere, or eat something. Life is a test. Will our desire to be with Jesus, as we are in His Word, prevail; or will the new thought to do something else take precedence?

Few so-called Christians in this present lukewarm generation have much spiritual discernment at all. Few have much understanding of God's Word. And even though about 100% are positive they will not go to hell, in reality, most will and do.

Unbelief or little faith needs to become strong faith—**WHICH IS FAITH THAT REJECTS ALL DOUBT**. It is void of all doubt that Satan puts in the thoughts of a person.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen-ref Heb 11:1. The foundation is to believe even though there is no evidence that can be seen as yet. It is total unwavering faith in Jesus Christ, and in God's Word, the Bible.

Mt 26:42-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.**

Jesus had that kind of faith. He was and is God. He had total faith in His Father. He said, Thine will be done, not my will.

If a person has faith even as small as a grain of mustard seed, which is about the size of the head of a pin, then that person will be able to tell a mountain to move, and it will move. The mountain could have been a reference to Mt. Tabor, or other nearby mountain. The idea of moving a mountain is used to illustrate moving obstacles that are in your way according to the will of God. Faith is needed, but in this generation, is there much true faith that is built upon being in the Word of God (the Bible)? Few read their Bible faithfully in these last days. Few obey the Bible in these latter days. Rather many follow TV, radio, and church Bible teachers that say what people's ears itch to hear.

Nothing will be impossible to the person that has faith without doubts, which is strong faith. Jesus had that faith. However, in this latter day generation, that kind of faith is almost non-existent.

The Scriptures tell us that "faith" can only come from hearing or reading God's Word, as it is written: Ro 10:17-SO THEN FAITH COMETH BY HEARING, AND HEARING BY THE WORD OF GOD.

In this latter day generation, most Bible teachers teach little of the Bible. Many pick a verse, or a few verses, and then talk about them, sometimes using no other verses. Some preachers no longer use God's Word at all, but rather psychology or some other teachings. These masquerade as Bible teachers, but are actually deceivers. Many claim they are teachers of God's Word, but they are deceivers. Catholic priests are deceivers. Many TV and radio ministers are deceivers. Ye shall know

them by their fruits. Do they confess that **Jesus Christ is come in the flesh**? Few do. Ones that do not, the Bible indicates they are a deceiver-ref 1 Jn 4:2,3 and 2 Jn 7.

Many false teachers of God's Word are financially supported by many that are shallow in God's Word. Meanwhile, the few that do teach God's Word are rejected, as this is the age that will not put up with sound doctrine-ref 1 Tim 1:10.

Titus tells us in chapter 2 verse 1-BUT SPEAK THOU THE THINGS WHICH BECOME SOUND DOCTRINE.

In keeping with this verse, ref Mt 17:20, these verses may also be considered.

Ps 34:10-The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing.

Ps 84:11-For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory, no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.

Mt 7:11-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.

Mk 11:22-24-And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

John 14:12-15-Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall

Mt 17:21. Howbeit this kind goeth not out (or does not go out) but (or except) by prayer and fasting.

he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it. If ye love me, keep my commandments.

John 14:16-And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

John 15:7-If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:20**, And Jesus (or he) said (or replied) unto them, Because of your unbelief (or because you have so little faith) (or because of the littleness of your faith): for verily (or truly) I say unto you (or I tell you the truth), If ye (or you) have faith as (small as) a grain of mustard seed, ye shall (or can) say unto (or to) this mountain, Remove (from) hence (or here) to yonder place (or to there); and it shall remove (or move); and nothing shall be impossible unto (or for) you.

Mt 17:21. The first three words indicates that there are different kinds of demons. Some are stronger than others.

The NKJ Bible uses the word evil spirits 49 times.

The power of some demons is greater or stronger than others.

The kind that Jesus had just cast out would not normally depart except by prayer and fasting. The exception was Jesus. It immediately went out at the command of Jesus, but not at the command of the disciples.

In certain countries of the world, demonic activity seems to be more intense than others. We might consider that this would be so in non-Christian countries, as well as India and some

in Africa.

There are times a demonic spirit may even try to enter a person that has the Holy Spirit; however, it cannot do so. As it tries, it may be said to be like some force hitting the person, but then being repelled each time.

The power of some demonic spirits can be very strong. One may find that "some" people in insane asylums may be possessed with a demonic spirit. The world does not know how to deal with such a thing.

Some preachers do know how to deal with such situations, some do not. Most preachers or clergy are biblically ignorant of both the Scriptures and evil spirits.

Also a few preachers and church members do fast in accordance with the Bible, which states clearly that the people that are of God will indeed fast-ref Mt 9:15; Mk 2:20; and Lk 5:35. Yet, most do not.

So how many really obey the Bible in this? Very, very few.

How many are going to inherit eternal life? Very, very few.

Prayer and fasting are like the left and right hand. They go together, as does faith, patience, endurance, and praise.

The Lord's prayer is a daily prayer that all born again Christians should be praying. Jesus taught the Lord's prayer. Failure to use this daily prayer may indicate a biblical blindness on the person.

It is written: 1 Thes 5:17-PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.

All believers are also to fast. A one week fast (water only) will break those knots that we have in our stomach.

Chronologically, Mt 17:21 goes to Mk 9:14.

Mk 9:14 goes to Mk 9:29.

Mk 9:29 goes to Lk 9:37.

Lk 9:37 goes to Lk 9:43.

Lk 9:43 goes to Mt 17:22.

(Jesus speaks of His betrayal v. 22-23)

Still 34 months into the ministry of Jesus.

Mt 17:22. And while (or when) they abode (or came together) (or were gathering together) in Galilee, Jesus (or he) said unto (or to) them, The Son of man shall be (or is going to be) betrayed (or delivered) into the hands of men:

As it has been said in **Mt 17:21**, Howbeit this kind goeth not out (or does not go out) but (or except) by prayer and fasting.

Chronologically, Mt 17:21 goes to Mk 9:14.

Mk 9:14 goes to Mk 9:29.

Mk 9:29 goes to Lk 9:37.

Lk 9:37 goes to Lk 9:43.

Lk 9:43 goes to Mt 17:22.

(Jesus speaks of His betrayal v. 22-23)

Still 34 months into the ministry of Jesus.

Mt 17:22. Jesus and the disciples continued to stay in the Galilee for a period of time. This tends to give support that Mt. Tabor could have been where the transfiguration may have taken place.

During this time, Jesus spoke unto His disciples and began telling them that He was going to be betrayed by someone into the hands of men.

None understood that He would give His life, so that those that would repent and believe on Him would themselves have eternal life.

The men that Jesus was referring to were very evil. **The time period was about 2 months before it would happen. Approximately 34 months had now passed, since Jesus had been baptized by John in the Jordan-ref Mt 3:14.**

Jesus was preparing His disciples for what lies ahead. This included His going to Jerusalem, being betrayed and arrested, put in prison, being tried, and sentenced to death. Then being crucified and marred worse than any man.

The brutality that Jesus would suffer would leave Him looking like He had been put through the grinder. It would be a miracle that Jesus would be able to even speak a single word after the full onslaught of Satan's wrath working through men to scourge and brutally beat and torture Jesus.

This He had to suffer to save those that would one day believe on Him and trust Him for the forgiveness of their sins. It was man's sin that put Jesus on the cross.

It was God's love that sent Jesus into this world to save the few that would one day follow Him.

Many confess they are saved, but they do not follow Jesus and obey His Word. Only a few do this. Only a few follow Jesus and serve Him.

Millions and millions of people think they will be in heaven. No one thinks they will be in the lake of fire for eternity. Yet, statistically, it appears that less than one in a hundred will inherit eternal life. Who could believe this, except some that read God's Word, obey it, and understand the strait gate and narrow way.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:22**, And while (or when) they abode (or came together) (or were gathering together) in Galilee, Jesus (or he) said unto (or to) them, The Son of man shall be (or is going to be) betrayed (or delivered) into the hands of men:

Mt 17:23. And they shall (or will) kill him, and (on) the third day he shall (or will) be raised again (to life). And they (the disciples) were exceeding sorry (or were filled with grief) (or were greatly grieved).

Mt 17:23. Jesus continues to tell His disciples what lies ahead. He tells them that He shall be killed.

But then on the third day, He would be raised from the dead.

When the disciples heard this, they were undoubtedly horrified. They had been with Jesus now for over two years.

Their grief was probably beyond measure. Some may have cried. Some may have been in a state of denial.

The words about His upcoming death undoubtedly rang MUCH LOUDER in their hearts, than His being raised back to life.

It would seem inconceivable that someone would want to kill a person that could heal every disease that existed. After all, it might be one of them that was sick. Yet because Jesus pointed out their sin, they hated Him. Because Jesus corrected them, they hated Him.

Why would a person that had the power to raise dead people be killed?

The people believed this was going to be the King of Israel, and He would deliver them from the bondage of Rome.

Judas, one of the twelve, also heard these words; yet, it did not hinder him from what he was going to do—that is, to betray Jesus.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:23**, And they shall (or will) kill him, and (on) the third day he shall (or will) be raised again (to life). And they (the disciples) were exceeding sorry (or were filled with grief) (or were greatly grieved).

Chronologically, Mt 17:23 goes to Mk 9:30.

Mk 9:30 goes to Mk 9:32.

Mk 9:32 goes to Lk 9:44.

Lk 9:44 goes to Lk 9:45.

Lk 9:45 goes to Mt 17:24.

Still 34 months into the ministry of Jesus.

(The Tribute Money v. 24-27)

Chronologically, Mt 17:23 goes to Mk 9:30.

Mk 9:30 goes to Mk 9:32.

Mk 9:32 goes to Lk 9:44.

Lk 9:44 goes to Lk 9:45.

Lk 9:45 goes to Mt 17:24.

Still 34 months into the ministry of Jesus.

(The Tribute Money v. 24-27)

Mt 17:24. And when (or after) they (Jesus and his disciples) were come to (or arrived at) Capernaum, they (or those) (the collectors) that received tribute money (or the two drachma tax) came to Peter, and said (or asked), Doth (or does) not (or doesn't) your master (or teacher) pay tribute (or pay the Temple tax) (or two-drachma tax)?

Mt 17:24. Finally, Jesus and His disciples arrived at Capernaum. It appears Jesus stayed there at Peter's home a great deal. One may say this was His headquarters.

They would go out from Capernaum to the various areas.

Capernaum was on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. It is a beautiful area. Fish would have been their main industry. Many boats of all sorts should have been there.

The remains of Capernaum have been being excavated for many years along with its wall.

Also the remains of a synagogue has been excavated, which dates back to about 100 AD. Underneath it is what may be the synagogue that was there in the days of Jesus.

There is a beautiful boat ride that goes back and forth to the area of Tiberias that many tourists take. Tiberias is on the western shore down toward the southern end. It is a city whose lights adorn the night sky from the other side of the lake.

When Jesus arrived there, the tax collectors asked Peter regarding His master (Jesus) and the paying of the two drachma Temple tax. It is note worthy that they called Jesus, Peter's master.

This tax was equivalent to approximately a half shekel tax or perhaps two days' wages. It was to be collected from all males that were 20 years old and up.

This tax had nothing to do with the political arena or Rome. It appears that the priests and the Levites did not have to pay this tax.

Exodus 30:13-16

This they shall give, every one that passeth among them that are numbered, half a shekel after the shekel of the sanctuary: (a shekel is

Mt 17:25. He saith (or replied) (or said), Yes (he does). And when he (Peter) was come (or came) into the house, Jesus prevented him (or spoke to him first), saying (or was the first to speak), What thinkest thou (or what do you think), Simon (he asked)? of (or from) whom do the **kings** of the earth take (or collect) custom or (customs) or tribute (or collect duty and taxes) (or poll-tax)? of their own children (or sons), or of strangers (or others)?

twenty gerahs:) an half shekel shall be the offering of the Lord.

14 Every one that passeth among them that are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering unto the Lord.

15 The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less than half a shekel, when they give an offering unto the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.

16 And thou shalt take the atonement money of the children of Israel, and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation; that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, to make an atonement for your souls.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:24**, And when (or after) they (Jesus and his disciples) were come to (or arrived at) Capernaum, they (or those) (the collectors) that received tribute money (or the two drachma tax) came to Peter, and said (or asked), Doth (or does) not (or doesn't) your master (or teacher) pay tribute (or pay the Temple tax) (or two-drachma tax)?

Mt 17:25. Peter should have asked Jesus about the matter, but he did not. He appears to have answered quickly and without hesitation, which he should not have done.

Scripture tells us: Ja 1:19-Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, **slow to speak**, slow to wrath:

It appears Peter told them yes, Jesus did pay the tax. In reality, Jesus, did not owe any tax. He needed no ransom or atonement.

So when Peter came into the house, Jesus asked him a question, in what appears to be done very abruptly.

Peter may have been a bit startled.

Mt 17:26. (And upon his saying) Peter saith unto him (or answered), Of (or from) strangers (or from others). Jesus saith (or said) unto (or to) him, (Consequently) Then are the children (or sons) free (or are exempt).

Mt 17:27. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them (or but so that we do not) (or may not) (offend them), (or give them offense) go thou to the sea (or lake), and cast (or throw) an (or a) hook (or throw out your line), and take up the (first) fish that first cometh (or comes) up (or you catch); and (open its mouth) when thou hast opened his (or its) mouth, thou shalt (or you will) find a piece of money (a four-drachma coin) (or a stater) (or shekel): that take (or take it), and

As it has been said in **Mt 17:25**, He saith (or replied) (or said), Yes (he does). And when he (Peter) was come (or came) into the house, Jesus prevented him (or spoke to him first), saying (or was the first to speak), What thinkest thou (or what do you think), Simon (he asked)? of (or from) whom do the kings of the earth take (or collect) custom or (customs) or tribute (or collect duty and taxes) (or poll-tax)? of their own children (or sons), or of strangers (or others)?

Mt 17:26. Peter had been asked a question. Now he replies. He answered: From strangers or others in the land that are not citizens.

Rulers tax those that are strangers in the land, and so then their own people are free from paying or are exempt. In other words: then are the children or residents free or exempt from paying. The strangers carry the heavy load of much taxes.

Kings do not tax their own sons.

As already alluded to, by paying the tax no one could accuse them. Not even their enemies could find an occasion to speak against them.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:26**, (And upon his saying) Peter saith unto him (or answered), Of (or from) strangers (or from others). Jesus saith (or said) unto (or to) him, (Consequently) Then are the children (or sons) free (or are exempt).

Mt 17:27. Jesus controlled the weather.

Jesus controlled the bread being multiplied.

Jesus controlled gravity or the water, as He walked on the water.

Jesus even controlled the fish.

Jesus had thus said that Peter and Himself both should be exempt from paying the tax or tribute. They were both citizens or residents of the land. They were not strangers or aliens or

give (it) unto (or to) them for me (or my tax) and thee (or yours) (or you).

a resident of another country.

Yet, Jesus went on to say that He did not want to offend them, or cause an offense, or cause any problems. No matter how great the obstacle or test Satan tried to entangle Jesus in, Jesus always overcame.

Jesus demonstrated obedience to the laws.

Has anyone considered traffic laws? Is failure to come to a stop sign breaking the law? Yes. Is speeding breaking the law? Yes. Is running a red light breaking the law? Yes. God's Word clearly tells us to obey the laws. Yet how many Christians confess breaking traffic laws as sin?

Has anyone considered that unconfessed and unrepentant sin might lead to a huge loss of rewards for eternity?

Jesus clearly shows us in His Word and by what He did, we are to obey the Bible, which is God's Word and that includes submission to the laws of the land or the ruling authority.

So now He tells Peter to go to the Sea of Galilee and throw in a line or hook. He said nothing about using any bait.

Then Jesus tells Peter to take up the first fish that he catches. Then Peter was to open its mouth, and when he does so he will find a piece of money, or a four-drachma coin. It has also been called the silver tetradrachma, which was the same as a shekel. This was the exact amount needed for Jesus and Peter.

Peter was to take the coin and give it to the tax collector for himself and for Jesus.

Nothing was brought up about any of the other disciples.

As already said, neither Jesus or Peter should have any obligation to pay this tax, but Jesus did not quarrel with them or cause a scene. He

simply arranged to pay the tax.

As it has been said in **Mt 17:27**, Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them (or but so that we do not) (or may not) (offend them), (or give them offense) go thou to the sea (or lake), and cast (or throw) an (or a) hook (or throw out your line), and take up the (first) fish that first cometh (or comes) up (or you catch); and (open its mouth) when thou hast opened his (or its) mouth, thou shalt (or you will) find a piece of money (a four-drachma coin) (or a stater) (or shekel): that take (or take it), and give (it) unto (or to) them for me (or my tax) and thee (or yours) (or you).

Chronologically, Mt 17:27 goes to Mk 9:33.

Mk 9:33 goes to Mt 18:1.

Chronologically, Mt 17:27 goes to Mk 9:33.

Mk 9:33 goes to Mt 18:1.

[Click here for Mt. Chapter 18](#)