

**Matthew – The King And His Kingdom**  
**The Great Adventure**  
**Notes For Session 16 – Chapter 17: The Transfiguration**

*Help us to understand Your Word and put into practice in daily life.*

**T1.Reviewing where we have come from in the Gospel of Matthew**

- A. Matthew is made up of five individual books and an Introduction and Ending. Five books are made up of a Narrative and Discourse.
- B. Writer of Matthew is writing to the Jews and wants us to understand that Matthew is very similar to the first five books of the bible The Pentateuch.
- C. New beginning of Israel as Jesus is coming to establish the Kingdom of Heaven on earth.
- D. Review the Chapters leading up to Chapter 17. To remind you that Jesus' life is not just a random set of stories and journeys, and saying that He has, but His life is literally a carefully orchestrated by God, life that is a re-capitulation of Israel's life.
- E. In another words, if you look at Jesus' life and follow it very carefully, you will see Jesus' life is a re-living of the life of Israel. So He goes through the life of Israel, but as the successful faithful Son that Israel was not – Jesus is – He is successful. He trusts the Father even to the end.
- F. It is also a reconstitution of Israel that has fallen apart. Reconstitution of Israel around Himself.

**T2.Review of Chapters 1 – 16:**

**Chapter 1:** The Genealogy – Son of Abraham, Son of David.

- A. Four Shady Ladies included. They tell us something about the Gospel. That is Jesus wants us to see that the Gentiles are being included in the Kingdom. Where there were difficulties in the Old Testament Narrative of Salvation History, those difficulties are not a reason to dismiss the work that God did through David and Solomon.
- B. Also, remember that we have 3 sets of 14. Abraham to David we have 14 generations. From David to the deportation to Babylon 14 generations, and from Deportation of Babylon to Christ 14 generations. Which is 6 sets of 7. Then comes the Birth of Jesus, the 7<sup>th</sup> seven or the completion. It is all going to be completed in Christ

**Chapter2:** Infancy Narratives. Early parallel between life of Joseph in OT and Joseph in the NT. Both going down into Egypt.

**Chapter 3:** Parallel between Elijah and Elisha. John the Baptist and Jesus.

- A. John the Baptist first shows up at the Jordan River just north of the Dead Sea. He comes in the spirit of Elijah. Elijah according to Malachi was the one who was going to come before the Lord. In fact, the Jews even to today will set a special place during the Passover Meal for Elijah to come (empty table setting).
- B. In the OT, where was the last place Elijah shows up? He shows up in 2 Kings first 5 Chapters right there on the Jordan River just north of the Dead Sea. That is where Elijah goes up in a Chariot of Fire. In the NT, we see John the Baptist, who is Elijah who is to come, showing up first, right there where the OT Elijah left. The reason Matthew brings us out to the wilderness is to see this. Wants us to see where Jesus is at. Location, Location, Location is the important thing.

- C. Elisha went out to do great works than Elijah. For example, he raised the dead; he multiplied barley loaves, multiplied oil. In NT, John says I must decrease and He must increase. So there is parallel between Elijah and Elisha and John the Baptist and Jesus. Location in their ministry and Jesus goes on the greater works and raises the dead, multiplies the loaves and turns water into wine.

**Chapter 4:** Baptism of Jesus and Testing in the Wilderness (desert).

- A. We saw as Israel went out of the Red Sea through the water and out into the wilderness for 40 years, Jesus comes out of the water of the Jordan and goes immediately into the wilderness like Israel for 40 days and 40 nights.
- B. Goes into wilderness and faces three major temptations. In those three major temptations, Jesus answers Satan from the Pentateuch, Deuteronomy. Three specific temptations that Israel went through in Exodus, 16, 17, and 32.
- C. The three temptations that Israel goes through, Moses later in Deuteronomy tells the younger generation how your parents blew it in the wilderness. And that they grumbled over hunger and provision, they put God to the test Exodus 17, they worship a false god in Ex 32. So Jesus answers the enemy in the wilderness with the situation back in the OT.
- D. He has undergone the same testing as Israel, but He is faithful and He trusts the Father completely

**Chapters 5-7:** Sermon on the Mount.

- A. We see Jesus giving the new law of the new covenant in the Sermon on the Mount. My theologians both Protestant and Catholic all agree that this is the New Law in the New Kingdom where Jesus like Moses went up on a mountain and He gave this law. We see parallels of Jesus as the new Moses in the Gospel of Matthew:

Deliverer is born	Edict to destroy male children was given
God delivers them	Raised for time in Egypt
Comes out of Egypt	Goes into the Wilderness
Both pass through water into the wilderness	
Moses chose 12 Chieftains to rule the 12 Tribes,	Jesus choose 12 to sit on 12 Thrones to judge the 12 Tribes of Israel.
Moses had to appoint 70 Elders to rule (Num 11).	Jesus appoints (Luke 10) 70 gives them His spirit and His mission along with the 12.
So you see Jesus is the new Moses.	Greater than Solomon, greater than Jonah, greater than the Temple.
Jesus is coming to establish the Kingdom.	Sermon on the Mount is to Jesus what the Ten Commandments were to Moses.

- B. In the Sermon on the Mount, we have the Beatitudes. Beatitudes describe and reflect Christ. Each Beatitude flows into the next Beatitude. Not random Blessed are, but they flow one into the other.
- C. Humility is the chief virtue. Blessed are those who are humble. St. Thomas said without the virtue of humility you cannot develop other virtues.
- D. Jesus began his six antitheses. You shall not kill, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not divorce, swear falsely, eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, love your enemy.

**Chapter 6:** Jesus introduced us to Piety. Do everything in terms of Piety (Prayer, Fasting, and Almsgiving) for your Father who sees you.

- A. Jesus is bringing focus to this Kingdom that is quite different from the Old Covenant.
- B. He is calling on people to focus on the Father. Do everything the Father tells you to do. And the focus is not on the external, but the internal. And He is raising the bar in the new Kingdom.
- C. New Testament is harder, it is more difficult. You need more grace and Jesus gives us that grace.
- D. Prayer, Fasting and Almsgiving are wonderful ways the Jews back then, the early Christians, and even the Muslims today these are the three chief virtues they practice in their life.

**Chapter 7:** He talked about Judging, the Golden Rule. The Two Ways – the Broad way and the Narrow way. He talked about building your house on the Rock.

**Chapters 8 & 9:** Jesus begins Ten Miracle stories to demonstrate the power of the Kingdom. The power over demons, sickness, nature, and even death itself. He redefines what Holiness is – it is not separation. It is Mercy.

- A. Jesus talked to the Pharisees (Pharush – means separate ones). The Pharisees defined their holiness in terms of their separateness. Who they don't meet with, who they are not touching. They are separate and if touch those who are unclean, they become unclean. What they failed to remember was that in the OT this was a quarantine. It was because of the weakness of Israel that she was separated.
- B. Holiness is not defined by who you touch and who you are separate from, but it is Mercy. That is why Jesus can reach out and touch the leper, touch the woman with the issue of blood, and He does not become defiled – they become clean.
- C. So His level of Holiness, supersedes the world's level of un-holiness. That is what we are to walk in as Christians.

**Chapter 10:** Jesus begins to send His disciples out to do His work. He gives them power and authority.

**Chapters 11 & 12:** Jesus demonstrates through His teaching that He is the new King.

- A. Disciples picking wheat on the Sabbath. Jesus teaches that He is the new King of the new Kingdom and His Apostles are the new priests of the new Kingdom. All He said was "Have you not read what David did when he and his companions were hungry, 1 Sam 21:2-7.
- B. You are spying on the new King, like David, and my Apostles are the new priests.
- C. Jewish leadership wants Him dead in Chapter 12:14 "But the Pharisees went out and took counsel against him to put him to death."

**Chapter 13:** Jesus begins to teach in parables because of corrupt leadership.

- A. From Chapter 13 on, Jesus begins to employ parables. He gives the simple meaning of the Kingdom in parables. Those who ears will hear, those who have eyes will see.
- B. Jesus teaches parables; He speaks in parables about the Kingdom of Heaven. The major theme is that the Kingdom of Heaven is small in the beginning and large and influential in the end. It is like a mustard seed, leaven.

**Chapter 14:** Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes for 5,000 people (for Israel).

- A. He had Twelve baskets left over. Enough for all of Israel.

- B. Jesus walks on water and Peter asks to do the same. They are all in the boat and only one of them, Peter, said, Lord if it is You, ask me to come to you on the water. Jesus said, Come. Peter is the only one who got out of the boat that day.
- C. If you want to know if the Lord is really speaking to you and He is calling you on an adventure – the only way you are ultimately going to know – is to get out of the boat – and try to walk on water. God has called us to be water-walkers to trust Him with all of our life.

### **Chapter 15:**

- A. Jesus also multiplies loaves for 4,000. (For the 4 corners of the earth done in Gentile territory)
- B. Seven baskets left over – Perfect fulfillment for the whole world. God has enough to feed not only to feed Israel, but also to feed the whole world.

**Chapter 16:** Jesus makes Peter the first Vicar (the first Pope). He makes him the first prime minister of the new Kingdom.

- A. In the OT, there was Scriptural precedence in Israel's history for a position in the Kingdom of David called the Albiet (over the household). An office in the kingdom called the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister was described in Kings and Isaiah 22.
- B. We see a type of Prime Minister in Joseph who was over the household in Egypt.
- C. Another position called The Gebirah, Queen Mother. In the Kingdom of David, there were those two prime positions: the Albiet and the Gebirah. Isaiah 22 talks about taking away one Prime Minister and installing a new Prime Minister who will be given authority, be called Father, and he will have the Keys to the Kingdom.

### **T3.The Transfiguration – Chapter 17:**

- A. Disciples get a look at Jesus in His Divine Glory. He possesses this Glory, but is in humility hiding this glory. The veil is lifted for a moment on this mountain. Matthew 17 and Luke's Gospel 9. Luke is the only one who tells us what they are talking about in the Transfiguration. Matthew does not tell you the content of the discussion, but Luke does.
- B. Luke 9:29-31: While he was praying his face changed in appearance and his clothing became dazzling white. And behold, two men were conversing with him, Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory and spoke of his exodus that he was going to accomplish in Jerusalem.
  - 1) Jesus is talking to Moses and Elijah about His exodus, which is going to be accomplished in Jerusalem. He is going to be Crucified, Die, and Rise from the Dead.
  - 2) Jesus' life is bringing on the true exodus. Not an exodus of bondage of Egypt, but exodus from the bondage of sin. And the true return from exile. Not an exile from Babylon, but an exile brought on by sin.
  - 3) Jesus is all about the great exodus from bondage and the return to the Father. Moses exodus from Egypt, Jesus exodus from Jerusalem.
- C. Rev 11:3-6 mentions that Jerusalem is the new Egypt. Not Rome, but Jerusalem.
 

"I will commission my two witnesses to prophesy for those twelve hundred and sixty days, wearing sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. If anyone wants to harm them, fire comes out of their mouths and devours their enemies. In this way, anyone wanting to harm them is sure to be slain. They

have the power to close up the sky so that no rain can fall during the time of their prophesying. They also have power to turn water into blood and to afflict the earth with any plague as often as they wish."

1) Does this sound familiar? Two witnesses, one can stop the rain from prophesying, and the other can turn the water into blood (Nile River). There are only two characters that fit this profile. Elijah and Moses. Elijah stopped the rain before Ahab 1 Kings 17:1-2. Moses turn the Nile into blood Ex 7:17

2) Rev 11:7-8

"When they have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up from the abyss will wage war against them and conquer them and kill them. Their corpses will lie in the main street of the great city, which has the symbolic names "Sodom" and "Egypt," where indeed their Lord was crucified."

What city was Jesus crucified in? Jerusalem!

Lot made a great exodus from Sodom. Moses from Egypt.

3) The city was called Jerusalem later called the "harlot" city in Rev 17:4-6

"The woman was wearing purple and scarlet and adorned with gold, precious stones, and pearls. She held in her hand a gold cup that was filled with the abominable and sordid deeds of her harlotry. On her forehead was written a name, which is a mystery, "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth." I saw that the woman was drunk on the blood of the holy ones and on the blood of the witnesses to Jesus."

So the city is Jerusalem later called the harlot city.

4) Rev 18:2 - He cried out in a mighty voice: "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great. She has become a haunt for demons. She is a cage for every unclean spirit, a cage for every unclean bird, (a cage for every unclean) and disgusting (beast).

5) Verse Rev 18:10 - They will keep their distance for fear of the torment inflicted on her, and they will say: "Alas, alas, great city, Babylon, mighty city. In one hour your judgment has come."

6) Verse Rev 18:21 - A mighty angel picked up a stone like a huge millstone and threw it into the sea and said: "With such force will Babylon the great city be thrown down, and will never be found again.

7) If you understand the Book of Revelation from the big picture, you know that this is speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem.

8) Verse Rev 12: 1-9: Talks about The Woman and the Dragon (the ancient serpent).

9) So Revelation 11 confirms the work of Christ. There are two witnesses. There will be a new exodus, a new temple, a new Church, a new rock.

#### **D. Back to Matthew 17:**

1) Moses and Elijah represent 2 things. The Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah). On the Mount of Transfiguration with Jesus, you have Moses (the Law) and Elijah (the prophets. And Jesus says something to them.

2) A lot of clues related to the exodus of Jesus which will begin in Jerusalem.

#### **T4. The Transfiguration of Jesus (Matt 17: 1-8):**

After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his face shone like the sun and his clothes became white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, conversing with

him. Then Peter said to Jesus in reply, "Lord, it is good that we are here. If you wish, I will make three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

- A. Peter and the other two disciples are watching this. Jesus with Moses and Elijah on either side.
- B. There you are in the presence of Jesus, He begins to glow and you got Moses and Elijah on the mountain and they are all talking theology. They are talking about the new exodus that is going to take place in Jerusalem.
- C. And Peter with the understatement of the Millennium says It is a good thing. It is good that we are here. Peter says that I will make three tents here.

**Matt 17:5-8:** While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him." When the disciples heard this, they fell prostrate and were very much afraid. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, "Rise, and do not be afraid." And when the disciples raised their eyes, they saw no one else but Jesus alone.

D. These 8 verses show us that Jesus is about to lead the true major exodus from the bondage of sin. He is indeed the new Moses.

E. Parallels between Moses and Transfiguration:

- 1) Both take place on the 7<sup>th</sup> day.
- 2) Both occur on a mountain Ex 24
- 3) Both Jesus (Peter, James, and John) and Moses (Aaron, Nadab and Abiu) take 3 companions with them
- 4) Faces of both shine with God's glory
- 5) Both involved the Glory cloud of God's Presence – the coming down of God's presence in the form of a cloud (The Shekinah Glory). The Holy Spirit coming down in the form of a cloud.
  - In every Mass around the world, we have this Real Presence of Christ in our presence at Eucharist at Mass. At the Epiclesis, the Priest calls down the Holy Spirit, on the gifts of bread and wine. Priest says, "May Your Spirit come down upon these gifts. When the Priest says, This is My Body, this is My Blood – right at that point we have the Lord's Real Presence.
- 6) Both events have God speaking through a heavenly voice Ex 24 & Ex 34

F. Peter – let's build 3 tents or booths. Why would he say let us build 3 booths?

- 1) Feast of Booths is what they celebrated when they came out of Egypt. Every year to remind them that they have come out of bondage.
- 2) They in pilgrimage and they would build booths and live in them for a period to remind themselves that they came out of bondage. Also called the Feast of Tabernacles. They were set free from bondage.
- 3) Peter was hearing all this – so he says this is an exodus event – let us build booths. This is a Passover event that Jesus is predicting.
- 4) Live in booths for 7 days to remind themselves of the exodus.
  - Footnote for Mt 17:4: Three tents: the booths in which the Israelites lived during the Feast of Tabernacles (cf John 7:2) were meant to recall their ancestors' dwelling in booths during the journey from Egypt to the promised land (Lev 23:39-42). The same Greek word, skene, here translated tents, is used in the LXX for the booths of that feast, and some scholars have suggested that there is an allusion here to that liturgical custom.

**G. Matt 17:5:** While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud cast a shadow over them, then from the cloud came a voice that said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

That would have caught the attention of the apostles, as they were very aware of OT Teaching and the life of Moses:

- 1) Deut 18:15 "A prophet like me will the LORD, your God, raise up for you from among your own kinsmen; to him you shall listen.
- 2) Moses is talking with Jesus and a voice comes and says, "This is my beloved Son, listen to him." At that moment, Moses must have been pretty excited – I've been there before. I remember that when God gave me that word that in the future there would be a prophet like me – listen to him.
- 3) Acts 3:22-23: For Moses said: 'A prophet like me will the Lord, your God, raise up for you from among your own kinsmen; to him you shall listen in all that he may say to you. Everyone who does not listen to that prophet will be cut off from the people.'
  - He is talking about Christ in Acts 3
  - Moses (Ex 24) and Elijah (1Kings 19) are the only two characters who made pilgrimages to Sinai.

### **T5. The Coming of Elijah, Matt 17:9-13:**

As they were coming down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, "Do not tell the vision to anyone until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead." Then the disciples asked him, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" He said in reply, "Elijah will indeed come and restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him but did to him whatever they pleased. So also will the Son of Man suffer at their hands." Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

- A.** Verse 11 – He is to restore all things. That is a hint of what are called the deuterocanonical books of the Catholic Church – Sirach. Sirach 48:10 speaks of Elijah coming and restoring all things.
- B.** The part of Prophetic role of Elijah – John the Baptist was to come before the Messiah and becoming part of restoring all things – make straight the way of the Lord.

### **T6. Payment of the Temple Tax Matt 24-27:**

When they came to Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax approached Peter and said, "Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?" "Yes," he said. When he came into the house, before he had time to speak, Jesus asked him, "What is your opinion, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth take tolls or census tax? From their subjects or from foreigners?" When he said, "From foreigners," Jesus said to him, "Then the subjects are exempt. But that we may not offend them, go to the sea, drop in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up. Open its mouth and you will find a coin worth twice the temple tax. Give that to them for me and for you."

- A.** Temple is the center of Jewish life. Leaders want to keep it going. Much of what Jesus has been saying is that the Temple is coming down. Checking to see if Jesus was paying the Temple tax. Temple was down in Jerusalem.
- B.** Jesus headquarters where in Capernaum, where the exile in the OT began in Zebulun and Naphtali back in 722 BC Assyrians took the 10 Tribes in the North away, and in 586 BC, Babylonians took Judah away.
- C.** Jewish leadership was always checking to see if there was loyalty in the North among Galilean Jews. One way was to see if they were paying the Temple tax.

- D. These Judeans were may have wondered if Jesus was diverting the loyalty of Galilee away from the Temple into His own program. Half-Shekel tax was imposed on all males over 20 years of age for the Temple.
- E. Notice that they went up to Peter because Peter was the spokesman, he was the leader of the Apostles – he had preeminence.
  - 1) In Matthew's Gospel – his fourth book shows the Primacy of Peter.
  - 2) Matt 14:28-33, Matt 16, and now Matt 17.
- F. Jesus is the King, and the disciples are sons of the King. He asks, "What do you think, Simon? From whom do kings of the earth take toll or tribute? From their sons or from others?" And when he said, "From others," Jesus said to him, "Then the sons are free."
  - 1) In another words, Jesus should not have to pay the tax, and neither should they.
  - 2) Jesus says, However, not to give offense to them, go to the sea and cast a hook, and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth you will find a shekel; take that and give it to them for me and for yourself."
  - 3) I am the King and you are my sons. But not to give offense, we are going to be all things to all people – we are going to pay that Temple tax.
  - 4) This is an example of what Jesus said in Matt 10:16 when He sent the disciples out into the world – to proclaim the Kingdom, to heal, to raise the dead. He said to them remember three times in that Chapter, Don't Be Afraid. Be as wise as serpents, while remaining innocent as doves.

## **T7. Conclusion of Chapter 17:**

- A. We have a marvelous look back at Moses going up on the mountain and getting the Law. Now Jesus leading the true Exodus from sin that will start in Jerusalem, and as given His Law on the Sermon on the Mount and is now ready to pay the price as the Paschal Lamb.
- B. He will come into Jerusalem on the 10<sup>th</sup> Day of Nissan (roughly April) – the day the sacrificial lamb was brought into Jerusalem back in Exodus, Moses gave strict instructions that on the 10<sup>th</sup> Day of Nissan; take a lamb and inspect that lamb until the 14<sup>th</sup> Day. And on the 14<sup>th</sup> Day at twilight (3 O'clock in the afternoon), sacrifice the lamb. But you are to inspect that lamb from 10<sup>th</sup> until the 14<sup>th</sup> for blemishes.
- C. Jesus' exodus from the bondage of sin, will take place in Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of Nissan, the sacrificial flock is brought into Jerusalem at the same moment that the Paschal Lamb comes riding in on a donkey. The lambs are inspected and Jesus is inspected.
- D. He will stand before Pilate and he will say I find no fault in Him. On the 14<sup>th</sup> Day of Nissan while the sacrificial flock is being slaughtered for the Passover, Jesus Christ is on the Cross-and at 3 O'clock in the afternoon the twilight, He says, "It is Finished."
- E. Jesus refuses the 4<sup>th</sup> Cup at the Passover, leaves the Passover early, but finally receives the 4<sup>th</sup> Cup on the Cross and says that "It is Finished." What is Finished – The Passover is Finished – the Lamb has been sacrifice.
- F. He leads the new Exodus from Jerusalem. That is what this Chapter is speaking all about.