

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 1 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

The first chapter of the Gospel of Matthew is essential for understanding how the author presents Jesus as the promised Messiah, fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament. This chapter begins with a genealogy of Jesus, followed by an account of the Savior's miraculous birth.

Let's understand each verse clearly and in detail:

Matthew 1:1

"The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."

Matthew begins his gospel with a powerful introduction: Jesus is the "son of David" and the "son of Abraham." This is important because it connects Jesus to the promise made to Abraham (Genesis 12:3) that through his descendants all the nations of the earth would be blessed, and to the promise made to David (2 Samuel 7:16) that his line would reign forever. Matthew wants to show from the beginning that Jesus is the rightful heir to these messianic promises.

Matthew 1:2

"Abraham begot Isaac; Isaac begot Jacob; Jacob begot Judah and his brothers;"

This verse is part of the genealogy of Jesus, and here we see three very important names in the history of Israel: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They are the patriarchs, the first leaders of God's people, and God's promise began with Abraham.

Verse by Verse Explanation:

- **"Abraham begot Isaac"**: Abraham was chosen by God to be the father of a great nation (Genesis 12:1-3).

He is considered the "father of faith" because he trusted God, even when he was promised that he would have a son in his old age. That son was Isaac, who also received the promise that his descendants would be blessed.

- **"Isaac begat Jacob"**: Abraham's son Isaac was also an important figure. He had two sons, Jacob and Esau, but it was through Jacob that God continued to fulfill His promise. Jacob was renamed by God as "Israel" and his 12 sons became the 12 tribes of Israel, God's chosen people.
 - **"Jacob begot Judah and his brothers"**: Among the sons of Jacob, Judah is the most prominent here. It is from the tribe of Judah that the line of kings would come, including King David, and eventually Jesus, the Messiah. Although Judah was not Jacob's oldest son, he became the ancestor of the royal line. The Messiah, Jesus, is known as the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (Revelation 5:5).
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Matthew 1:3

"Judah begot Pharez and Zerah by Tamar; Pharez begot Hezron; Hezron begot Aram;"

- **"Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar"**: Here we see an interesting story. Tamar was Judah's daughter-in-law, but through a series of complicated and difficult events, she became the mother of Perez and Zerah (Genesis 38). This is a story of redemption in the midst of a morally complicated situation. Tamar's inclusion in Jesus' genealogy reminds us that God is merciful and can use difficult and even scandalous situations to bring His purposes to light.
 - **"Perez begot Hezron"**: Perez was the oldest son of Tamar and Judah. His line continued through Hezron, who is also part of the line that leads to Jesus.
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Matthew 1:4

"Aram begot Amminadab; Amminadab begot Nahshon; Nahshon begot Salmon;"

- **"Aaron begot Amminadab"**: These names are less well-known, but each plays a role in preserving the lineage from which Jesus would come. Amminadab was the father of Nahshon, who was a leader of the people of Israel during the exodus from Egypt (Numbers 1:7).
 - **"Nahshon begot Salmon"**: Nahshon was a prince of the tribe of Judah during the time of Moses. Salmon, his son, appears as the next in line.
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Matthew 1:5

"Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab; Boaz begot Obed by Ruth; Obed begot Jesse;"

- **"Salmon begot Boaz by Rahab"**: Rahab, a Canaanite woman from Jericho, is also a woman included in Jesus' genealogy. She was known to be a prostitute, but her faith in God saved her, and she helped the Israelite spies when they took Jericho (Joshua 2). Rahab is an example of how God welcomes strangers and transforms lives.
 - **"Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth"**: Boaz married Ruth, another foreign woman, a Moabite. Ruth is known for her loyalty and faith, and her story is told in the book that bears her name. Ruth's inclusion in Jesus' genealogy demonstrates how God calls people from all nations to be part of His plan of redemption.
 - **"Obed begot Jesse"**: Obed was the son of Boaz and Ruth, and his son Jesse is known to be the father of the great King David. This line takes us directly to the royal line of Israel.
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Matthew 1:6

"Jesse begot King David; and King David begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah;"

- **"Jesse begot King David"**: Here we find David, one of the most important names in Jesus' genealogy. David was Israel's greatest king, and God promised that his line would last forever (2 Samuel 7:16). Jesus is the fulfillment of that promise.
 - **"King David begot Solomon by the wife of Uriah"**: Solomon, the son of David and Bathsheba, is also included in the genealogy. The mention of "the wife of Uriah" is significant because it recalls the sin of David, who took Bathsheba as his wife after arranging the death of her husband Uriah (2 Samuel 11). Even in the midst of sin and tragedy, God continued the work of redemption, showing His grace.
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Matthew 1:7

"Solomon begot Rehoboam; Rehoboam begot Abijah; Abijah begot Asa;"

- **"Solomon begot Rehoboam"**: After Solomon, his son Rehoboam became king, but under his reign, the kingdom of Israel was divided into two parts—Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Rehoboam ruled over Judah.
 - **"Rehoboam begot Abijah"**: Abijah was the son of Rehoboam and followed in his father's footsteps, ruling Judah.
 - **"Abijah begot Asa"**: Asa was one of the kings who tried to bring religious reforms to the people of Judah, destroying idols and renewing the worship of the Lord (1 Kings 15:11).
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Matthew 1:8

"Asa begot Jehoshaphat; Jehoshaphat begot Joram; Joram begot Uzziah;"

- **"Asa begat Jehoshaphat"**: Jehoshaphat was a king who, like his father Asa, sought the Lord and tried to lead the people back to faithfulness to God. He is remembered for trusting the Lord in times of war (2 Chronicles 20).
 - **"Joshaphat begat Joram"**: Unfortunately, Joram did not follow in his father's footsteps and strayed from God's ways, influenced by the house of Ahab, whom he married.
 - **"Joram begat Uzziah"**: Uzziah, also known as Azariah, was a king who started out well, but eventually fell into the sin of pride, which resulted in him being stricken with leprosy (2 Chronicles 26).
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Matthew 1:9

"Uzziah begot Jotham; Jotham begot Ahaz; Ahaz begot Hezekiah;"

- **"Uzziah begat Jotham"**: Jotham was a king who generally walked in the ways of the Lord, but he did not bring about complete reforms in Judah (2 Kings 15:34).
 - **"Jotham begat Ahaz"**: Ahaz, on the other hand, was one of the worst kings of Judah, straying greatly from the Lord and even sacrificing his own sons to idols (2 Kings 16:2-3).
 - **"Ahaz begat Hezekiah"**: Hezekiah was one of the best kings of Judah. He made great spiritual reforms, destroying idols and restoring the worship of the Lord. His reign is one of the most significant in the history of Judah (2 Kings 18-20).
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Matthew 1:10

"Hezekiah begot Manasseh; Manasseh begot Amon; Amon begot Josiah;"

- **"Hezekiah begot Manasseh"**: Manasseh was one of the most wicked kings of Judah, leading the people into terrible sins. However, he repented at the end of his reign.

life, showing that God's mercy is great, even for the worst sinners (2 Chronicles 33).

- **"Manasseh begat Amon"**: Amon was a king who followed his father's initial example, but without the repentance. He was murdered by his own servants (2 Kings 21:19-23).
 - **"Amon begat Josiah"**: Josiah was a young, godly king who restored God's Law and brought spiritual revival to Judah. He is remembered as one of the best kings Judah had (2 Kings 22-23).
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Matthew 1:11

"Josiah begot Jeconiah and his brothers at the time of the deportation to Babylon."

- **"Josiah begat Jeconiah"**: Jeconiah, also known as Jehoiachin, was the last legitimate king of Judah before the Babylonian exile. The deportation to Babylon was a dark moment in Israel's history, but even here we see that God remained faithful to His promise.
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Matthew 1:12

"And after the carrying away to Babylon: Jeconiah begat Salathiel; Salathiel begat Zerubbabel;"

- **"And after the deportation to Babylon"**: The deportation to Babylon was one of the most tragic moments in Israel's history. God's people were taken captive as a result of their disobedience to God, as warned by the prophets. Even so, God did not abandon His plan of redemption and kept the lineage that would lead to Jesus intact.
- **"Jeconiah begat Salathiel"**: Jeconiah, also known as Jehoiachin, was the last legitimate king of Judah before the exile. He was taken captive to Babylon. The mention of Jeconiah here is significant

because, although his reign ended in failure and judgment, God still preserved his lineage.

- **"Salathiel begat Zerubbabel"**: Zerubbabel is an important figure in the history of Israel after the exile. He led the return of the Jews to Jerusalem and oversaw the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 2-3). This shows that God not only restored His people physically to their land, but was also spiritually preparing the way for the Messiah.

Matthew 1:13

"Zerubbabel begot Abiud; Abiud begot Eliakim; Eliakim begot Azor;"

- **"Zerubbabel begat Abiud"**: While we know much about Zerubbabel, his son Abiud is less well-known, like many of the names that follow on this list. Yet he is part of this unbroken chain of the Messianic line. The fact that Abiud's name is preserved here reminds us that even though we do not have many details about him, his importance in God's plan is unquestionable.
 - **"Abiud begat Eliakim"**: Eliakim is also a name that is not very prominent in Scripture, but is part of this line that leads us directly to Jesus. This reminds us that sometimes people who play less visible roles still have an important contribution to God's plan.
 - **"Eliaquim begot Azor"**: Similar to Eliakim and Abiud, Azor is not extensively discussed in the Bible, but his mention here underscores that God was carefully orchestrating Jesus' lineage, even through lesser-known generations.
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Matthew 1:14

"Azor begot Sadoc; Sadoc begot Achim; Achim begot Eliud;"

- **"Azor begat Sadoc"**: Sadoc, like the names that precede him, is part of this continuous lineage that culminates in Christ. The name "Sadoc" also appears in other contexts in the Bible, especially related to priests, although we cannot say that this Sadoc was the same.
- **"Sadok begat Achim"**: Aquim continues the lineage and although it is an unknown name outside of this genealogy, its presence here serves to remind us that each person in the line of Jesus was placed there by God for a purpose.
- **"Aquim begat Eliud"**: Eliud is another name mentioned exclusively in the genealogy of Jesus. These names, which may seem obscure, show us that God was working through ordinary generations, fulfilling His plan consistently and faithfully.

Matthew 1:15

"Eliud begot Eleazar; Eleazar begot Matthan; Matthan begot Jacob;"

- **"Eliud begat Eleazar"**: Although we know little about Eleazar, his inclusion in the lineage of Jesus is a reminder that God often works in silence, working in and through ordinary people.
- **"Eleazar begat Matthan"**: Matthan, the next in line, is also an unremarkable figure outside of this genealogy. The important thing is that God is leading the Messianic line faithfully, generation after generation.
- **"Mathan begat Jacob"**: Jacob, mentioned here, is the father of Joseph, the man who would become the husband of Mary and the legal father of Jesus. This name prepares us for the

culmination of the genealogy, with the birth of Christ.

Matthew 1:16

"And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."

- **"Jacob begat Joseph"**: Joseph, although not the biological father of Jesus, is a key figure in the messianic genealogy. He is the husband of Mary, and through his marriage to her, Jesus becomes legally heir to the line of David.
 - **"Mary's husband"**: It is interesting that the text mentions Joseph as the "husband of Mary", and not the father of Jesus. This underscores the miraculous nature of Jesus' birth, conceived by the Holy Spirit, as will be explained later in the chapter.
 - **"From which Jesus was born"**: Jesus was born of Mary, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies about the Messiah coming through the line of David.
 - **"Who is called the Christ"**: "Christ" means "anointed one," or "Messiah." This is the title that declares Jesus as the promised Savior, the King who would bring redemption to His people. Jesus is not only part of this long lineage, He is the fulfillment of everything this genealogy points to: the coming of the Redeemer.
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Matthew 1:17

"So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David until the deportation to Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon until the Christ are fourteen generations."

Matthew summarizes the genealogy, dividing it into three groups of 14 generations. This may have a symbolic meaning, since the number 14, in Jewish numerology, is

associated with the name of David. Matthew is, once again, reinforcing the idea that Jesus is the rightful heir to the throne of David.

Matthew 1:18

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost."

This verse introduces us to the beginning of the story of the birth of Jesus. Mary, already promised in marriage to Joseph, becomes pregnant before they live together. Matthew makes a point of emphasizing that this conception was the work of the Holy Spirit, making it clear that Jesus was not conceived naturally, but miraculously, thus fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies about the virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14).

Matthew 1:19

"Then Joseph her husband, being a just man and not wanting to make her a public example, decided to divorce her secretly."

Joseph, described as a righteous man, does not want to expose Mary to public shame (which in those days could have resulted in severe consequences). Instead, he plans to leave her quietly. This reveals Joseph's character—a compassionate man, even in a situation that, to human eyes, would seem like a major betrayal.

Matthew 1:20

"But while he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.'"

As Joseph ponders what to do, an angel of the Lord appears to him in a dream, confirming that Mary is pregnant by the Holy Spirit. The angel calls him "son of David," reminding him of his royal lineage, and encourages him to take Mary as his wife. This is a crucial moment, as it confirms Jesus' divine origin and protects Mary.

Matthew 1:21

"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

The angel also gives Joseph the mission to name Mary's son "Jesus," which means "The Lord saves." Jesus' purpose is clearly stated here: He came to save His people from their sins. This is Jesus' central mission, and Matthew makes a point of emphasizing it from the beginning.

Matthew 1:22

"All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:"

- **"All this happened"**: Matthew is referring to the earlier account of Jesus' birth, which includes Mary's conception by the Holy Spirit and Joseph's being instructed in a dream not to abandon Mary. These events are presented as part of the divine plan.
- **"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet"**: This sentence is essential to understanding the purpose of Matthew's Gospel. The author frequently points to how Jesus' life fulfills the promises and prophecies made in the Old Testament. Here, Matthew shows that Jesus' birth is not an isolated event, but the fulfillment of a divine prophecy, which was spoken through a prophet

many centuries before. This reinforces the legitimacy of Jesus as the Messiah.

Matthew 1:23

"The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God with us.'"

- **"The virgin will become pregnant"**: This is a direct quote from Isaiah 7:14, where the prophet spoke of a virgin who would give birth to a son. The word "virgin" highlights the miraculous character of this birth. It was no ordinary birth, but a supernatural conception, the work of the Holy Spirit. Mary's virginity is a sign of God's power to act in unexpected and divine ways.
- **"And she will give birth to a son"**: The focus here is on the son who will be born of this virgin. This son will be extraordinary, for he will not only be a human being, but will also have a divine mission.
- **"And they shall call him Immanuel"**: The name Immanuel means "God with us," and this is crucial to understanding who Jesus is. It is not just a title, but a profound statement about the nature of Jesus. He is God who came down to live among men, showing that God is present with us at all times. This points to the unique character of Jesus as God incarnate, which distinguishes Christianity from other faiths.
- **"Which means 'God with us'"**: Matthew makes a point of explaining the meaning of the name Immanuel to his readers. This name encapsulates the mystery of the incarnation — Jesus is God who came to earth to live among His people, bringing salvation and reconciliation. The birth of Jesus is not just a historical event, but a theological event that reveals that God is present and accessible in a way never seen before.

Matthew 1:24

"And Joseph, rising from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took unto him his wife:"

Joseph immediately obeys the divine message. His response of faith and obedience is exemplary. He accepts Mary as his wife, trusting fully in God's guidance, despite difficult circumstances and possible social judgments.

Matthew 1:25

"And he knew her not until she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name Jesus."

Here, Matthew emphasizes that Joseph did not have relations with Mary until the birth of Jesus, reaffirming the virginal conception. Joseph fulfills his mission of naming his son "Jesus," as instructed by the angel. This name is a clear sign of who Jesus is and what He came to do: save the world from sin.

Final Reflection

The first chapter of Matthew gives us a clear picture of how God, in His sovereignty, prepared the way for the Messiah by fulfilling ancient promises. The genealogy demonstrates that Jesus is the rightful heir of the line of David, and the account of Jesus' miraculous birth shows us that He is "God with us," the promised Savior.

As we study these verses, may we be reminded of the grandeur of God's plan and the faithfulness with which He fulfills His promises. Like Joseph and Mary, we are called to obey in faith, even when we do not fully understand what God is doing in our lives.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 2 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew chapter 2 begins with the visit of the Magi and the encounter with King Herod, followed by the flight into Egypt and the return to Nazareth. These events are fundamental to understanding the fulfillment of the messianic prophecies and show how Jesus is the fulfillment of the expectations of the Old Testament.

Matthew 2:1

"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, wise men from the East arrived in Jerusalem"

- **"After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea"**: Matthew begins by informing us that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, as prophesied in Micah 5:2. The city of Bethlehem was the hometown of King David, which reinforces Jesus' lineage as the promised Messiah, from the house of David.
- **"In the time of King Herod"**: Herod the Great was the ruler of Judea during the birth of Jesus. He is an important figure in history because, although he did some great building works, such as the Temple in Jerusalem, his leadership was marked by violence, paranoia and cruelty, especially towards his own family and the Jews.
- **"Some magicians from the East"**: The "Magi" were probably scholars and astronomers, possibly from regions such as Persia or Babylon, who were familiar with Jewish scripture and interpreted the birth of Jesus as the fulfillment of a great prophecy. They are often referred to as the "wise men," although the Bible does not describe them in this way.

specific. His arrival from the "east" implies a long and significant journey to worship the Messiah.

Matthew 2:2

"And they said, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? We have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."

- **"Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?":** The Magi's question reveals that they believed that the birth of Jesus was associated with the coming of a new king, the promised Messiah. They recognized that Jesus was not just a political king, but the "king of the Jews" according to God's promise. This is a confession of faith and worship in the Messiah.
 - **"We saw his star in the East":** The star mentioned probably referred to a celestial phenomenon that the Magi interpreted as a sign of the birth of a great king. This may have been a conjunction of planets or another astronomical event, but to the Magi it was a confirmation of the messianic prophecy.
 - **"We came to worship him":** The adoration of the Magi is one of the most significant moments in the story. They not only recognize Jesus as a king, but they are willing to travel a great distance to worship Him. This shows that from the very birth of Jesus, He was recognized as worthy of worship, not only by Jews, but by people of other nations.
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Matthew 2:3

"King Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him."

- **"King Herod was troubled":** Herod, known for his paranoia and cruelty, was deeply disturbed by the news of a new "king of the Jews." He feared losing his power and authority, which led him

to adopt extremely violent attitudes to guarantee their dominance.

- **"And all Jerusalem with him"**: Herod's reaction caused unrest in Jerusalem, as he was a feared ruler. Herod's concern about the birth of a new king likely caused unease and uncertainty throughout the city, as he did not hesitate to be violent against any threat to his throne.

Matthew 2:4

"He summoned the chief priests and teachers of the law of the people and asked them where the Christ was to be born."

- **"He summoned the chief priests and the teachers of the law"**: Upon hearing about the birth of Jesus, Herod sought out the Jewish religious leaders for information. He wanted to know more about the prophecy that spoke of the birth of the Messiah. By consulting the priests and teachers of the law, Herod sought to confirm where this messianic figure was supposed to be born, according to the Scriptures.
- **"And he asked them where the Christ should be born"**: Herod uses the term "Christ", which means "anointed one" or "Messiah". He wanted to know where the promised Messiah would be born, and this led the religious leaders to refer directly to Micah's prophecy.

Matthew 2:5

"In Bethlehem of Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet wrote:"

- **"In Bethlehem of Judea"**: The priests and teachers of the law confirm that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem, as it was written in the prophecy. Bethlehem is important not only because it is the city of David, but also because it is the

the place where the Messiah was to be born, according to Micah 5:2. This prophecy is essential to understanding that Jesus is, in fact, the promised Messiah.

Matthew 2:6

"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." (Micah 5:2)

- **"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah"**: Micah's quote reveals that Bethlehem, though small, has a special place in God's plan. Despite being a modest town, it would be the birthplace of the promised King.
 - **"You are by no means the least among the rulers of Judah"**: This statement is a prophetic statement that says that Bethlehem, despite its insignificant appearance, would be a place of great importance, as it was from there that the great leader of Israel would emerge — the Messiah.
 - **"For out of you will come a leader who will shepherd my people Israel"**: This leader is a direct reference to the Messiah, who would rule and shepherd God's people. Jesus is the promised "shepherd" who would guide His people with justice and love, unlike the flawed human leaders who ruled before Him.
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Matthew 2:7

"Then Herod secretly called the wise men and inquired of them precisely what time the star had appeared."

- **"Herod secretly called the Magi"**: Herod, trying to find out more details about the birth of the Messiah, secretly calls the Magi. His intention was to find out exactly when the star appeared in order to calculate the time of the birth and thus be able to

take steps to eliminate any threat to your kingdom.

Matthew 2:8

"And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child. And when you have found him, report to me, so that I also may go and worship him.'"

- **"He sent them to Bethlehem"**: Herod instructs the Magi to go to Bethlehem, ostensibly to worship the child, but his true intention was to locate him to kill him, which demonstrates his malice and fear of the Messiah.
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Matthew 2:9

"After they had heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the east went before them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was."

- **"The star went before them"**: The star is again a heavenly sign that guided the Magi directly to Jesus. This celestial phenomenon has a miraculous character, showing that God was guiding the Magi on their journey to find the Messiah.
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Matthew 2:10

"When they saw the star, they were overjoyed."

- **"They were very happy"**: For the Magi, the star was a sign of the greatness of the moment they were living in. They were not just following a star, but witnessing the fulfillment of a prophecy and the realization of something divine.
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Matthew 2:11

"When they entered the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh."

- **"They fell down and worshiped him"**: The adoration of the Magi is an act of recognition that Jesus is not just an earthly king, but the King of kings, worthy of honor and reverence.
 - **"Gold, frankincense and myrrh"**: These gifts are symbolic and meaningful. The gold represents Jesus' royalty, the frankincense symbolizes His divinity and the fact that He is worthy of worship, and the myrrh, which was used in embalming, symbolizes the future suffering Jesus would face as Savior.
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Matthew 2:12

"And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went their way to their own country another way."

- **"Warned in a dream"**: God again intervenes to protect the Messiah and the Magi, warning them not to return to Herod. This type of divine revelation is a recurring theme in the story of Jesus' birth, showing God's direct guidance.
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Matthew 2:13

"After they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod will search for the child to destroy him.'"

- **"The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream"**: The presence of an angel in a dream is a way in which God guides and protects those who do His will.

will. Joseph, being a righteous man, receives divine guidance to protect Jesus' life and obey specific instructions.

- **"Flee to Egypt"**: Egypt was a safe place for the Jews, as it was already a land with a large number of Jews and therefore far from the threat of Herod. This escape also fulfills a prophecy, as Jesus would later be called back from Egypt, just as Israel was called out of Egypt at the time of the Exodus (Hosea 11:1).
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Matthew 2:14

"So Joseph got up and took the child and his mother by night and departed for Egypt."

- **"José... took it at night"**: Joseph's swiftness of action shows his immediate obedience to divine instruction. He does not hesitate, but acts urgently to protect his family.
 - **"And he departed to Egypt"**: The flight into Egypt not only protects Jesus, but also has a symbolic meaning. As already mentioned, Egypt was a place of refuge and protection for God's people in times of crisis. Jesus, by being taken there, demonstrates that He is the new "Israel", in whom God's promises are fully fulfilled.
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Matthew 2:15

"And he was there until the death of Herod, that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled: 'Out of Egypt I called my son.'" (Hosea 11:1)

- **"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord"**: Matthew highlights that the flight into Egypt and the return of Jesus are the fulfillment of Scripture, showing that

the events of Jesus' life were all under God's control and according to divine plan.

- **"Out of Egypt I called my son"**: The quotation from Hosea 11:1 is a reference to the exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt. Although originally referring to the people of Israel as a whole, Matthew applies this passage to Jesus, showing that He is the new Israel, called to come out of Egypt to fulfill God's purpose.

Matthew 2:16

"When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he was furious and sent out to kill all the male children in Bethlehem and in all its surroundings from two years old and under, according to the time he had found out from the wise men."

- **"He was very angry"**: Herod, realizing that the Magi had not returned to inform him of Jesus' whereabouts, becomes furious. His desire to protect his throne and eliminate any threat to his power leads him to take extreme and cruel action.
 - **"He ordered the killing of all the boys in Bethlehem and its entire region"**: This massacre, known as the Massacre of the Innocents, is an act of brutal violence, showing the lengths Herod was willing to go to maintain control. This tragic event highlights the contrast between the King of kings, who came to save, and human rulers who rule with fear and violence.
 - **"Two years and under"**: Herod, based on the information he obtained from the Magi, probably ordered the killing of all male children up to the age of two, which would indicate that he was trying to ensure that, among the newborns, none of them would be the Messiah.
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Matthew 2:17

"Then was fulfilled what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet: 'A voice was heard in Ramah, loud lamentation, weeping and much mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted, because they were no more.'"(Jeremiah 31:15)

- **"What was spoken through the prophet Jeremiah has been fulfilled"**: Matthew quotes a passage from Jeremiah that originally referred to the lamentation of the people of Israel during the Babylonian captivity. However, he applies this prophecy to the Massacre of the Innocents, demonstrating that, even in the most difficult times, Israel's pain and suffering were part of God's plan for salvation.
 - **"Rachel weeping for her children"**: Rachel, the wife of Jacob and mother of Joseph and Benjamin, symbolizes the mothers of Israel. She is depicted as weeping over the loss of her children, and this imagery is used to express the sadness and grief over the death of the innocents of Bethlehem.
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Matthew 2:18

"Rachel wept for her children, and would not be comforted, because they were no more."

- **"I didn't want to be comforted"**: This expression reinforces the indescribable suffering of mothers who have lost their children. Rachel's lament is a symbol of the deep and irreparable pain caused by the death of innocents. Matthew uses this image to illustrate the suffering caused by Herod's wickedness and the cruelty of human life.
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Matthew 2:19

"After the death of Herod, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,"

- **"After the death of Herod"**: After Herod's death, the threat to Jesus' life ceased. Herod's death is seen as the end of a cycle of suffering and danger, allowing Jesus' family to return to the promised land.
 - **"Behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream"**: Again, God uses dreams to communicate His will to Joseph. He continues to be the divine guide for Jesus' family, protecting and guiding them at every step.
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Matthew 2:20

"And he said, 'Arise, take the child and his mother, and go to the land of Israel; for those who sought the child's life are dead.'"

- **"Get up, take the child and his mother"**: The angel gives clear and direct instructions to Joseph, who does not hesitate to follow them. The command to "arise" implies immediate action, again showing Joseph's diligent obedience.
 - **"Go to the land of Israel"**: Jesus and his family are now instructed to return to Israel, as the threat of Herod has been neutralized. This is part of the divine plan for Jesus to fulfill the role of being the Messiah in Israel.
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Matthew 2:21

"So he arose, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel."

- **"Joseph... went to the land of Israel"**: Joseph follows divine instruction and returns to the land of Israel, faithfully obeying God, once again demonstrating his trust in the divine plan.
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Matthew 2:22

"But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there; and being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the region of Galilee."

- **"Hearing that Archelaus reigned"**: Archelaus, Herod's son, was known for his cruelty. This makes Joseph once again hesitant about returning to Judea, as he feared that the political situation had not changed.
 - **"Being warned in a dream"**: Again, God guides Joseph through dreams to protect and guide him, demonstrating the constant divine intervention to ensure the safety of Jesus' family.
-

Matthew 2:23

"And he went and lived in the city of Nazareth, that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled: 'He will be called a Nazarene.'"

- **"He went to live in the city of Nazareth"**: The return to Nazareth, a small and unremarkable town, has an important significance. Jesus would be identified as someone from a humble town, which would fulfill the prophecies about the humility of the Messiah.
- **"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets"**: The fact that Jesus is called a "Nazarene" is a reference to the fact that the Messiah would be despised or considered insignificant by many, something that is fulfilled in Jesus, who came from a city without great prestige.
- **"He will be called a Nazarene"**: Although the Old Testament does not explicitly mention "Nazarene", this expression is a summary of several prophecies that indicate the humility and rejection that the Messiah would suffer.

Final Reflection

Matthew chapter 2 reveals the fulfillment of the prophecies about the Messiah, who, from birth, experiences the challenges and adversities that were predicted for Him. This chapter is fundamental to understanding the divine protection over Jesus and His family, demonstrating how God guided and guarded the Savior, even when the threat of death hung over Him.

The birth of Jesus not only brought joy, but also generated fierce opposition from Herod, who, in trying to kill the Child, serves as a symbol of evil that opposes God's will. The Massacre of the Innocents, narrated by Matthew, is a tragic expression of human evil, but it also serves to highlight the fulfillment of Scripture, such as Rachel's lament for the loss of her children, reflecting the grief of the people of Israel.

Furthermore, the chapter shows how Joseph's actions, who promptly obeyed God's instructions given through dreams, ensured Jesus' protection and the fulfillment of God's plan. The flight into Egypt, the death of Herod, and the return to Nazareth are events that are not just historical details, but clear evidence of how God works behind the scenes to ensure that His will is accomplished perfectly and without question.

In his return to Nazareth, we see Jesus identified as the "Nazarene," fulfilling the expectations of a Messiah who would come in humility, rejected by the powerful, but faithful to God's purpose of bringing salvation. Thus, Matthew chapter 2 highlights not only God's protection of Jesus, but also how He, from the beginning, fulfills the prophecies that speak of His redemptive mission and His role as the promised Savior.

This chapter is a reminder of God's sovereignty over all events in history, and how He guides, protects, and accomplishes His purposes even when there seems to be opposition. Jesus, the Messiah, did not come into an easy world,

but in the midst of challenges, His plan of salvation continues to be fulfilled in a divine way, even in the most adverse circumstances.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 3 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Verse 1: "In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea."

Matthew introduces us to John the Baptist, a key figure in preparing the way for Jesus. He appears "in the days" of a specific moment in history, as a messenger of God. The fact that he is preaching in the "Judean wilderness" is no coincidence. The wilderness symbolizes a place of purification and preparation. God has used the wilderness throughout history to shape His people, and now, in the New Testament, the wilderness becomes the setting for the message of repentance, signaling that something new is about to happen.

Verse 2: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

John begins his message with an urgent call to repentance. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand, that is, the age of salvation is about to manifest itself with the coming of Jesus. Repentance, in John's context, is not just an acknowledgment of sin, but a profound change in heart and life, something that prepares people for the coming of the Messiah. Repentance is, therefore, the key to accessing the Kingdom of Heaven.

Verse 3: "For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

In this verse, Matthew makes a direct quote from Isaiah 40:3, showing that the coming of John the Baptist and his mission of

John's mission to prepare the way for Jesus was the fulfillment of ancient prophecy. John's role was to be the "voice of one crying in the wilderness," calling out to people to prepare themselves spiritually for the coming of the Messiah. He prepares their hearts so that when they see Jesus, they will recognize Him as the Savior.

Verse 4: "And this John wore a garment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey."

The description of John the Baptist in verses 4 and 5 serves to highlight his simplicity and humility. He was not concerned with wealth or status, but lived an austere life, like the prophets of old, in total dependence on God. His clothing and food were simple and rustic, symbolizing his focus on the spiritual rather than material possessions. This also serves to contrast with the religious leaders of the day, who were often more concerned with their outward appearances than with the inner transformation of the heart.

Verse 5: "Then Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about the Jordan, went out to him."

John draws a crowd of people from many regions, highlighting the great spiritual need among the people. Everyone from Jerusalem and Judea was looking for something that would give meaning and purpose to their lives. John's call for repentance touched many hearts, and people were willing to travel great distances to hear his message and seek God's forgiveness.

Verse 6: "And they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins."

John's baptism was a symbolic ritual of purification. By being baptized, an individual was publicly demonstrating his willingness to turn from his sins and be reconciled to God. Confession of sins was an essential part of this process of repentance, as it recognized the need for forgiveness and transformation.

Verse 7: "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?'"

John the Baptist, upon realizing that the Pharisees and Sadducees, religious leaders of the time, were coming for baptism, rebukes them harshly. He calls them a "brood of vipers," a harsh term denoting hypocrisy and falsehood. These religious leaders, who considered themselves righteous, were just following the crowd without any real repentance or desire to change. John questions them about how they think they will escape God's judgment if they are not willing to truly repent.

Verse 8: "Therefore bring forth fruits worthy of repentance."

John challenges everyone, including the Pharisees and Sadducees, to demonstrate by their actions that the repentance they proclaim is genuine. A simple external gesture like baptism is not enough; the heart must be transformed, reflecting this in daily actions. "Fruits worthy of repentance" means living in a way that is consistent with the inner change brought about by repentance.

Verse 9: "And do not think that you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you that God is able of these stones to raise up children for Abraham."

John refutes the idea that being a physical descendant of Abraham would be enough to guarantee salvation. He warns that a relationship with God is not defined solely by lineage, but by a willingness to live according to God's will. If necessary, God could raise "children of Abraham" even from stones, that is, true spiritual descent does not depend on genealogy, but on obedience to God.

Verse 10: "And now the ax is laid at the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire."

John uses the metaphor of a fruitful tree to warn of impending judgment. The "axe at the root" symbolizes God's judgment that is about to take place. Any tree that does not produce "good fruit" will be cut down, a symbol of judgment and rejection. For John, true repentance leads to a life that bears spiritual fruit, and those who do not change their ways will face God's judgment.

Verse 11: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire."

John stands in a position of humility before Jesus. He recognizes that his baptism with water was merely a sign of repentance, but Jesus' baptism would be much deeper and more transformative. Jesus would baptize with the Holy Spirit, providing true spiritual regeneration, and with fire, which could mean purification or judgment, depending on the context.

Verse 12: "His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor; he will gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

John speaks of the future judgment, using the metaphor of the separation of the wheat from the chaff. The wheat represents the righteous, who will be kept in the barn (salvation), while the chaff, representing the wicked, will be burned with "unquenchable fire" (eternal condemnation). This emphasizes the seriousness of repentance and the need for a change of life.

Verse 13: "Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John to be baptized by him."

Here, Jesus, though sinless, chooses to be baptized as an act of identification with humanity and obedience to God. He submits to John's baptism, which was a baptism of repentance, to begin

publicly His ministry and fulfill the Father's will.

Verse 14: "But John tried to stop him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?'"

John, recognizing Jesus' superiority, tries to prevent the baptism. He understands that, since Jesus is without sin, it should be him who is baptized by Jesus, and not the other way around. John's reaction shows the humility and reverence with which he stands before Jesus.

Verse 15: "But Jesus said to him, 'Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.' So he allowed it."

Jesus explains that baptism was necessary to "fulfill all righteousness." That is, it was part of God's plan for

Jesus identified completely with humanity and followed the path of obedience to the Father. Jesus' response shows that, even though He is sinless, He submits to the divine plan to fulfill all of God's will.

Verse 16: "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him."

This verse describes the manifestation of the Trinity at the time of Jesus' baptism: the Father, through the voice from heaven (not mentioned here but suggested by the context), the Son (Jesus), and the Holy Spirit, who descends "like a dove." This event marks divine approval and the official beginning of Jesus' public ministry.

Verse 17: "And behold, a voice from heaven said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Finally, the Father publicly declares that Jesus is His beloved Son. This declaration not only confirms Jesus' identity as the Son of God, but also the mission He came to fulfill: to bring salvation to humanity. The word "pleasure" indicates God's joy and pleasure in seeing His Son obey the divine plan.

Final Reflection

Matthew 3 sets the stage for Jesus' ministry. John the Baptist's message of repentance and preparation for the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven is complemented by Jesus' baptism, which symbolizes His identification with humanity and the inauguration of His ministry. The manifestation of the Trinity in Jesus' baptism reaffirms His divine authority and His redemptive mission. This chapter shows the importance of

repentance, humility and obedience, preparing hearts for the full revelation of Jesus as the Messiah and Savior.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 4 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew chapter 4 is crucial to understanding the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. He overcomes temptations in the desert, confirming His commitment to the divine mission. After this, He begins to call disciples, simple fishermen who abandon their lives to follow Him. Jesus' ministry is not only about teaching, but also about healing and deliverance, showing the transforming power of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Let's understand each verse clearly and in detail:

Verse 1: "Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil."

After his baptism, Jesus is led by the Holy Spirit into the desert to face temptation. This shows that, even though he was the Son of God, he went through human trials. The desert symbolizes a place of isolation and difficulty, where Jesus would directly face the devil, the spiritual adversary.

Verse 2: "And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, afterward he was hungry."

Jesus fasted for forty days and nights, a reference to biblical tradition (such as Moses on Mount Sinai and Elijah on Mount Horeb), showing His spiritual discipline and preparedness for confrontation. After this long period of fasting, Jesus feels hungry, highlighting His true humanity. He was physically vulnerable, which makes temptation more challenging.

Verse 3: "And the tempter came and said, 'If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread.'"

Here the devil begins the temptation by trying to exploit Jesus' hunger. He challenges Jesus' identity, saying, "If you are the Son of God." The temptation was for Jesus to use His divine power to satisfy an immediate physical need by turning stones into bread. This would not only call into question Jesus' trust in the Father, but it would also lead Him to use His power selfishly.

Verse 4: "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Jesus responds to temptation by quoting Scripture (Deuteronomy 8:3). He reaffirms that man's life does not depend only on physical needs, such as food, but mainly on obedience to the Word of God. Jesus teaches us here to trust God to supply our needs, without resorting to shortcuts or solutions that compromise faith.

Verse 5: "Then the devil took him into the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple."

In the second temptation, the devil takes Jesus to Jerusalem, the holy city, and places him on the highest point of the temple. This location has religious significance, being a central place for God's people. The devil is preparing a temptation related to pride and the public display of power.

Verse 6: "And he said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee, and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."

The devil tries to manipulate Scripture by quoting Psalm 91:11-12 to persuade Jesus to throw himself from the temple, suggesting that God would send angels to protect him. He tries to put Jesus to the test so that he can demonstrate his power in a spectacular way, forcing God to intervene. This is an attempt to distort trust in God by making Jesus demand proof of divine protection.

Verse 7: "Jesus said to him, It is written again: 'You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.'"

Jesus responds once again with Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:16), stating that we should not test or defy God. This shows that even though we know God's power, we should not force Him to act on our behalf out of pride or insecurity. True faith trusts in God's protection and timing without selfish demands or demonstrations.

Verse 8: "Again the devil took him to an exceedingly high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory."

In the third temptation, the devil takes Jesus to a high place and shows Him all the kingdoms and riches of the world. Here, the devil offers an alternative to God's plan, promising the glory and power of this world immediately and without suffering. He offers Jesus an easier way, without the cross, to achieve dominion.

Verse 9: "And he said unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me."

The devil makes his direct proposal: if Jesus would worship him, he would give him all the power and glory of the kingdoms of the world. This temptation is an offer for Jesus to take a shortcut, avoiding the cross and suffering, but at the price of betraying his faithfulness to God. The devil is tempting Jesus to choose temporal power over spiritual purpose.

Verse 10: "Then Jesus said to him, 'Get away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.'"

Jesus firmly rejects this temptation, once again using Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:13). He makes it clear that worship and loyalty are due to God alone. No earthly glory or power is worth the price of disobeying the Father. Jesus, as the true Son of God, takes no shortcuts and stands firm in His purpose to fulfill the Father's will, rejecting any offer that would compromise that mission.

Verse 11: "Then the devil left him, and, behold, angels came and ministered to him."

After Jesus' victory over temptation, the devil departs. Then the angels come and minister to Jesus, showing that God has not abandoned him. This shows that by resisting the devil with God's truth, victory is assured, and God's sustenance comes at the right time. Jesus, despite his physical weakness, is strengthened by God after the trial.

Verse 12: "But when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee."

This verse marks the transition from John the Baptist to Jesus' ministry. After John's arrest, Jesus returns to Galilee, a region where He will begin His public mission. John's arrest highlights the opposition that both he and Jesus will face from the authorities. Jesus now takes the lead in the movement of repentance and the Kingdom of Heaven.

Verse 13: "And leaving Nazareth, he came and dwelt in Capernaum, a city by the sea, in the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali."

Jesus leaves Nazareth, where he grew up, and settles in Capernaum, a strategically located city. Capernaum was located near the Sea of Galilee, in a highly populated area with a lot of commercial activity, making it an important point for the expansion of Jesus' ministry. The mention of Zebulun and Naphtali is significant because it connects this move with Old Testament prophecies.

Verse 14: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying,"

Matthew often points out how the events of Jesus' life fulfill Old Testament prophecies. Here he introduces yet another prophecy, linking Jesus' move to Galilee with the words of Isaiah, which emphasizes the continuity of God's plan for redemption.

Verse 15: "The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;"

This quote from Isaiah 9:1 highlights the location of Galilee, a region of contact between Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews). The "Galilee of the Gentiles" indicates that this area was mixed with non-Israelite peoples, which has special significance: Jesus begins His ministry in a diverse region, showing that His message is for all peoples, not just Jews.

Verse 16: "The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light; and to those who sat in the region and shadow of death, light has dawned."

Jesus is described as the "great light" that illuminates the darkness. The "darkness" represents the spiritual ignorance, sin, and hopelessness that gripped the people. The coming of Jesus is like a light that brings hope, direction, and salvation. This metaphor of light and darkness highlights the transformative impact of Christ's presence in people's lives.

Verse 17: "From that time Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

Here begins Jesus' preaching ministry. His initial message is clear: repentance. He calls people to change their hearts and lives in preparation for the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. Repentance is the first step toward entering the Kingdom, and Jesus offers this opportunity for transformation for everyone.

Verse 18: "Now Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brothers, Simon called Peter, and Andrew, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen."

Jesus begins to call his first disciples. Peter and Andrew are the first to be called. They were fishermen, a common occupation in the region. Jesus, by calling simple men, shows that his ministry is not based on status or ability, but on the willingness to follow and learn.

Verse 19: "And he said unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Jesus uses the metaphor of fishing, something Peter and Andrew understood well, to describe their new mission. They would go from catching fish to bringing people into the Kingdom of God. Being "fishers of men" means that they would help "catch" souls, leading them to faith and repentance.

Verse 20: "Then they immediately left their nets and followed Him."

Peter and Andrew's response was immediate. They left their nets, that is, they left their old occupations and lives behind to follow Jesus. This act of abandonment symbolizes their willingness to leave everything behind for a greater cause: to follow Christ and participate in his ministry.

Verse 21: "And going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in a boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and he called them."

Jesus then meets two other brothers, James and John. Like Peter and Andrew, they were fishermen. They were in the

boat with his father, mending the nets, a task that symbolizes the maintenance of his activity. Jesus calls these two brothers as well, highlighting the growth of his circle of disciples.

Verse 22: "And they immediately left the ship and their father, and followed him."

James and John also respond immediately to Jesus' call, leaving the boat and their father. This represents the personal and family sacrifice that is often required to follow Jesus. Their readiness to respond to the call shows the urgency and importance of Jesus' invitation.

Verse 23: "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness among the people."

Jesus begins to travel throughout Galilee, teaching in the synagogues where people gather to study the Scriptures. He preaches about the Kingdom of Heaven and heals sickness and disease, demonstrating both the spiritual and physical power of His mission. His healings draw crowds and show that the Kingdom of God brings both spiritual salvation and physical restoration.

Verse 24: "And his fame went out throughout all Syria: and they brought to him all that were sick, having divers diseases and torments, and those possessed with devils, and epileptics, and the paralytics: and he healed them."

The fame of Jesus spreads rapidly, not only throughout Galilee, but even in Syria, a region north of Israel. People begin to bring their sick and afflicted people to be healed.

Jesus heals them. The list of illnesses includes demonic possession, mental illness, and physical illness, highlighting Jesus' power over every aspect of human life.

Verse 25: "And many people followed him from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond the Jordan."

Jesus' ministry draws a large crowd from many regions. People from Galilee, the Decapolis (a region of ten Gentile cities), Jerusalem, Judea, and other areas come to follow him. This shows the broad appeal of Jesus, which transcends cultural and geographic boundaries. His message and power have a profound impact on all who encounter him.

Final Reflection on Matthew 4

Matthew chapter 4 reveals to us defining moments in the life of Jesus, beginning with the temptation in the wilderness and culminating with the beginning of His public ministry. It offers us profound lessons about how we should deal with trials and challenges, and how we are called to follow Jesus on our spiritual journey.

1. Resisting Temptation with the Word of God: The first great lesson of this chapter is how Jesus overcomes Satan's temptations. He teaches us that the Word of God is our main defense against the enemy's lies and temptations. In each temptation, Jesus responds by quoting Scripture, showing that knowledge of the Word is not just theoretical, but a practical and powerful weapon. This reminds us of the importance of knowing and meditating on the Scriptures to face the spiritual battles that arise in our daily lives.

2. The Call to Repentance: After the temptation, Jesus begins to preach the central message of His ministry: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Repentance is a recurring theme in the gospel and

It means changing your mind and heart, turning away from sin and turning to God. This is the gateway to the Kingdom of God, and everyone is called to take this step, regardless of their condition or life story.

3. The Nature of Discipleship: Jesus' call to Peter, Andrew, James, and John reminds us that following Christ demands an immediate response and total commitment. They left their networks and their families to follow Jesus. This challenges us to reflect on what we are willing to give up in order to follow Christ more fully. Discipleship is not a passive thing, but an invitation to a life of purpose, action, and sacrifice.

4. The Mission of Jesus: Jesus not only preaches about the Kingdom of Heaven, but demonstrates the power of the Kingdom through healing and miracles. He heals the sick, frees the oppressed, and brings hope to the hopeless. This shows us that the Kingdom of God is not just a future spiritual reality, but something that is already at work here and now, transforming lives. The power of Jesus continues to heal and restore today, both physically and spiritually, and we are called to participate in this work, helping to bring healing and hope to the world around us.

5. A Kingdom for All: The fact that multitudes from many regions and backgrounds began to follow Jesus highlights that the Kingdom of God is inclusive. It transcends cultural, geographical, and social barriers. Jesus attracts people from all walks of life, and His message is for everyone. This reminds us that as followers of Christ, we too should seek to reach everyone, regardless of their background, sharing God's love and truth with everyone we meet.

Conclusion:

Matthew 4 challenges us to live a life of resistance to temptation, genuine repentance, committed discipleship, and active participation in the Kingdom of God. Jesus

He showed us the way, and now we are called to follow Him, trusting in God's Word, proclaiming the Kingdom, and bringing healing and hope to those around us. May this chapter inspire each of us to live a Christ-centered life, committed to His calling, and open to the transformation He offers.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 5 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

In this passage, Jesus begins His famous *Sermon on the Mount*, a collection of teachings that offer profound insight into life in the Kingdom of God. It begins with the "Beatitudes," statements that bless those who live according to God's values.

Verse 1:

"When Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on the mountain; and when he was seated, his disciples came to him."

In this verse, we see Jesus going up to the mountain to teach. In Jewish tradition, great teachings were given in high places, symbolizing a connection with God. When Jesus sits down, it indicates a position of authority. The disciples and the crowds come closer, ready to learn. Here, Jesus is about to teach fundamental principles to all who would follow him.

Verse 2:

"And he began to teach them, saying:"

Here Matthew introduces what will be the heart of Jesus' teachings. Jesus will teach with authority, revealing profound truths about the character of God and how we should live.

Verse 3:

"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Being "poor in spirit" means recognizing our spiritual need, recognizing that we are totally dependent on God. Those who understand their own limitation and their need for God are blessed, for they are humble and open to receive the Kingdom of Heaven. This is the first step to entering the Kingdom: humility and dependence on God.

Verse 4:

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."

Jesus is referring to those who mourn the state of the world and their own failings. It is a sorrow that comes from seeing the sin and pain all around us. This sorrow is not without hope, for God promises to comfort those who mourn, whether here on earth or in heaven for the rest of their lives.

Verse 5:

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

The meek are those who have a gentle and humble spirit, who do not seek revenge or power, but trust in God to vindicate their causes. In a world that values strength and aggression, Jesus teaches that true strength lies in meekness. These will inherit the earth, symbolizing a future blessing and the promise of God's Kingdom.

Verse 6:

"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."

Those who have a deep thirst and desire for righteousness, that is, to live righteously and see God's righteousness prevail in the world, will be satisfied. This means that God promises to fulfill this sincere pursuit of righteousness, both in our personal lives and in the world around us.

Verse 7:

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

Jesus teaches that those who show mercy—compassion, forgiveness, and kindness to others—will receive mercy from God. This reflects the principle that as we treat others, so will we be treated by God. Mercy is a central characteristic of God's character, and He expects His followers to practice it.

Verse 8:

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

Purity of heart means having sincere intentions, without hypocrisy or ulterior motives. Those who are pure in heart seek God with honesty and integrity. The promise is that they will see God—both a literal vision (in heaven) and a spiritual vision (having a clear perception of God's presence now).

Verse 9:

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Peacemakers are those who work to promote peace, whether by resolving conflicts or building bridges between people. They reflect the heart of God, who is a God of peace. In doing so, they show that they are true children of God, imitating His character in their actions.

Verse 10:

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Jesus concludes this section with a word of encouragement to those who are persecuted for doing what is right in God's eyes. Being persecuted for righteousness' sake is a sign that one is aligned with God's Kingdom. For such people, the reward is the Kingdom of Heaven, an eternal inheritance that outweighs any temporary suffering.

Verses 11-12:

"Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you falsely, because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, because your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you."

Jesus continues the Beatitudes by encouraging his disciples to face persecution with joy, as this is a mark of true followers of God. He explains that suffering for the sake of faith is part of the Christian walk, and that this persecution should be seen as a blessing, as it is evidence that we are on the right path. The example of the prophets of the Old Testament

Testament, who were also persecuted for proclaiming the truth, reinforces that this rejection of the world brings a great heavenly reward.

Verse 13:

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt has lost its flavor, how can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men."

Jesus compares His followers to salt, which at the time was valued for its ability to preserve and flavor food. The role of Christians in the world is similar: to preserve truth and bring spiritual "flavor" to society by combating moral and spiritual corruption. If we lose our spiritual effectiveness—our "flavor"—we fail to fulfill our purpose. Thus, Jesus warns us to maintain our faithfulness and influence, for without them we are useless for God's mission.

Verse 14:

"You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden."

In addition to being the salt of the earth, Christians are also described as the light of the world. Our lives are to be a visible testimony to God's truth and grace. Jesus uses the image of a city on a hill, which cannot be hidden, to show that our faith is to be visible to others. We are called to reflect the light of Christ and illuminate the darkness of the world.

Verse 15:

"Neither do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a lampstand; and it gives light to all in the house."

Jesus teaches that the light of our faith should not be hidden. Just as no one lights a lamp to hide it, so we should not hide our faith or testimony. Our lives should be a living example, positively impacting those around us. Our light should shine in a way that influences those in our "household"—our family, our community, and everyone we meet.

Verse 16:

"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

This verse emphasizes that our light is to be seen through our good works. This is not for our own glory, but so that others may see our righteous actions and praise God. When our good works point to God's love, justice, and truth, His name is glorified, and others may be led to believe and follow Christ. We are therefore a reflection of God's goodness in the world.

Verse 17:

"Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets. I did not come to destroy them but to fulfill them."

Here Jesus makes it clear that His coming was not to abolish the Law of Moses or the teachings of the Old Testament prophets, but to fulfill them fully. He is bringing new depth and clarity to the Law, showing

how it applies more deeply to the hearts and lives of those who follow him. Jesus is not dismissing what has been said before, but is revealing its true meaning.

Verse 18:

"For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke of a pen will pass from the law until all is accomplished."

Jesus reaffirms the immutability of the Law. He uses the smallest letter of the Hebrew alphabet (*iota*) and the smallest writing sign (*tilde*) to show that no detail of God's Law will be neglected or lost until all of God's purposes are accomplished. This means that God's Word remains eternal and unchangeable until all prophecies and promises are fulfilled in Christ.

Verse 19:

"Whoever therefore breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches men so, he shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven: but whoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

Here Jesus emphasizes the importance of obedience to the Law. Anyone who disobeys even the least of the commandments and teaches others to do the same will have a lowly position in the Kingdom of Heaven. On the other hand, those who faithfully obey and teach God's commandments will be considered great in the Kingdom. This verse emphasizes the importance of not minimizing any aspect of God's Law and of living and teaching its fullness.

Verse 20:

"For I tell you that unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."

The scribes and Pharisees were known for their meticulous obedience to the Law, but their righteousness was often external and based on rituals and rules, without true inner transformation. Jesus challenges His followers to a righteousness that goes beyond appearances, a righteousness that comes from a heart transformed by God. He makes it clear that mere external conformity to the Law is not enough; what is needed is a righteousness that reflects God's love, mercy, and truth in every aspect of life.

Verse 21:

"You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not kill,' and 'Whoever kills will be in danger of the judgment.'"

Jesus begins to delve deeper into the meaning of the commandments. Here He refers to the sixth commandment, "You shall not kill." The Law prohibited murder, and anyone who committed it was judged. This was well understood by the Jews, but Jesus is about to expand the understanding of this commandment, showing that true justice goes beyond avoiding the physical act of killing.

Verse 22:

"But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother without a cause will be liable to judgment; and whoever says to his brother, 'Raca,' will be liable to the Sanhedrin; and whoever says, 'You fool,' will be liable to the hell of fire."

Jesus goes beyond the act of killing and addresses the root of sin: anger. He teaches that unjustified anger, contempt, and insults

are also worthy of judgment. Negative words and attitudes toward another person, such as calling someone a “Raca” (a term of contempt) or “crazy,” are equally serious in God’s eyes, because they reveal a corrupt heart. Jesus is showing that true righteousness is internal, and that we should not only refrain from killing, but also from harboring hatred or contempt for others.

Verse 23:

“Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you,”

Jesus shifts the focus to the context of worship. He teaches that reconciliation with others is more important than religious rituals. If someone is in the act of offering an offering to God and remembers that another person has something against him, he should put down his offering and resolve the conflict first. This emphasizes the value God places on reconciliation and peace between people. Our relationships with others directly influence our relationship with God.

Verse 24:

“Leave your gift there before the altar, and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.”

Jesus emphasizes that reconciliation must be a priority. Before offering anything to God, we must seek peace with those we have offended or who are offended with us. He shows that interpersonal relationships are an integral part of true worship. There is no point in offering something to God when there is bitterness or conflict with others. The act of reconciling with one’s brother reflects the true spirit of repentance and love.

Verse 25:

“Come to terms with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary hand you over to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.”

Jesus encourages the swift resolution of conflicts. He uses the example of a legal dispute, where the parties are on their way to court. The idea is that it is best to resolve matters as quickly as possible to avoid harsh judgment. This can also be applied to the spiritual life: we should not let conflicts build up or fester. We should seek reconciliation quickly, both to avoid earthly and spiritual consequences.

Verse 26:

“Truly I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.”

Here Jesus highlights the seriousness of not seeking reconciliation. He uses figurative language of imprisonment and debt to show that if we do not settle our grievances with others, we will be held accountable down to the last detail. In the spiritual life, this can be seen as a warning about the consequences of not reconciling with others. God deeply values forgiveness and reconciliation, and there are serious consequences for those who neglect this calling.

Verse 27:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’”

Now Jesus addresses another commandment of the Law: “You shall not commit adultery.” In Jewish tradition, this commandment was understood as a strict prohibition of

act of marital infidelity. Jesus, however, is about to show that adultery begins long before the physical act, in the desire of the heart. He wants His followers understand the true depth of this commandment.

Verse 28:

“But I say to you that anyone who looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”

Jesus expands our understanding of adultery. He teaches that sin is not only in the physical act, but also in desire. Looking at someone with impure intentions or with lustful thoughts is already a violation of the commandment against adultery. He emphasizes that the heart is the real battlefield. Temptation begins with the

thoughts, and sin takes root when we allow these desires to grow. Therefore, controlling our thoughts is fundamental to a pure life.

Verse 29:

“Therefore if your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.”

In this verse, Jesus uses hyperbolic language to emphasize the seriousness of avoiding sin. He is not literally suggesting that we should pluck out our eyes, but He is showing that we should take radical steps to remove temptation from our lives. The “eye” here represents that which causes us to sin. If there is something that constantly causes us to stumble, we should cut it out of our lives, even if it is painful or difficult. The purpose is to avoid judgment and ultimate punishment.

Verse 30:

“And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it from you. It is better for you to lose one of your members than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.”

Just as in the previous verse, Jesus repeats the same idea, now using the “right hand” as a symbol of something precious, but which can lead to sin. The message is clear: we must be willing to sacrifice even important things if they are taking us away from God. Jesus teaches that it is better to lose something valuable, but maintain spiritual purity and integrity, than to allow sin to dominate us and lead us to eternal condemnation.

Verse 31:

“It was also said: Whoever divorces his wife, let him give her a certificate of divorce.”

Jesus here addresses the issue of divorce, citing the common practice at the time of giving a bill of divorce as a legal way to dissolve a marriage. Under the Law of Moses, divorce was permitted, but Jesus is about to teach that divorce should not be done lightly or casually. He shows that marriage is a sacred institution, and that its dissolution has serious spiritual and moral implications.

Verse 32:

“But I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, makes her commit adultery; and whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.”

Jesus teaches that divorce, except in cases of sexual immorality, leads to adultery. By breaking up a marriage without a legitimate reason, both the spouse who divorces and the spouse who marries the divorced person are engaging in adultery. This shows the value and seriousness of marital commitment in the eyes of God. Jesus emphasizes that marriage is not something that can be easily dissolved, and that adultery is not only a physical sin but also involves the ramifications of wrong decisions about divorce.

Verse 33:

“You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not break your oath, but shall perform your oaths to the Lord.’”

Jesus refers to a common practice among the Jews of his time, who swore to confirm the truthfulness of their words. The Law of Moses forbade false oaths, and people were expected to fulfill their vows to the Lord. Tradition permitted swearing by various sacred things, but Jesus is about to offer deeper insight into the integrity of speech.

Verse 34:

“But I say to you, do not swear at all; neither by heaven, for it is God’s throne;”

Jesus introduces a new standard: He forbids all oaths. What He means is that instead of relying on oaths to give credibility to our words, followers of Christ must be so honest that a simple “yes” or “no” is enough. Heaven is the throne of God, too sacred to be used casually in human oaths. Jesus teaches us to live with such truth that swearing becomes unnecessary.

Verse 35:

“Neither by the earth, for it is his footstool; nor by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King;”

Jesus goes on to explain that swearing by the earth or by Jerusalem is also inappropriate, since the earth is God’s footstool and Jerusalem is the city of the great King. He reminds us that everything that exists belongs to God, and using it in human oaths is disrespectful. Again, the emphasis here is on absolute integrity, without the need to bind oneself with oaths.

Verse 36:

“Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.”

Here Jesus emphasizes our limitation and lack of control over even the smallest things, such as the color of our hair. Swearing by our own head, which is beyond our control, is useless. Jesus teaches us that the integrity of our words should not depend on oaths, but on a life of truth and honesty.

Verse 37:

“But let your communication be, Yes, yes; No, no: for anything beyond these cometh of evil.”

Jesus teaches us that simplicity and sincerity should characterize our speech. “Yes” should mean “yes,” and “no” should mean “no.” Anything beyond this, such as oaths or attempts at manipulation, can lead to deception or lies, and Jesus identifies this as evil. He calls us to live lives of transparency and truthfulness.

Verse 38:

"You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.'"

Jesus refers to an ancient law known as the "law of retaliation" (or retaliation), which allowed for retribution proportionate to the offense suffered. It was a way to ensure that revenge did not exceed the original harm. However, Jesus is about to present a completely different way of dealing with conflict and offenses.

Verse 39:

"But I say to you, Do not resist an evil person. But if anyone slaps you on your right cheek, turn to him the other also."

Jesus teaches us not to seek revenge or retaliation. When He says to "turn the other cheek," He is calling us to respond to offenses with patience and grace, rather than retaliating with violence or anger. This attitude demonstrates true Christian love, which does not seek revenge but, instead, extends mercy, even when unjustly attacked.

Verse 40:

"And if anyone wants to sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well."

In this verse, Jesus continues to challenge cultural norms of justice and propriety. If someone sues us for our tunic, we should also be willing to give up our cloak. This reflects an attitude of material detachment and a spirit of generosity, even in situations of need.

conflict. Jesus teaches that Christians should prioritize peace and the testimony of love, instead of insisting on their rights.

Verse 41:

“And whoever forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles.”

At the time, Roman soldiers could legally force a citizen to carry their belongings for a mile. Jesus teaches that instead of resisting or complying with this obligation in a minimal manner, we should go the extra mile and walk two miles. This act symbolizes a willingness to serve and help, even when forced, demonstrating an attitude of humility and goodwill.

Verse 42:

“Give to him who asks you, and do not turn away from him who wants to borrow from you.”

Jesus here encourages radical generosity. He calls us to be willing to help those in need without hesitation. The principle behind this verse is that Christians should be characterized by generosity and a willingness to share with those in need, even when it costs us something. This reflects God’s love and compassion for others.

Verse 43:

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’”

Jewish law emphasized love for one's neighbor, but some believed that this implied hatred of one's enemies. This interpretation was common in Jesus' time, although hatred

to enemies was never a direct command of the Law. Jesus is about to challenge this mindset by offering a much higher and more transformative teaching.

Verse 44:

“But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you;”

Here Jesus presents one of the most radical statements of his teaching: to love our enemies. He not only commands us to love our friends and family, but also those who hate us and persecute us. Furthermore, he teaches that we should pray for those who do us harm, showing that Christian love does not depend on how we are treated, but reflects the love of God, who is merciful and full of grace towards all.

Verse 45:

“That you may be children of your Father in heaven, for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

Jesus explains that loving our enemies and praying for those who persecute us makes us true children of God, imitating the character of our heavenly Father. God demonstrates His love impartially, sending blessings such as sunshine and rain to both the righteous and the unrighteous. In the same way, we are called to love without discrimination, reflecting God’s universal love.

Verse 46:

“For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?”

Jesus argues that loving only those who love us is easy and brings little merit. Even tax collectors, who were considered notorious sinners and traitors among the Jews, loved their friends. Christian love should go much deeper, extending even to those who harm us. Jesus challenges his followers to stand out in the way they love.

Verse 47:

“And if you greet your brothers only, what more do you do? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?”

Jesus goes on to explain that Christian love and kindness must go beyond ordinary expectations. Greeting only those who are our friends or family is not extraordinary; even pagans do this. Jesus' call is for a love that goes beyond social and cultural boundaries, a love that includes even those outside our inner circle.

Verse 48:

“Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

Jesus ends this section with a lofty challenge: to be perfect as God is perfect. This perfection does not mean the absence of human flaws, but rather spiritual maturity, reflected in the complete and indiscriminate love He described. We are called to imitate God's character, especially in how we treat those around us, demonstrating a love that transcends human logic.

Final Reflection

Matthew 5 is the beginning of the famous **Sermon on the Mount**, where Jesus teaches his disciples about the values of the Kingdom of God. He begins with the **Beatitudes** (vv. 3-12), a series of statements describing the character of those who are blessed by God. Jesus exalts the humble, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and those persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Next, Jesus calls his disciples to be **salt of the earth** and **light of the world** (vv. 13-16), highlighting the role of Christians as positive influencers who should reflect God's character in the world.

In the remainder of the chapter, Jesus addresses the **Law** and takes it to a deeper level (vv. 17-48). He did not come to abolish the Law, but to fulfill it. In a series of contrasts, He explains how true righteousness must go beyond external rules, emphasizing the heart and intention behind actions. He addresses such topics as:

- **Anger and murder:** Jesus compares anger and insult to murder and calls the disciples to resolve conflicts before worship.
- **Adultery and desire:** He teaches that adultery begins in the heart, through desire.
- **Divorce:** Jesus reaffirms the seriousness of marriage and the need to avoid divorce except for immorality.
- **Oaths:** Jesus forbids swearing, encouraging simple, straightforward honesty in all words.
- **Revenge and love for enemies:** He rejects retribution ("an eye for an eye") and calls us to love and pray for our enemies, reflecting the perfection of the heavenly Father.

Overall, Matthew 5 presents the principles of the Kingdom of God, emphasizing that outward behavior should be an expression of inner transformation. Jesus raises the standards of morality and righteousness, calling His followers to

live extraordinary lives, loving even their enemies and pursuing a life that reflects God's perfect character.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 6 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 6 teaches us that our acts of piety (such as prayer and generosity) should be motivated by sincerity and not by a desire for recognition from others. God values **motivation of the heart** and rewards actions that are done with purity of intention. When we approach God, we must remember that He already knows our needs, and our prayer is a way of **strengthen our relationship with Him**, and not to convince God to answer us. Jesus' example, the "Our Father", invites us to pray with humility, reverence and confidence, seeking first the Kingdom of God in our lives.

Matthew 6:1 - *"Be careful not to practice righteousness before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise, you will have no reward from your heavenly Father."*

Jesus begins this passage by warning his followers about the **motivation behind good deeds**. He teaches that the **justice** (Actions such as charity, prayer, and fasting) should not be performed with the aim of being praised or seen by others. The true reward comes from God, not from the applause or praise of men. The motivation should be pure, seeking to please God and not to impress others.

Matthew 6:2 - *"So when you give to the needy, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be honored by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward in full."*

Here, Jesus speaks specifically about **give alms**. He warns against the **selfishness disguised as generosity**, how to do

boasting about our good deeds. The “hypocrites” did this publicly to be admired, but Jesus teaches that the true act of generosity must be discreet and done from the heart, without seeking recognition. The reward will come from the Father who sees in secret.

Matthew 6:3 – “But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing,”

This metaphor teaches about **secrecy** in good deeds. Generosity should be done in such a way that even we, in our own practice, **let us not be tempted to seek recognition**. The idea is that we should act with humility and without wanting others to know the good we are doing. When we act in this way, our reward is guaranteed by God.

Matthew 6:4 – “So that your alms may be done in secret; and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.”

God is the one who sees everything we do in secret, and He is the one who will give the **true reward**. Jesus is showing that God's reward is far more valuable than human gratitude. Therefore, the primary motivation for doing good should be the desire to please God, not public recognition.

Matthew 6:5 – “When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, you have received your reward in full.”

Here, Jesus talks about the **public prayer**. He criticizes those who pray in an ostentatious manner, just to be seen by others, seeking applause or recognition. He calls these people “hypocrites” because their prayer does not

It is a genuine search for God, but a form of display. True prayer is intimate and sincere.

Matthew 6:6 - *"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is unseen, and your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you."*

Here, Jesus teaches **private and sincere prayer**. The act of prayer is something personal between you and God. **It doesn't have to be done publicly to please others..** The Father sees the heart, and the reward comes from God. Prayer should be an intimate and true conversation with God, without the need for exhibitionism.

Matthew 6:7 - *"And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions like the pagans, for they think that they will be heard because of their many words."*

Jesus also teaches that prayer should not be a **mechanical or repetitive prayer** meaningless, as many did at the time, believing that the amount of words or repetitions would guarantee that they would be heard. God knows our needs and thoughts before we even ask, so we don't need to try to impress Him with empty words or formulas.

Matthew 6:8 - *"Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him."*

God already knows what we need, and prayer is not about informing Him, but about establishing a relationship with Him. **Prayer is a way to connect with God**, not trying to convince Him. Jesus teaches that we must trust that God will hear us and answer us according to His will, because He is a loving Father who cares for us.

Matthew 6:9 - *"You then should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name;"*

Here begins the model of prayer that Jesus teaches us, known as **The Lord's Prayer**. It starts with a **recognition of God as our heavenly Father**, expressing **respect and reverence** to His name. The word "hallowed" means that we want God's name to be **honored and treated with the utmost holiness**.

Matthew 6:10 - *"Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*

In this part, Jesus teaches us to **pray for the Kingdom of God**, which is the manifestation of God's dominion and will in our lives. He invites us to desire that **God's will be done here on earth** just as it is done in heaven. This is a deep desire to see God's rule prevail over every aspect of our lives, including our hearts, our society, and the world.

Matthew 6:11 - *"Give us this day our daily bread."*

In this verse, we are asking God to **sustain us daily**. The "bread" here symbolizes **the basic necessities of life**—food, water, health, shelter. Jesus teaches us to depend on God for our daily sustenance, recognizing that everything we have comes from His generosity. This request also reminds us of the importance of not worrying excessively about the future, but trusting that God will provide for us according to our needs.

Matthew 6:12 – *"Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."*

Here, Jesus teaches us the importance of **forgiveness**. We ask God to forgive our sins, just as **we commit to forgiving others**. This part of the prayer reflects the **relationship between God's forgiveness and our forgiveness** to others. God forgives us not because we deserve it, but because of His grace, and in response, we should extend the same forgiveness to others. This is vital to maintaining a healthy relationship with God and others.

Matthew 6:13 – *"And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."*

Here, we are asking God to **protect us from evil and temptation**. Jesus teaches us to recognize our weakness and the need for His help to resist temptations. We cannot overcome evil alone, so we seek His help. **divine protection**. This part of the prayer is a request for God to protect us and help us to live according to His will, away from sin and the traps of the enemy.

Matthew 6:14 – *"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you."*

Jesus reinforces the idea that the **forgiveness is essential** in our Christian life. If we seek God's forgiveness, we must also be willing to forgive those who offend us. Forgiveness is not optional; it is an expression of our **Christian character** and our understanding of the grace we have received from God. God forgives those who demonstrate a merciful, forgiving heart.

Matthew 6:15 – *"But if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."*

Here Jesus speaks directly and clearly. If **we do not forgive** those who offended us, **we cannot expect God's forgiveness.**

Forgiveness is a two-way street. Refusal to forgive is a barrier that prevents divine forgiveness in our lives. This verse highlights the **importance of forgiveness** as a fundamental principle in the Christian life and how it affects our relationship with God.

Matthew 6:16 - "When you fast, do not look somber like the hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces to show others they are fasting. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward in full."

Here, Jesus talks about the **fast**, a practice of spiritual discipline. It teaches that fasting should not be done to be **seen by others**, with the intention of gaining recognition. Jesus criticizes the "hypocrites" who fast in an ostentatious manner in order to be admired by men. The true practice of fasting must be discreet, and must have the objective of **bring us closer to God**, not to attract attention.

Matthew 6:17 - "But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,"

Jesus teaches that when we fast, we should **maintain our normal appearance**, so that no one notices that we are fasting. **The inner attitude of humility** and seeking God should be the focus, not external display. Spiritual practice, such as fasting, should be something between us and God, without the need for human recognition.

Matthew 6:18 - "That ye may not appear unto men as them that fast, but unto your Father which is in secret: and your Father which seeth in secret shall reward you."

Here, Jesus reinforces the idea that our spiritual practices, such as fasting, should be **made with a sincere heart** and not for the purpose of obtaining human applause. God sees in secret, and it is He who rewards us. God's reward is much more valuable and eternal than any fleeting recognition we may receive from others.

Matthew 6:19 – “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal;”

In this verse, Jesus teaches us about the **spiritual priorities**. He warns us not to accumulate riches **earthly**, which are temporary and vulnerable to wear and tear and theft. It reminds us that material possessions are fleeting and cannot provide us with lasting security.

Matthew 6:20 – “But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal;”

In contrast, Jesus teaches us to **invest in heavenly treasures** — acts of kindness, love, generosity and service to God and others. These "treasures" are eternal and cannot be corrupted or stolen. The focus should be on **spiritual values**, as these are the ones that really have lasting value.

Matthew 6:21 – “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

This verse reveals a **deep truth**: where we invest our time, resources and energy, that is where our **heart**. If our treasures are in earthly things, this reflects in our **worry and attachment to these things**. But if we seek spiritual treasures, our life will be oriented towards what really matters before God.

Matthew 6:22 - *"The lamp of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.*

Jesus uses the **image of eyes** to talk about the **spiritual vision**. When our eyes are **focused on the Kingdom of God**, our life reflects this spiritual light. If our eyes are fixed on earthly things or wrong values, our life will become **full of darkness**, without direction and purpose. Our vision, or the way we see the world, affects how we live.

Matthew 6:23 - *"But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is that darkness!"*

In this verse, Jesus tells us about the importance of having a **healthy spiritual vision**. When our eyes, that is, the way we see the world and relate to it, are distorted, our actions and attitudes will also be **full of darkness**. If we are fixated on the wrong things or material values, our life will be marked by **confusion, disorientation and sadness**. The true light is that which comes from God, which gives us clarity and direction.

Matthew 6:24 - *"No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon."*

Here Jesus makes it clear that **we cannot divide our loyalty** between God and riches (mammon, which is the god of money and wealth). Our hearts cannot be divided; they must be entirely dedicated to God. When we love riches or the incessant pursuit of them, this damages our relationship with God, because these things can **take God's place in our lives**, generating **idolatry and spiritual deviation**.

Matthew 6:25 - *"Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?"*

Jesus teaches us not to **worry excessively** with the material necessities of life. He reminds us that life is **much more** than the things we consume or the clothes we wear. By worrying about these issues, we end up **losing sight of what really matters**, which are spiritual blessings and relationship with God.

Matthew 6:26 - *"Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of much more value than they?"*

Here, Jesus uses the example of **birds of the sky** to teach us about the **God's provision**. Birds do not work like humans, but God still feeds them. This shows us that God cares for all of His creation, and even more especially, He cares for us, who are **much more valuable** for Him. Therefore, there is no reason for us to live anxiously, because **God, our Father, will provide everything we need**.

Matthew 6:27 - *"Which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life?"*

Jesus reminds us that **anxiety doesn't change anything**. Worrying excessively about the future or circumstances is not productive and can actually make things worse. Anxiety does not have the power to **change the course of our lives**. Instead of despairing, we should **trust in God** and rest in His sovereignty and care.

Matthew 6:28-30 – "And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow. They neither toil nor spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith!"

Jesus uses the **natural beauty** of the lilies of the field to illustrate God's providence. The lilies do not worry about their appearance, but God clothes them with wonderful beauty. In the same way, God will take care of our needs, even in small things like clothing. The reason for our anxiety is often a **lack of faith**. Jesus calls us to trust more in God, who takes care of us with much more care than he would take care of the plants in the field.

Matthew 6:31-32 – "Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' (For all these things the Gentiles seek, and your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.)"

Jesus teaches us that concern for material needs is a **characteristic of unbelievers (Gentiles)**, who do not know God and do not trust in His provision. As children of God, **we must not be anxious** because He knows what we need and will provide it for us. This trust should free us from the **constant concern** with material issues.

Matthew 6:33 – "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."

This is one of the **key verses** of the Bible. Jesus instructs us to make God the **our priority**. We must seek **Yours**

Kingdom and His righteousness above all else. When we put God first, He takes responsibility for our material needs. By seeking His will and living in obedience, **God will give us everything we need** to live fully and in peace.

Matthew 6:34 - "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

Jesus teaches us to **don't live worried about the future**. Tomorrow is uncertain, and often our anxieties about what will come are unfounded. Instead of worry, we must focus on the present and trust that **God will take care of each day**, giving us the grace and wisdom to face the challenges that arise. Anxiety about the future only weighs us down, while trusting in God brings us **peace and rest**.

Final Reflection

Chapter 6 of Matthew invites us to reflect on our **spiritual priority** and how our lives can be transformed by focusing more on God than on earthly concerns. Jesus challenges the idea that **happiness and peace** come from the incessant search for material goods, affirming that true peace and security are in God, who takes care of us with love and faithfulness.

One of the great lessons of this chapter is about **freedom from anxiety**. When we trust God to supply our needs, we can live with more **tranquility and confidence**, knowing that He is in control of all things. Jesus teaches us that the search for the Kingdom of God must be our priority. When we place what is eternal above what is temporary, our life finds **meaning and purpose**. Concerns about the future

lose their power, because we know that God will be with us every step of the way, taking care of our needs.

Furthermore, Jesus reminds us that life is **much more than food, drink and clothing**. Our identity and value are not in the things we possess, but in our relationship with God. He is our true provider, and trusting in Him frees us from fear and insecurity.

Finally, Jesus calls us to live the **today** with confidence. Tomorrow belongs to God, and by focusing on the present, seeking His will, we find the strength to face any challenge. True peace comes from the certainty that **God takes care of us** at every moment.

Therefore, this chapter invites us to **live with faith**, without burdening ourselves with unnecessary anxieties, and to **set our hearts on the things of the Kingdom of God**, because that is what brings true peace and prosperity.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 6 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

In Matthew 7, Jesus teaches us to look at ourselves before we look at others, practicing self-criticism and humility. He also challenges us to be persistent and confident in prayer, reminding us that God is a good and generous Father, willing to give what we need. He teaches us to discern to whom we should offer sacred things, highlighting the importance of sharing the truth wisely and respectfully. As we reflect on these words, we are called to live more **compassion, humility** and **trust** in God, always seeking the good for others and for ourselves in His will.

Verse 1: "Judge not, that ye be not judged."

Jesus begins this verse with a call to humility. He warns us not to judge others hastily or hypocritically, for as we judge, so we will be judged. The judgment we make of others often reflects our own shortcomings and imperfections. Rather than looking harshly at the mistakes of others, we should act with compassion and mercy, remembering that we are all flawed and in need of grace.

Verse 2: "For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with what measure you use, it will be measured to you again."

Here Jesus emphasizes the law of reciprocity. He teaches us that the way we treat others, especially when it comes to judgment, will be the way we will be treated. If we are harsh and unforgiving in criticizing someone, we will also be treated harshly. But if we are generous and understanding, we will experience the same generosity in our lives.

Verse 3: "And why beholdest thou the speck that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the plank that is in thine own eye?"

Jesus uses a powerful metaphor to illustrate hypocrisy. He compares someone else's small mistake (the "speck") to the big mistake or flaw we have in our own life (the "beam"). Jesus' point is that we often

We focus on the faults of others without recognizing our own much greater faults. Jesus calls us to be self-critical and to deal with our own problems first before pointing out the faults of others.

Verse 4: "Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the speck of sawdust out of thine eye; and there is a plank in thine own eye?"

Jesus continues his reasoning and challenges us to reflect on the **hypocrisy** of trying to correct others when we have obvious flaws. He invites us to be humble and to begin correcting ourselves before trying to correct others. True transformation begins in the heart and in our willingness to see our own weaknesses.

Verse 5: "You hypocrite! First take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

Here, Jesus is not saying that we should never help others, but rather that we should **correct our own faults first**, so that we can genuinely and effectively help others. The word "hypocrite" is used because it is a person who pretends to be something they are not. Jesus wants us to be genuine in our intention to help, and that starts with self-care and sincerity.

Verse 6: "Do not give what is holy to the dogs, nor throw your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn and tear you to pieces."

Here, Jesus teaches us to be careful about what we share and to whom we offer the precious things of faith. He uses the metaphor of "dogs" and "pigs" to refer to people who have no genuine interest in spiritual truths and, therefore, may despise what is sacred. He calls us to be wise and discerning when and with whom we share the gospel, so that our words will not be despised or misinterpreted.

Verse 7: "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."

Jesus encourages us to be persistent in seeking God. He promises that as we ask, seek, and knock, God will answer us. **The sincere prayer** is the way to get closer to God, and He is generous in giving us what we need, according to His will. This teaches us to **don't give up** in the search for divine answers and direction, trusting in God's kind and caring character.

Verse 8: "For he who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it will be opened."

Here Jesus reaffirms the promise that **God is generous** and will answer those who sincerely seek. He points out that the willingness to seek and ask reveals **active faith**, who does not remain passive, but moves toward God with confidence that He will listen. The promise is clear: whoever seeks sincerely will find what they need.

Verse 9: "Or what man is there among you, whom if his son asks for bread, will he give him a stone?"

Jesus makes a simple comparison to show that **God, being a Father, desires the good of His children**. He argues that just as an earthly father will not give bad things to his children when they ask for something good, much more will God give to those who ask Him with a sincere heart. This reaffirms the goodness of God and the confidence we can have in His providence.

Verse 10: "Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent?"

This question from Jesus follows the same logic as the previous verse. If, as earthly parents, we know how to give what is good to our children, **the more God**, who is perfect and loving, will give us what is good and necessary for us. This teaches us to **have confidence in God**, knowing that He will never give us anything that is harmful.

Verse 11: "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good things to those who ask him?"

In this verse, Jesus highlights God's goodness by comparing it to that of human parents. Even though we are imperfect, we know how to give good things to our children when they ask for them. Now, if we, flawed human beings, have this capacity to do good, **the more God**, who is perfect, will give us what is good and necessary. The promise here is that God, our heavenly Father, is **more generous and more attentive** to our needs than any earthly father.

Verse 12: "So all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them: for this is the law and the prophets."

Here, Jesus introduces us to **golden rule** of the gospel: to treat others the way we would like to be treated. This sums up the teachings of the **prophets** and all the **God's law**: the principle of loving our neighbor as ourselves. When we put this into practice, we follow the path of justice and peace. **Love the other** How we desire to be loved is a reflection of God's heart, which always seeks the good of others.

Verse 13: "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and many there are who enter through it."

Jesus speaks about **two doors** and two paths: the **narrow** and the **wide**. The broad road represents life without restrictions, without commitment to God's will, where people follow their own desires without caring about God's principles. This path is easy and attractive to many, but it leads to **perdition**. On the other hand, the narrow path is the path of **obedience** and **spiritual discipline**; it is more difficult, but it is the only one that leads to **eternal life**. Jesus challenges us to choose the narrow path, which demands sacrifice, but leads us to true peace and salvation.

Verse 14: "How narrow is the gate and difficult the way that leads to life, and there are few who find it!"

Jesus confirms that the **path to true life** is not easy. It is narrow and requires a commitment to **true**, with the **holiness** and with the **God's will**. Although many seek the broad and easier path, few choose the narrow path, which requires renunciation and fidelity to God. **Find that path** is not automatic; it requires seeking, effort and dedication. True Christian living involves

daily choice to follow Christ, even when it is difficult or unpopular.

Verse 15: "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves."

Jesus warns us against **false prophets**, those who present themselves as spiritual leaders or teachers of truth, but who in reality have evil intentions. They may appear **good people** on the outside, but their words and actions do not match the truth of God. They are disguised, deceiving many with promises of prosperity, but in reality they want to lead the faithful astray and cause harm. Jesus' warning is for us to have discernment and **Careful** with those who teach things that are not in harmony with the word of God.

Verse 16: "By their fruits you will know them. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?"

Here, Jesus teaches us to evaluate people based on their **actions** and **results**. **Fruits** represent the spiritual behavior and fruits that a person produces. If someone teaches the truth, his actions and fruits will reflect the character of Christ. But if a person is false, his fruits will be bad, and his words will not be based on God's truth. Jesus teaches us that we can **identify false prophets** observing their lives and attitudes. Good fruits (love, peace, truth, justice) come from a true connection with God.

Verse 17: "Even so every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit."

This verse reinforces the idea that **our spiritual life is revealed by our fruits**. If a person has a

If a person has a true relationship with God, he or she will produce fruits that reflect God's goodness: love, patience, faith. On the other hand, a person who does not have a genuine connection with God, even if he or she speaks in God's name, will produce negative fruits. Jesus challenges us to **check the fruits** of the lives of others and ourselves to verify whether we are following the true will of God.

Verse 18: "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit."

Jesus continues to teach that **tree nature** determines the type of fruit it produces. **Our spiritual nature** is reflected in the choices we make and the things we say. If we are **truly converted** and guided by the Spirit of God, our life will produce good fruit. But if our life is far from God, the fruit will be bad. Jesus' call is for us to keep ourselves **connected to Him** and live according to His will.

Verse 19: "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

Jesus tells us about **consequence of lack of fruits**: destruction. Just as a tree that does not bear fruit is cut down, those who do not live according to God's will, without fruits of repentance and change, will face God's judgment. This verse is a **severe warning** so that our lives reflect true faith and commitment to the Word of God.

Verse 20: "Therefore by their fruits you will know them."

Jesus reaffirms the principle that **spiritual quality of a person** can be seen by its fruits. No matter what anyone says; your actions, attitudes and choices

reflect what you really believe. We must be aware of **spiritual fruits** that demonstrate the authenticity of faith.

Verse 21: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father in heaven."

Jesus makes it clear that **It is not enough to just profess faith**. Many people may claim to be Christians, but what really matters is the **obedience to God's will**. A true disciple of Christ is not defined by the words he speaks, but by the actions he takes. **Do the Father's will** means living according to God's principles, constantly seeking to be transformed by His Word.

Verse 22: "Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many wonderful works?'"

Here Jesus presents us with a scene of final judgment. Many people at the end of time will be able to say that **performed great deeds in His name**: they prophesied, cast out demons, and performed miracles. However, these external actions, as impressive as they may seem, are not enough to guarantee salvation. **Jesus emphasizes that service to Him is not limited to what is done externally**, but to a real and intimate relationship with Him and to obedience to the Father's will.

Verse 23: "Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."

Jesus' response to these people will be shocking: He will say that **never met them**. Even if they have accomplished things in His name, Jesus will reject them because, although

have externally accomplished great deeds, **did not live in obedience to His will**. This verse reveals a very important principle: **God does not only look at our external works, but at our hearts**.. He wants a relationship of intimacy and genuine obedience, not mere actions performed for self-promotion.

Verse 24: "Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock."

Jesus now makes a comparison: those who hear His words and those who do them **practice** are like a man who builds his house on a solid rock. The **rock** symbolizes the solid foundation of **obedience to God** and trust in His instructions. When we live according to Christ's teachings, our lives become **resistant to adversity**, because we are grounded in the immutable truth of God. **Practicing the Word of God** is the key to a well-grounded and secure life.

Verse 25: "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not, for it was founded upon the rock."

The difficulties and temptations of life are represented by **rain**, by the **rivers that run** and by the **strong winds**. However, the house built on the rock does not fall, even in the midst of these difficulties. This teaches us that, **although the storms of life may arise**, if our life is founded on the Word of God, we will not be shaken. Our **faith** and our **obedience to God** will give us stability, even in the most difficult situations.

Verse 26: "And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand."

Now Jesus presents the opposite: the person who hears His words but **does not practice them**, is like someone who builds his house on sand. Sand symbolizes **unstable and insecure foundations**. When we do not live according to God's word, our life becomes vulnerable to difficulties and crises. **foolish man** It may seem to be thriving for a while, but your home (your life) will not withstand when the storms come.

Verse 27: "And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell, and great was the fall of it."

The house built on sand, when hit by storms, **falls**. This symbolizes the fall of a life that is not grounded in **God's truth**. When we face the difficulties of life, if our trust is not in God, we will not have the **necessary foundations** to resist. The verse highlights the **big fall** that occurs when we live superficially and do not practice the teachings of Jesus. True destruction is not only physical, but also spiritual, when our life is not founded on Christ.

Verse 28: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these sayings, the multitudes were astonished at his doctrine."

After teaching about the two types of building life (on the rock or on the sand), Jesus ends His words. The reaction of the **crowds** is of **admiration**. People were impressed by the depth and authority of His teachings. Jesus' wisdom was not like that of the teachers of the day; He spoke with **divine authority**. That

attracted those who were **seeking the truth** and they wanted a life based on something lasting and real.

Verse 29: "For his teaching was as of one having authority, and not as of the scribes."

Jesus was **different from the scribes and Pharisees**. These religious leaders taught based on human interpretations and traditions, but Jesus spoke with **divine authority**, as someone who had **direct knowledge** and deep of God's will. His teachings were **powerful and transformative**, and this had a profound impact on those who heard it.

Final Reflection on Matthew 7

Matthew 7 is a chapter that closes the **Sermon on the Mount**, where Jesus offers profound teachings on how to live according to the principles of the Kingdom of God. Throughout His message, He challenges superficial conceptions about faith and reveals that the true walk with God involves **obey His Word** and live authentically.

1. The importance of judging correctly: In the opening verses, Jesus teaches us about the danger of hypocritical judgment. The call is for us to **let us evaluate our own hearts** before criticizing others. Instead of pointing out flaws, we should seek to reflect God's grace in our attitudes.

2. Prayer and trust in God: In verses 7 through 11, Jesus reminds us of the importance of **seek God in prayer** with faith. He assures us that just as an earthly father desires to give good things to his children, how much more will our **Heavenly Father**. Prayer, therefore, is not an empty practice, but a way of approaching God with

confidence that He hears us and responds according to His will.

3. The narrow path:When Jesus talks about the narrow and wide way, He confronts us with a choice.**The Christian life is neither easy nor popular**, but it is the only way that leads to eternal life. The narrow gate requires of us a genuine commitment to Christ and a life of discipline, but it is through it that we find true peace and communion with God.

4. True obedience:In verse 21, Jesus makes it clear that **not everyone who says "Lord, Lord" will enter the Kingdom of Heaven**, but the one who **do the will of the Father**. He emphasizes that while outward actions such as prophecy or miracles may seem impressive, the true mark of a disciple of Christ is **practical obedience** to His Word and the transformation of the heart.

5. Building on the rock:In the final verses, Jesus gives us an analogy of two houses: one built on rock and the other on sand. The storms that arise represent the difficulties of life.**house on the rock**, the one who is established in Christ and His Word, will remain firm even in the face of adversity.**house on the sand**, symbolizing a life without solid spiritual foundations, will not resist.**True security is in Christ** and in living according to His teachings.

Conclusion:Matthew chapter 7 calls us to a faith that goes beyond words and outward appearance. Jesus does not want a superficial Christianity, but a transformed life based on **obedience** and in **practice** of His teachings. He challenges us to be **authentic disciples**, who seek to live according to God's will, in humility and reverence, trusting in His provision and grace.

In our daily lives, it is vital to reflect on the solidity of our **spiritual foundation**. Are we building our lives on the solid rock of Christ or on the uncertainties of the passing trends and opinions of this world? Jesus' invitation is

Of course:**enter through the narrow gate**, live truthfully and faithfully, and trust that in Christ our lives will be safe and successful, even in the storms of life.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 6 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 8, we see **two examples of faith** powerful: the leper, who believes in **mercy and healing power of Jesus**, and the centurion, whose **faith in the authority of Christ** is remarkable. Both demonstrate that **the true faith** is not based on merit or status, but on **trust** that Jesus can do all things, whether through His touch or His word. These accounts invite us to examine our own faith, seeking unshakable confidence in the power of Jesus,

regardless of the circumstances around us.

Verse 1: "When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him."

- Jesus was on top of a hill, probably after finishing the **Sermon on the Mount**, where He taught about how to live according to the Kingdom of God. After this moment of profound teaching, He comes down from the mountain and is followed by **large crowds**. People were eager for more of His word and especially for miracles, because they knew He had the power to heal and transform lives.
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Verse 2: "And, behold, a leper came and worshiped him, saying, Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean."

- Here we find a **leper**, someone socially excluded due to his illness, who approaches Jesus with an attitude of **worship and humility**. Leprosy was a terrible disease at the time, and those who had it were shunned by society. Yet this man did not hesitate to approach Jesus, believing that He had the power to heal him. He says: "**If**

you want", showing that he knew that the cure depended on Jesus' will, but he believed in His power.

Verse 3: "Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, 'I am willing; be clean.' And immediately he was cleansed of his leprosy."

- **Jesus touches the leper**, which, for the Jewish mentality of the time, was something impure, since touching a leper meant becoming impure. However, Jesus is not afraid of impurity and, instead of being contaminated, **purifies man**. He says: "**I want it, it's clean**", and immediately the man is cured of leprosy. This miracle not only shows the power of Jesus, but also His **compassion** by those who were on the margins of society.
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Verse 4: "And Jesus said unto him, See that thou tell no man: but go, show thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

- Jesus often asked people not to talk about the miracles He performed. He wanted to avoid **excessive popularity** or the misunderstanding of being seen only as a physical healer, when His greater purpose was to teach about the Kingdom of God. Here, He instructs the leper to **fulfill the Law of Moses** (Leviticus 14:2-32), which said that a person cured of leprosy should present himself to the priest and offer sacrifices. This would be **public testimony** of their healing and their restoration to the community.
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Verse 5: "Now when Jesus entered Capernaum, a centurion came to him, beseeching him."

- **Capernaum** was the city where Jesus spent much of His ministry and, upon entering there, a **Roman centurion** approaches Him. The centurion was an officer in the Roman army, which placed him in a position of authority. This man, contrary to what would be expected of a Roman officer, demonstrates a **great humility and faith**, as he is asking for help for a servant who was seriously ill.
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Verse 6: "Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, suffering terribly."

- The centurion reveals the reason for his plea: his **servant is paralyzed** and suffering greatly. He cares deeply about the condition of his servant, showing a side **humane and compassionate**. Instead of worrying about his own position or what others would think of his attitude, he turns to Jesus, hoping for a solution.
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Verse 7: "And Jesus said unto him, I will come and heal him."

- Jesus responds with **disposition and readiness**. He is willing to go to the centurion's house to heal the servant, demonstrating His **availability and willingness to help**. This attitude is also a reflection of the **Jesus' willingness to help everyone**, regardless of social status, origin or religion.
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Verse 8: "But the centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but say the word only, and my servant will be healed."

- Here, the **centurion demonstrates impressive faith**. He recognizes Jesus' authority and believes that He can heal the servant without needing to be physically present.

present. He considers himself **unworthy** to receive a visit from Jesus in his home, but he has **certainty of the power of Jesus**, knowing that a simple word from Him can bring about healing. This faith, which recognizes the power of Jesus beyond physical circumstances, is an example of **true and unlimited faith**.

Verse 9: "For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to one, Go, and he goes; and to another, Come, and he comes; and to my servant, Do this, and he does it."

- The centurion uses his military experience to explain his understanding of Jesus' authority. He knows that as a commander he has authority over his subordinates and that his words are **immediately obeyed**. Likewise, he believes that Jesus has authority **supreme spiritual** and that whatever He says will come to pass. The centurion shows a clear understanding that Jesus has **divine authority**, which demonstrates **amature faith**.
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Verse 10: "When Jesus heard it, he marveled, and said to those who followed him, 'Truly I tell you, I have not found such great faith, no, not in Israel.'"

- Jesus **marvel** with the centurion's faith. He is impressed by the **greatness of your faith**, which went beyond what He found among the Jews themselves. Jesus recognizes that the faith of the centurion, a Gentile, is stronger than that of many Israelites. He uses this opportunity to **teach your followers** that true faith does not depend on ethnic origin, but on a heart willing to believe and obey the authority of Jesus.
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Verse 11: "I tell you that many will come from east and west, and will recline at the feast with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."

- Jesus, upon hearing the centurion's demonstration of faith, makes a **surprising statement**. He says that many people of **outside Israel** (from the east and the west, that is, from other nations) will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. This means that **faith** does not depend on Jewish nationality or descent, but on a **personal relationship with God**. He uses the reference to **Abraham, Isaac and Jacob**, patriarchs of faith, to show that the Kingdom of God is not limited to the Jews, but open to all who believe.
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Verse 12: "But the children of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

- Jesus makes a **severe warning** to the Jews who, despite being "children of the Kingdom" by inheritance, did not have the **genuine faith** in the Messiah. He is saying that many who consider themselves part of God's people, but who do not recognize the authority of Christ, will be rejected and cut off from the Kingdom. **wailing and gnashing of teeth** are images of pain and regret, indicating that, despite their heritage, those who do not practice the true faith will be excluded from the Kingdom.
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Verse 13: "Then Jesus said to the centurion, 'Go, and as you have believed, let it be done for you.' And that same hour his servant was healed."

- Jesus, impressed by the centurion's faith, says that **what he believed would happen**. The word of Jesus is **absolute authority**, and immediately the **centurion's servant is healed**. This miracle is a clear sign of the **power of Jesus**, and also a teaching on how faith in the power of Jesus can bring healing and instant transformation.

Verse 14: "When Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law lying in bed with a fever."

- After the centurion's miracle, Jesus goes to the house of **Pedro**, where he finds his mother-in-law with **high fever**. This shows that, in addition to teaching and performing great miracles in public, Jesus also cares about the details of everyday life, taking care of **individual needs** of the people around Him.

Verse 15: "And he touched her hand, and the fever left her, and she arose and served him."

- Jesus, with a simple **touch**, heals Peter's mother-in-law. This miracle is impressive not only because of the instantaneous cure of the fever, but because, after being healed, the mother-in-law **immediately gets up and starts serving** to Jesus and the disciples. This shows that Jesus' healing not only brings **physical restoration**, but it also brings people to a new disposition to **serve and glorify God**.

Verse 16: "And when evening came, they brought to him many who were demon-possessed; and he cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick."

- As the day progresses, **many people** with different **diseases and demonic possessions** are brought to Jesus. He **cast out demons** with his **word** and heals all who are sick. This shows that Jesus has **absolute authority** over the spiritual and physical realms, and His power has no limits. He not only heals, but also **free** those who were imprisoned by evil spirits.

Verse 17: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, He took up our infirmities, and bare our sicknesses."

- This verse quotes **Isaiah 53:4**, who prophesied about the Messiah who would take upon himself the sicknesses and diseases of the people. Matthew's quote shows that Jesus' miracles were **fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament**, confirming that He is the **Promised Messiah**. Jesus' care for physical illnesses is also a **manifestation of His compassion** and fulfillment of God's plan to bring healing and salvation to the world.

Verse 18: "When Jesus saw a large crowd around him, he gave orders to cross over to the other side."

- After performing cures and casting out demons, Jesus realizes that a **great crowd** is forming. Knowing that His mission was not only for a great display of power, but also to teach and train the disciples, He decides **get away from the crowd** and cross to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. This shows that Jesus had a **set agenda**, focused not just on momentary needs, but on fulfilling God's plan for salvation.

Verse 19: "And a certain scribe came and said unto him, Master, I will follow whithersoever thou goest."

- One **scribe** (an expert in Jewish law) approaches Jesus and offers to follow Him, expressing great enthusiasm. He probably recognized the **authority** of Jesus and was willing to be His disciple. However, this also indicates that the ministry of

Jesus was attracting people from different social classes and occupations, who saw great hope in Him.

Verse 20: "And Jesus said unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."

- Jesus responds to the scribe with a **serious warning**. He reveals that the path of discipleship is neither easy nor comfortable. Unlike animals that have places to rest, the **Son of Man** (a title used to refer to Himself) did not have a **stable home**. This is a reminder that following Jesus can require **personal sacrifices and renunciations**, and that the Kingdom of God is not based on earthly comforts, but on **commitment to the divine calling**.
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Verse 21: "And another of the disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father."

- Another disciple, apparently wanting to follow Jesus, asks permission to first **bury your father**. This request may reflect the need to comply with the **family responsibilities** or a question of **time** to follow Jesus.
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Verse 22: "But Jesus answered him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

- Jesus' answer may seem harsh, but He is highlighting the **priority of the Kingdom of God**. Jesus is saying that the call to follow Him is more important than any other obligation, even the most legitimate ones. Following Jesus means **put the Kingdom of God above all else**, including the responsibilities

family members, who are important, but should not occupy the first place in a disciple's life.

Verse 23: "And when he was entered into a boat, his disciples followed him."

- Jesus and His disciples enter a **boat**, probably to cross the Sea of Galilee. The disciples' act of following Jesus demonstrates the **commitment and obedience** of them. Even without knowing what was coming, they were willing to **follow Jesus**, trusting in Him.
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Verse 24: "And behold, a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves; but he was asleep."

- One **sudden storm** begins to rock the boat. This storm was so strong that the **waves** were covering the boat, putting the lives of everyone on board at risk. The fact that Jesus was **sleeping** during the storm highlights His **inner peace** and total trust in God, in contrast to the fear and despair of the disciples.
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Verse 25: "And his disciples went and woke him, and cried out, saying, Lord, save us! We are perishing!"

- The disciples, taken by the **fear**, wake Jesus and ask for His help, saying that they are about to perish. They still do not fully understand what **power of Jesus**. The fear and despair of being in imminent danger reveal a lack of complete trust in Him in that situation.

Verse 26: "And he said unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and the sea; and there was a great calm."

- Jesus **reprimands** the disciples, calling them "**men of little faith**". He admonishes them for not fully trusting in His power to resolve any situation, even such a great crisis. Jesus then stands up and **rebuke the wind and the sea**, and the storm ceases immediately. The sudden calm shows that He has **authority over nature**, which reveals His divinity and supreme power over all things.

Verse 27: "And the men marveled, saying, Who then is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?"

- The disciples stay **surprised and amazed** when they saw Jesus' authority over nature. They were still **trying to understand who Jesus was** indeed. This question reflects the impact of this miracle on them: Jesus was not just a teacher, but someone with **divine power**, capable of controlling forces of nature.

Verse 28: "And when they were come to the other side into the country of the Gadarenes, they met two possessed with devils coming out of the tombs, exceeding fierce, so that no man could pass that way."

- When they arrived on the other side of the sea, in the region of **Gadarenes**, two men possessed by **demons** find Jesus. These men lived in the **tombs**, a place associated with death and impurity, and were so **violent and uncontrollable** that nobody could

pass through that path. Their presence represents the **domain of darkness** about that region.

Verse 29: "And behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither before the time to torment us?"

- When the **demons** recognize Jesus, they exclaim that He is the **Son of God**. They know that in Jesus there is the **authority** to judge them and expel them. The phrase "**You came before your time**" indicates that the demons knew that the final judgment had not yet arrived, but were aware that the arrival of Jesus brought a **threat** to your plans.
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Verse 30: "Now there was a herd of many pigs feeding near them."

- One **large herd of pigs** was feeding not far from the demoniacs. This detail sets the scene for the next miracle, where the demons ask to enter the pigs.
-

Verse 31: "And the demons begged him, saying, If thou cast us out, send us into the herd of swine."

- You **demons** ask Jesus for permission to enter the herd of pigs, showing that **they couldn't be without a body**. This action also reflects the **spiritual domain** of Jesus over the demons, and how they recognized His authority.
-

Verse 32: "And he said unto them, Go. And they came out, and entered into the swine: and, lo, the whole herd rushed down the steep place into the sea, and died in the waters."

- Jesus grants the demons' request, allowing them to enter the pigs. When this happens, the herd rushes out **desperately to the sea**, where they die. This miracle reveals the **destructive nature of demons** and how they seek to destroy whatever they touch. Furthermore, it demonstrates that the demons have no control over Jesus, who can, at any moment, give them the order and put an end to their dominion.
-

Verse 33: "And they that fed the swine fled, and went into the city, and told all that had befallen the possessed men, and concerning the swine."

- You **pig caretakers**, upon witnessing what happened, **fled in panic** and told the townspeople what had happened. They were probably more concerned about the economic loss of the **pigs** than with the deliverance of the demoniacs. This highlights the **lack of spiritual sensitivity** of those who were more focused on material things than on spiritual needs.
-

Verse 34: "And, behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus; and when they saw him, they begged him to depart from their coasts."

- When the people of the city heard what had happened, they came to Jesus, but instead of **recognize His authority** and ask for more miracles, they **ask Jesus to leave**. This demonstrates how fear, material loss and lack of spiritual understanding can lead people to reject **presence of Jesus** in their lives.

Final Reflection on Matthew 8:

Matthew chapter 8 is a powerful testimony of the **divine authority of Jesus** over every area of human life. From His control over the forces of nature to His ability to free people from spiritual dominion, this chapter reveals Jesus not only as a great teacher, but as the very Son of God, with absolute power over the physical, spiritual, and supernatural.

- 1. Trusting in Jesus in the storms of life:** When Jesus calms the storm, He teaches us that even when we face moments of chaos and insecurity, we can trust Him. Like the disciples, we often find ourselves overcome by fear and anxiety, but Jesus calls us to **have faith** and trust in His power. The storm is no greater than the authority of Christ. In our own “stormy seas,” He is with us, ready to bring peace and security.
- 2. Authority over demons and evil:** The miracle of the deliverance of the two demon-possessed men illustrates the **Christ's victory over the forces of evil**. The demons know who He is, and His authority is such that even evil spirits must obey His word. This reminds us that in Christ we have **authority** about evil and that His presence can transform even the darkest situations in life. He came to **free** the captives and give us a new and full life.
- 3. Rejection and acceptance:** The reaction of the townspeople, who ask Jesus to leave, is an important lesson. Sometimes we are so **trapped by our material concerns and fear of the unknown** that we reject God's work in our lives. They were unwilling to embrace the transformation that Jesus brought, preferring the **comfort zone** from what they already knew, even if it meant losing the transforming power of Jesus. We are called not to reject the Lord because of our human limitations or

fears, but to allow Him to transform us completely.

In short, Matthew 8 challenges us to reflect on how we respond to the power of Christ. Do we trust Him in the midst of hardship? Do we acknowledge His authority in our lives, over evil and chaos? And finally, are we willing to open our hearts and allow Him to bring transformation, or will we, like the Gadarenes, ask Him to leave?

Jesus is always ready to heal us, set us free, and guide us through the storms of life. The question remains: **Are we willing to follow Him, trust His authority, and allow Him to change our lives?**

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 6 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 9 teaches us about authority and **grace** of Jesus. He not only heals physically, but offers forgiveness of sins, showing that **inner healing** is even more important than physical healing. His authority transcends human limits, and He challenges the preconceived ideas of the religious people of the time, showing that God is accessible to everyone.

Matthew's story also reveals that Jesus comes to **transform** lives, regardless of one's past. His grace is for all, and His offer of forgiveness is infinite. In our spiritual journey, we must remember that Jesus is willing to heal both body and soul, and that He calls us to follow Him and live a new, restored, and transformed life.

Jesus offers us healing and forgiveness: He can restore all that was lost, both physically and spiritually, and calls us to follow Him in faith.

Verse 1: *"And Jesus got into a boat, crossed over and came to his own city."*

Here, Jesus is moving from one region to another. The "boat" symbolizes the crossing between one location and another. The Gospel of Matthew does not focus so much on the details of the journey, but on Jesus entering a new setting, ready to perform miracles. He goes to **your city**, which probably refers to **Capernaum**, where He lived and carried out many of His works. This reminds us that Jesus is accessible, He approaches people where they are, in the places where we live.

Verse 2: *"And behold, they brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the paralytic, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven thee.*

Here we see an amazing act of faith. The friends of the paralytic believed that if they could bring their friend to Jesus, he would be healed. **paralytic**, in his weakened physical condition, could not go on his own, but was carried by those who believed in the power of Jesus. Jesus recognizes this faith and not only offers physical healing, but begins with something even deeper: forgiveness of **sins**. He teaches us that before healing us from our physical illnesses, He wants to free us from the weight of sin that affects our soul. Jesus' forgiveness is the first step towards complete healing.

Verse 3: *"And behold, some of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth.*

You **scribes**, who were religious leaders, were attentive to Jesus' words. When they heard Jesus forgiving the sins of the paralytic, they considered it **blasphemy**, because only God could forgive sins. They still did not recognize Jesus as the Son of God, which shows us the contrast between the faith of those who seek Jesus with confidence and the doubt of those who, out of pride or spiritual blindness, do not see the authority of Christ.

Verse 4: *"And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Why think ye evil in your hearts?"*

Jesus, as always, knows the **thoughts and hearts** of the people. He notices the doubt and criticism of the scribes and, instead of simply responding with words, He challenges them directly. This teaches us that we can hide nothing from God, for He sees and knows what is in the heart.

deepest part of our being. There is nothing in our hearts that He does not notice.

Verse 5: *"For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?"*

Jesus, in challenging the minds of the scribes, asks a question that makes them reflect on the true power of God. **Forgive sins** is something invisible and, apparently, easier to say. However, **heal a paralytic** is something visible, tangible, that proves the power of God in action. Jesus, in saying this, is pointing to the **divine authority** that He possesses. He has the power not only to heal physically, but also to forgive spiritually.

Verse 6: *"Now that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins," he said to the paralytic, "Get up, take your bed and go home."*

Now, Jesus goes further and physically heals the paralytic, as a **signal** of His spiritual authority. The **Son of Man** is a title that Jesus uses to refer to Himself, showing His messianic identity, but also His connection with humanity. By healing the man, He demonstrates that He has the authority not only to forgive sins, but also to restore physical health. This teaches us that Christ's work is integral: He cares for our souls as well as our bodies.

Verse 7: *"And he arose, and went to his house."*

The healing was instantaneous and complete. The paralytic not only got up, but **went to his home**, which indicates that his healing was not just physical, but restorative of his dignity and position in society. Jesus not only restores the man's health, but also gives him the chance to return to his life.

normal, to your family context. Jesus brings **complete restoration**.

Verse 8: *"And when the multitudes saw it, they marveled, and glorified God, which gave such authority unto men."*

THE **crowd** marvels at the miracle, recognizing the **divine authority** of Jesus. They see the power of God in action and cannot help but **glorify God**. The healing of the paralytic serves as a demonstration that **Jesus is the Messiah**, sent by God, and that He has the power to transform people's lives. This reminds us that our lives should also reflect God's glory as we experience His blessings.

Verse 9: *"And as Jesus passed on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.*

Here, Jesus calls **Matthew**, a tax collector (considered a sinner by society), to follow Him. His attitude **Matthew** The fact that Jesus immediately left everything and followed Jesus shows the transforming power of Christ's call. Jesus does not choose perfect or impeccable people, but those who are willing to be transformed by Him. This verse also reminds us that Jesus came for sinners, not the righteous.

Verse 10: *"And it came to pass, that, being in the house, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Jesus and his disciples."*

Verse 10 shows the **welcome** of Jesus to those who were despised by society. He sits at the table with **tax collectors and sinners**, demonstrating that His mission was to reach those who most needed His grace. This

reveals the inclusive nature of Jesus: He is willing to extend His love to everyone, without exception, and to offer forgiveness and transformation to those who approach Him.

Verse 11: *"And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your teacher with tax collectors and sinners?"*

Here, the **Pharisees** are watching Jesus' action and wondering why He, being a teacher, is associating with **publicans** (tax collectors) and **sinners**, people generally despised by the religious society of the time. This was a common criticism against Jesus, because He broke social and religious norms by associating with those considered "impure" or "sinners." Jesus' response to this criticism goes beyond social conventions, showing that He came to heal and save, not to condemn.

Verse 12: *"But when Jesus heard it, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick."*

Jesus responds with a metaphor. He compares **the sinner** to **the sick** that need **cure**. He is stating that His mission is for those who recognize their need for spiritual help and healing. Unlike the Pharisees, who saw themselves as righteous, Jesus knew that those who considered themselves spiritually "sound," that is, the religious people who saw no need for repentance, were not ready to receive His teaching. Jesus' spiritual healing is for those who recognize their need, not for those who are blinded by their pride.

Verse 13: *"And when I came to learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."*

Jesus quotes a passage from the **Old Testament** (Hosea 6:6), highlighting the importance of **compassion** about the **sacrifice**. True repentance is not just about performing religious rituals, but about having a **genuine change of heart**. Jesus is saying that while sacrifices are important, God values a heart more **merciful**. He came to call the **sinners**, those who know they are far from God, to repent and change their lives. Genuine repentance is what opens the door to God's restoration.

Verse 14: *"Then John's disciples came to Him, saying, 'Why do we and the Pharisees fast, but Your disciples do not fast?'"*

Now the disciples of **John the Baptist** question Jesus about the practice of fasting. Fasting was a common practice among both John's disciples and the Pharisees, and they are surprised because **Jesus' disciples do not practice fasting** in the same way. This question reflects the idea that fasting was seen as an expression of piety and religiosity. John's disciples and the Pharisees were trying to understand why Jesus seemed to fall outside these religious norms.

Verse 15: *"And Jesus said unto them, Can the guest of the wedding feast mourn, while the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then they will fast."*

Jesus responds with the image of a **wedding party**, where the presence of the **groom** (representing Himself) brings joy and celebration. It makes no sense for the groom's friends to be in mourning while the groom is present. Jesus

is pointing out that His presence brings a new reality to His disciples, a time of **happiness and celebration**, not in mourning. But He also points to a future when He will be taken from them (a reference to His death), and at that time, the disciples will fast, for they will feel the absence of their Lord.

Verse 16: *"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment, for the patch takes its place and the tear becomes worse."*

Jesus uses a **practical image** to explain that His message cannot simply be **added** to ancient religious systems. The **Gospel** is something completely new and transformative. Putting a patch of new cloth on an old garment makes no sense, because the new cloth, when it shrinks, will make the tear even bigger. This teaches us that **message from Jesus** is not just an update or addition to ancient religious practices, but a **revolution** in the way of understanding God, salvation and the relationship with Him.

Verse 17: *"Nor do people put new wine into old wineskins, or else the wineskins will burst, and the wine will be spilled, and the wineskins will be ruined. But they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved."*

Here, Jesus makes an analogy with the **wine** and the **wineskins** (skin containers used to store liquids). The **new wine** symbolizes the **Gospel**, and the **new wineskins** are the hearts willing to welcome this new message. The **old wine** represents the ancient religious traditions and practices that cannot accommodate the **new alliance** that Jesus brings. The idea is that Christ's new message demands a **new way of living and understanding God**, something that cannot simply be fitted into old forms of religiosity.

Verse 18: *"While he was saying these things to them, behold, one of the rulers came and worshiped him, and said, My daughter is dead; but come and lay your hand on her, and she will live."*

In this verse, the **head of the synagogue** (probably a Jewish religious leader) comes to Jesus in an act of faith, despite his position of religious authority. He believes that Jesus can do the **impossible**. His daughter is **dead**, but he believes that by touching her, Jesus can bring her back to life. This is an example of a faith **bold** and **determined**. Often, in times of pain and suffering, our faith needs to be like this: **trusting**, believing that Jesus can do the impossible.

Verse 19: *"And Jesus arose and followed him, and so did his disciples."*

Jesus, being **called**, promptly gets up and goes to where the leader's daughter is. Jesus **responds** to the faith of the one who seeks Him. He does not hesitate, He acts with **compassion** and **readiness**. This teaches us that Jesus is always willing to respond to those who seek Him with genuine faith.

Verse 20: *"And behold, a woman who had a discharge of blood for twelve years came up behind him and touched the fringe of his garment."*

As Jesus goes to the leader's house, a **woman** with a chronic problem of **blood flow** approaches Him. She had suffered from this disease for **twelve years**, which made her ritually unclean according to Jewish law. She believed that if she could just touch the hem of His garment, she would be healed. Her faith is impressive, for she does not feel she needs Jesus to see her or speak to her directly, but believes that His power is sufficient to heal her.

Verse 21: *"For she said within herself, If I may but touch his garment, I shall be made whole.*

The woman expresses **faith** in Jesus in a simple yet profound way. She believes that only the **touch** in Jesus' garment would be enough for her to be healed. Her faith is an example of how we must trust in the power of Christ, even if we do not see an immediate solution. Her touch represents the **trust** in Jesus to transform your situation.

Verse 22: *"But Jesus turned and saw her and said, "Daughter, take heart; your faith has made you well." And the woman was made well from that hour.*

Jesus, upon noticing the woman touching His garment, turns around and **bles**s, recognizing the **faith** her. He says that the **faith** hers the **saved**, and not only healed her physically, but also restored her spiritually. The healing was not only of the body, but also of her **whole life**. This teaches us that the **faith** true not only brings healing, but also **salvation**.

Verse 23: *"And when he came to the house of the ruler of the synagogue, he saw the musicians and the crowd making a commotion."*

When Jesus arrives at the house of **head of the synagogue**, He finds **a crowd in mourning**. In Jewish culture, when someone died, people would hire **musicians** and **they planted tears** as signs of respect and sadness for the loss. The commotion and crying indicate that the **daughter of the head of the synagogue** had already passed away. Jesus arrives at this moment of despair, when all seemed lost. This sets the stage for a great demonstration of His power over death.

Verse 24: *"And he said, Depart: for the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed at him."*

Here, Jesus declares that the girl is **not dead**, but only **sleeping**. This statement may seem strange, but Jesus is revealing His **divine authority** about death. For Him, death is just a passage, like sleep. His word brings **hope and certainty** that death is not the end. The reaction of the crowd, which **laughed** at Jesus shows how blind people were to the reality of Jesus' power. They only saw death as the end, and could not understand that He has the authority to overcome even death.

Verse 25: *"And when the multitude was parted, he went in, and took her by the hand: and the girl arose."*

Jesus expels the crowd, creating an atmosphere of **faith and tranquility**. He then takes the girl's hand, a gesture of **cure and restoration**, and immediately she **get up**. The simple action of Jesus, taking her hand, is enough to perform the miracle. Here we see the power of **Jesus on death** and His ability to bring **life** where there is despair. This miracle is also a sign of what He would do on the cross – bring life and restoration to all those who believe in Him.

Verse 26: *"And the fame of it spread throughout that land."*

After the miracle, news spreads quickly, as is natural when something extraordinary happens. People begin to talk about the power of Jesus, and this only increases His **fame** and the **interest** in His person and works. The **healing of the girl** was not just an isolated miracle, but a testimony to Jesus' authority as the **Messiah** promised.

Verse 27: *"And as Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, crying out, "Son of David, have mercy on us."*

Now, two **blind** begin to follow Jesus, crying out for His help. They call Jesus **"Son of David"**, a messianic title, recognizing Him as the **Promised Messiah**. They do not just ask for physical healing, but they beg for **compassion**, which shows that they see in Jesus more than a healer, but someone with spiritual power. The request for mercy is a sign of **faith**, because they believe that Jesus can change their lives.

Verse 28: *"And when he was come into the house, the blind men came unto him: and he said unto them, Believe ye that I am able to do this?"*

Jesus, seeing the blind men approaching, asked them: **"Do you believe I can do this?"** He is challenging their **faith**, not because they doubt, but so that they may reveal the depth of their confidence in the power of Jesus. Their faith would be the key to the miracle. This teaches us that in order to receive miracles from Jesus, we must fully believe in His ability to perform the impossible.

Verse 29: *"They said to him, "Yes, Lord."*

The blind respond in the affirmative, declaring their **faith** unshakable in the power of Jesus. They believe that Jesus can **cure them**, and their response is **total confidence**.

Verse 30: *"Then he touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be done to you." And their eyes were opened."*

Jesus then touches the **eyes of the blind** and declares: **"Let it be done to you according to your faith"** Healing happens immediately, as a reflection of their **faith** in Jesus. Here, Jesus teaches us that

our faith is **determinant** so that we can experience His miracles. The healing of the blind did not depend on Jesus' willpower, but on **faith** of those who believed that He could do it. Jesus is sensitive to people's genuine faith.

Verse 31: *"But He sternly warned them, saying, "See that no one knows about it."*

After healing the blind men, Jesus warns them not to publicize the miracle. This may seem contradictory, but it is important to understand that Jesus did not want to be known only for His miracles, but for **message of the Kingdom of God**. He knew that His time had not yet come to be widely recognized as the Messiah, and any great fanfare about His miracles could hasten the fulfillment of plans that were to occur in God's timing.

Verse 32: *"But they went out and spread his fame throughout all that land."*

Even with Jesus' warning, the healed blind men could not contain their joy and spread the news throughout the land. **testimony of the miracle** of Jesus spreads naturally, because people cannot hide the **transformation** that they experienced. This shows us the strength of **personal testimony**. When we experience something great from God, it is difficult not to share it with others.

Verse 33: *"And when they went out, behold, they brought unto him a dumb man possessed with a devil."*

Now another person is brought to Jesus: **amute** that was **demonized**. This shows the great diversity of needs of the people who sought Jesus. Healing was not limited to physical illnesses, but also deliverance

spiritual, as in the case of the mute man. This teaches us that Jesus is interested not only in healing diseases, but also in **free** the spiritually oppressed.

Verse 34: *"And the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils by the prince of the devils."*

You **Pharisees**, once again, try to discredit the work of Jesus. Instead of acknowledging that Jesus has divine power, they claim that He casts out demons by **prince of demons** (Satan). This accusation shows the **hardness** of their hearts and their refusal to see Jesus as the **Messiah**. They would rather attribute God's work to the evil one than recognize Jesus' divine authority.

Verse 35: *"And Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every affliction."*

Jesus continues His mission of teaching and healing throughout the region, going from city to city, preaching the **Gospel** of the Kingdom of God and healing people. He not only cares about people's spiritual needs, but also about their own **physical and emotional needs**. Jesus is the **teacher** that teaches, heals and transforms lives on all levels.

Verse 36: *"And when he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."*

Jesus, seeing the crowds, is moved by **compassion**. He sees the suffering of people like a shepherd who sees his sheep without direction. They were **afflicted, exhausted and hopeless**. This reflects the reality of many today: people in search of

answers, without spiritual guidance. Jesus, as the **Good Shepherd**, is the answer to this need.

Verse 37: *"Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the workers are few."*

Jesus observes the great need for **collaborators** to spread the **Gospel**. He uses the metaphor of **table** (harvest field) to show that the work of evangelizing and healing is vast, but the workers (those who preach and teach) are few. He is speaking of the urgent need for more people to be involved in the mission of bringing the **good news**.

Verse 38: *"Pray therefore the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."*

Here Jesus instructs His disciples to pray, asking God to send more workers for His work. The prayer is a request for more people to be called to **serve in the Kingdom** of God and to lead to **message of salvation**. Prayer is essential here, because God is the one who calls and empowers workers for His work.

Final Reflection on Matthew 9

Matthew chapter 9 reveals to us a Jesus who not only teaches, but who acts with **power, compassion and authority**. Through His miracles and healings, He shows His sovereignty over the **illness, demons, death** and even about the **society** that marginalized certain groups of people, such as the blind and the sick. Jesus is presented as the **Teacher and Savior**, whose works are not just manifestations of power, but signs of **restoration** that He came to bring to humanity.

The chapter also teaches us that the **faith** is crucial for us to experience the **wonders** of God. The blind, for example, were healed because **believed** that Jesus could heal them. This challenges us to reflect on our own faith. Do we trust in Jesus with the same confidence that these blind men did? Do we believe that He can transform our lives, heal our wounds, and restore our hope?

Another important point in this chapter is the **compassion of Jesus** for the multitudes, who were like “sheep without a shepherd.” When He saw the people’s distress, He did not turn away from them, but cared deeply. This teaches us the importance of having a compassionate heart toward others, especially those who are suffering, without direction, and without hope. Jesus calls us to be **workers in His harvest**, so that we can take His **message of hope** and **cure** to those in need.

Prayer is also a central point here. Jesus teaches us to pray to the Lord of the harvest, asking Him to send more workers to His work. The call to **pray** for the harvest is an invitation to actively engage in the Kingdom of God. We are all part of this mission to reach those who are lost and without hope, bringing them the truth of the Gospel and the spiritual and physical healing that only Jesus can offer.

Therefore, this chapter challenges us to reflect on our **faith**, our **compassion** for others, and our commitment to be an active part of Jesus' mission in the world. May we respond to this call with action, faith and prayer, always trusting in the power of God to accomplish great things in our lives and in the lives of those around us.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 10 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 10 is a **manual** for the mission that Jesus entrusts to His disciples, and by extension, to all His followers. The call is clear: **pave the way** for the Kingdom of God, **heal and free** people, and do this with **faith and dependence** of God. They are sent with a mission of **serve selflessly**, trust in the **God's provision** and, above all, to proclaim the Kingdom that has come in Christ. The mission is still in force today, and each of us, as disciples of Jesus, is invited to follow these principles in our walk with Christ.

Verse 1

"And he called his twelve disciples unto him, and gave them authority over them to cast out unclean spirits, and to heal every disease and every sickness."

Jesus, when calling His **twelve disciples**, does not send them on a mission unprepared. He **gives authority**, which means they have power delegated directly by Him to **cast out demons** and **cure diseases**. This was not something that just anyone could do, but it was being given to these men so that they could continue Jesus' ministry effectively. Here we see the **power** of Jesus being transmitted to His followers.

Verse 2

"The names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and his brother Andrew; James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John;"

Here, Matthew makes a point of **list the names** of the twelve apostles. The term "apostles" means **sent**, that is, those who were called to take Jesus' message to the world. Highlighting their names also reminds us that God chose specific people, with their stories, flaws, and potential, to be part of His mission.

Verse 3

"Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax collector; James the son of Alphaeus and Thaddaeus;"

Here we have more details about the **names of the apostles**. Each one had an identity and a past, and Jesus chose them from different **contexts and experiences**. For example, Matthew was a **tax collector**, a profession frowned upon by the Jews of the time, but Jesus calls him to be part of His plan. This teaches us that Jesus looks at people, not for their past mistakes, but for their **potential** that He sees in them.

Verse 4

"Simon the Zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him."

Here Matthew mentions two more apostles. **Simon the Zealot**, was probably part of a radical group of Jews who wanted to fight against Roman oppression. And finally, we have **Judas Iscariot**, who would be known for his **betrayal** to Jesus later. Even with flaws, Jesus chose each of these men. This reminds us that God has **sovereign purposes** and often chooses those who seem unlikely to fulfill His plan.

Verse 5

"Jesus sent them out, saying, 'Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any town of the Samaritans.'"

Jesus instructs His disciples to **do not go to the Gentiles** or Samaritans in this first moment of mission. This orientation has to do with the **priority** to take the gospel to the Jews, for Jesus knew that His ministry would be a **fulfillment of promises** made to Israel. This also shows that initially the message of salvation was to be offered first to the Jewish people, and would later expand to the Gentiles and Samaritans.

Verse 6

"Go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

Here, Jesus emphasizes that the **first target** His mission is to the people of Israel, who, like lost sheep, needed to hear the message of **salvation**. Jesus sees the people of Israel as those who were **strays**, without a pastor, in urgent need of direction and **spiritual healing**. The mission begins with **Israel**, but eventually reaches the entire world.

Verse 7

"And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"

THE **Kingdom of heaven** is the **central message** of Jesus' ministry. When He sends out His disciples, He instructs them to **announce** that the Kingdom of God has already arrived, and with it, the opportunity for transformation. This was a **good news** for those who lived under oppression and suffering, for the Kingdom of God brought **healing, deliverance and forgiveness** for all who would repent and follow Christ.

Verse 8

"Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give."

Jesus gives **clear instructions** to the disciples: **heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers and cast out demons**. All of these are **miracles of deliverance** that demonstrate the power of God working through them. The most important thing here is the last sentence: **“Freely you have received, freely give.”** The power and authority of Jesus are not to be **used selfishly**, but shared with others, without expecting anything in return. We are called to **serve generously**.

Verse 9

“You have no gold, nor silver, nor copper in your belts,”

Jesus instructs the disciples to **not to worry about material wealth** during the mission. They should not carry **money or provisions** for the journey. The focus was on the message and the confidence that God would take care of all their **needs**. This teaches us that by following God's call, we can trust His **providence**, without depending on material things.

Verse 10

“Neither bag for the journey, nor two tunics, nor sandals, nor a staff: for the workman is worthy of his meat.”

Jesus continues to instruct His disciples not to take **superfluous**, such as extra clothes or walking sticks. He emphasizes that by following the mission, the **workers of the Kingdom** he has **right to sustenance**, because the work they do is worthy. God, through the people who receive the message, will take care of their needs. This reminds us that when we are engaged in God's work, we can trust that He will **will provide everything we need**.

Verse 11

"In whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay with him until you leave."

Here, Jesus instructs the disciples to **look for a worthy person** in every town or village to stay. The word "worthy" can refer to someone who **accept the message** of the gospel and show receptivity to the service of disciples. They must be received in a welcoming and **hospitable**, and this person will become a kind of **partner** on the mission. The focus is that they **find support and acceptance** in the cities where they will preach.

Verse 12

"And when you enter the house, greet it."

Here, Jesus teaches that, upon arriving at a house, the disciples must **greet** people with **greetings of peace**. This is a gesture of **blessing and goodwill**, because peace is one of the marks of the Kingdom of God. The greeting is not just a greeting, but a wish for **spiritual well-being** and **harmony** for those who receive them.

Verse 13

"But if the house is worthy, your peace will come upon it; but if it is unworthy, your peace will return to you."

Jesus explains that when greeting a house, **peace** of the disciples will be a sign of **acceptance or rejection**. If people accept the message, the peace of God will **will establish** in that home. But if they reject it, the disciples' peace will return to them, symbolizing that the **God's blessing** cannot be forced, and those who refuse the message lose that peace. This reinforces the idea that the gospel must be **I accept with willingness** to make a difference in people's lives.

Verse 14

"And whoever will not welcome you or listen to your words, when you leave that house or town, shake off the dust from your feet."

Jesus instructs the disciples to **do not insist** where the message is not received. If the **reception is negative**, they must **shake the dust off your feet** as a symbol that they are **distancing** of that rejection. That gesture was a **public sign** that the responsibility for rejecting the message lay with the people who refused. This attitude could also be a **alert** to those who rejected the word, showing that their refusal had **spiritual consequences**.

Verse 15

"Truly I tell you, the punishment for Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment will be more tolerable than for that town."

Jesus warns that the **rejection** of the gospel will bring serious consequences. **Sodom and Gomorrah**, two cities known for **immorality and corruption**, were destroyed by God. However, Jesus states that the cities that reject His disciples will have an **even more severe penalty** at trial. The rejection of the **message of salvation** is seen as a very serious sin, as it is the **rejection of God's grace**.

Verse 16

"Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves."

Jesus recognizes that the mission will be challenging, and the disciples will face **persecutions and hostility**. He uses the metaphor of **sheep** being sent into the midst of **wolves** to illustrate the vulnerability of the disciples. However, He

also guides them to be **wise as serpents**, that is, to be **shrewd and careful**, and at the same time **simple as doves**, demonstrating **purity of heart**. They must be **cunning** in difficult situations, without losing the **honesty and innocence** in their intentions.

Verse 17

"But beware of men, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues."

Jesus warns about the **difficulties** that the disciples will face. They will be **persecuted** by the religious leaders and authorities, who will hand them over to be **judged** and **punished** physically. The **religious opposition** will be one of the main sources of suffering for those who preach the gospel. Jesus is not hiding the difficulties, but preparing His disciples to face the tribulations with courage.

Verse 18

"And you will be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony to them and to the Gentiles."

Here Jesus gives a broader view of where persecution will lead them. They will be **brought before the civil authorities**, as **governors and kings**, because of His message. However, even before the authorities, the disciples will have the opportunity to **testify about Christ** before **gentiles** (non-Jews). This is an opportunity to **expand the gospel** beyond Israel, even in a context of hostility.

Verse 19

"But when they deliver you up, do not inquire how or what

what you will speak, because in that same hour you will be given what to speak."

Jesus promises that in the moment of great **tribulation** and **persecution**, He will be with the disciples and will give the **right words** to be said. We should not worry about the **answer** that we will have to give, because the Spirit of God will be there to guide us. This teaches us to trust God in difficult situations, knowing that He will not leave us helpless.

Verse 20

"For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks through you."

This is a reaffirmation that when we are **being persecuted for the sake of Christ**, the very **Holy Spirit** will take control of our words. The words the disciples speak will be of **divine wisdom** and not just human. The Holy Spirit will act in them, giving them **courage and clarity** to bear witness to the truth.

Verse 21

"Brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against their parents and have them put to death."

Jesus warns that the **persecution will be so intense** that until **family relationships** will be affected. Loyalty to Christ will be more important than family ties, and **betrayal within families** will be a reality. Loyalty to Christ will sometimes cause division, even within homes, because the gospel message can be **misunderstood** or **rejected** for those who do not believe.

Verse 22

"And you will be hated by all for my name's sake, but he who endures to the end will be saved."

The chase will be **generalized**, and all followers of Jesus will be hated **because of His name**. This is an inevitable consequence of following Christ in a world that often rejects His teachings. However, Jesus gives a word of **hope**: those who **persevere to the end**, keeping its **faith and fidelity**, will be **saved**. Salvation is reserved for those **who don't give up**, despite the difficulties.

Verse 23

"Therefore when they persecute you in this city, flee to the next. For truly I tell you, you will not have gone through the cities of Israel before the Son of Man comes."

In this verse, Jesus instructs the disciples to **flee to another city** if they are persecuted in a locality. He does not want His followers to put themselves in unnecessary risk situations. At the same time, He indicates that **mission to evangelize** will be so wide that they will not be able to reach all the cities of Israel before **return of Christ**. This warning points to the urgency of the mission, for time is short and the gospel must be taken to everyone before He returns.

Verse 24

"A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master."

Jesus reminds the disciples that as His followers, **should not expect better treatment** than He Himself received. If He was **persecuted**, the disciples will also face **difficulties and opposition**. This verse teaches us about the **identification** with Christ: if He was rejected, no

we should be surprised or discouraged when we are rejected too. **solidarity** with Christ implies **follow in His footsteps**, even when it involves suffering.

Verse 25

"It is enough for the disciple to be like his teacher, and the servant like his master. If they have called the head of the house Beelzebul, how much more will they call those of his household?"

Jesus uses a comparison to emphasize that if He, the Master, was called **Beelzebul** (a term used to refer to a demonic prince), his disciples would also be mistreated and called offensive names. He is saying that **if He was defamed**, we should not be surprised when his followers are also the target of accusations. The point here is that **we will be treated as He was treated**, both for good and for bad, and this is part of our **identification with Christ**.

Verse 26

"Therefore do not fear them, for there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, and nothing secret that will not be known."

Despite persecution and defamation, Jesus assures his disciples that in the end, **truth will prevail**. What is hidden will be **revealed** and the **God's justice** will be done. He teaches us that **we must not fear those who persecute us** because the truth will be exposed and in the end God will bring out what is right. This verse also conveys a sense of **security in God**, knowing that He knows and sees all things.

Verse 27

"What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops."

Jesus exhorts the disciples to **share publicly** the message He revealed to them privately. The gospel is to be proclaimed openly, without **fear or shame**, even if the message brings **conflicts or persecutions**. This implies that **courage** to speak the truth of Christ, not just in private moments, but in **public**, without fear of the consequences. The gospel must be **disclosed without reservation**, because it is a message of salvation for everyone.

Verse 28

"And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

Jesus puts the **pursuit in perspective**: although people can threaten or even kill the physical body, **only God has the power to destroy the soul**. He teaches us to **fear God** above any human threat, because God has the final authority over our eternal life. This guides us to **prioritize our relationship with God** and the **faithfulness to Him**, rather than fearing the temporal consequences that may arise from following Christ.

Verse 29

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father."

Jesus uses the image of **sparrows** (little birds of low value) to illustrate God's care for all creatures, including His children. If God cares for even the little sparrows, how much more will He care for **of us**, that we are much more precious to Him? This is one way of showing the **God's constant care** upon those who follow Him. Nothing happens without His knowledge, and no suffering is unknown to Him.

Verse 30

"And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered."

Jesus continues to emphasize God's detailed care for us. **Every strand of hair** is known to God, which is a way of expressing the depth of His **personal interest** and affection for our lives. Nothing about us goes unnoticed in the eyes of God, and this gives us great **security and trust** in His protection.

Verse 31

"Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows."

Faced with the threat of persecution and difficulties, Jesus reaffirms that **we are extremely valuable to God**. If He cares even for sparrows, how much more will He care for us, His children? This should give us great peace and confidence in His **protection** and **provision**, even in the most challenging situations.

Verse 32

"Whoever therefore confesses me before men, him I will also confess before my Father who is in heaven."

Here, Jesus makes a promise to **reward** to those who **publicly confess** your faith in Him. If we have the courage to **declare** our covenant with Christ before others, He, in turn, **will confess us before God the Father**. This is an invitation to **be faithful** to Christ at all times, knowing that our **loyalty to Him** will be recognized and rewarded by God.

Verse 33

"But whoever denies me before men, him I will also deny before my Father who is in heaven."

This verse contrasts with the previous one, warning that whoever **to deny** to Christ before men will be **denied** for Him before the Father. Denying Christ is a serious spiritual failure, for it implies **lack of courage and loyalty** to the truth. The rejection of Christ before others results in a **eternal separation** of God, something that should make us reflect on the seriousness of our **public faith** and how we must stand firmly on the side of Christ.

Verse 34

"Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword."

In this verse, Jesus says something that may seem contradictory at first glance, since He is known as the **Prince of Peace** (Isaiah 9:6). However, He is explaining that His coming would bring **conflict**, because the message of the gospel **divide** people. Those who accept Christ will have a new life in God, but those who reject His message will be in opposition to those who believe. **sword** here it symbolizes the separation that the truth of Christ can generate, even in **family relationships**. Peace with God can, in some circumstances, result in **conflict with others**.

Verse 35

"For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law."

Jesus continues to talk about the **consequences of the gospel**. He is not promoting discord, but describing what happens when **truth of Christ** enters into people's lives. In many families, some people may accept the gospel while others reject it, and this can create divisions. **family** can be divided, because the **spiritual choices** can generate **disagreements** and even **persecution** within one's own home. Jesus teaches us that loyalty to Him

may require the **priority over all family ties**, when these come into conflict with faith.

Verse 36

"So a man's enemies will be the men of his own household."

Jesus states that in some cases the greatest **enemies** of a person can be those who are closest, such as **family**. This is because the gospel of Christ can generate **deep division** even among those closest to him. The disciple of Christ must be aware that following Jesus can result in **removal of relatives** who do not understand or reject the Christian faith. This is a call to **commitment to Christ**, even when the opposition comes from within the home.

Verse 37

"Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."

Jesus here reminds us that the **love for Him** must be **supreme**. This does not mean that we should stop loving our family members, but rather that **priority must be given to Christ** above any other relationship. It demands a **absolute fidelity** and a **total dedication**, which means that when there is conflict between our loyalty to Him and our love for our loved ones, we must choose **follow Christ**. The disciple of Jesus cannot **compromise your faith** because of no human relationship.

Verse 38

"And whoever does not take up his cross and follow me is not worthy of me."

Taking up the cross means **take responsibility** and the **sacrifice** to follow Jesus, as He Himself did. The cross represents the **death to self**, the **renounce one's ego** and be willing to suffer for the sake of Christ. Jesus challenges us to **carry our cross** every day, which implies being willing to **pay the price** by our faith, whether through **persecution, difficulties** or **personal sacrifices**. Whoever is not willing to do this is not **ready to be His disciple**.

Verse 39

"Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

This verse highlights the **gospel paradox**: who tries **preserve your life** and avoid suffering for the sake of Christ will end **losing it**, for true life is found in **abandon one's own interests** in favor of Christ. In return, those who **give up** of your life, of your own desires and ambitions for **follow Christ**, will find true life, **eternal** and **full**. Here, Jesus teaches us that true **freedom and life** come as we surrender everything to Him.

Verse 40

"Whoever receives you receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me."

Jesus reinforces the idea that, when **receive the disciples** that He sends, people are, in reality, **receiving Christ**. He is the one sent by God, and whoever accepts the message of the gospel also accepts the **authority and presence of God the Father**. This teaches us that the gospel is not just a human message, but a **divine message**, and by receiving the message, we are receiving the message itself **God**.

Verse 41

"Whoever receives a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward; and whoever receives a righteous man in the name of a righteous man will receive a righteous man's reward."

Jesus talks about the **reward** of one who welcomes and honors those who come in His name. To receive a **prophet** or a **fair** is not just an act of hospitality, but an acknowledgement of **divine role** of these people in God's plan. When we do this, we are also **blessed** and rewarded by God, because we are honoring the **divine authority** that they carry. What Jesus is teaching is that by receiving God's representatives, we are actually **welcoming God** and His plan.

Verse 42

"And whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he will by no means lose his reward."

This verse teaches us that even the smallest gesture of **kindness and support** towards the disciples of Christ will be **recognized and rewarded by God**. Jesus makes reference to the **"little ones"**, that is, to the disciples who serve Him humbly. The simple act of giving a **glass of cold water** demonstrates that even the **simple gestures** supporting the servants of Christ will not be forgotten by God and will have **great reward**. This verse teaches us about the **importance of serving** to Christ and others in a sincere and selfless way.

Final Reflection on Matthew 10

In Matthew chapter 10, Jesus prepares His disciples for the difficult reality they will face as they follow Him. He does not hide the challenges, but warns them about the **price** to be His follower. By calling the twelve apostles and sending them out on their mission, He highlights the importance of **perseverance**,

courage and loyalty in the face of difficulties. They would be sent out like sheep among wolves, knowing that **persecution** it would be a constant reality, both for authorities and family members.

One of the most profound lessons of this chapter is that **absolute priority** that we should give to Christ in our lives. Jesus is not saying that we should neglect others, but that **our loyalty to Him must be unquestionable**. It demands such deep fidelity that, if necessary, we must put even family ties in the background, because **gospel truth** can bring divisions. This is a call to **resignation**, where the disciple is willing to **take up your cross** and follow Jesus, even if it means losing something important, like social acceptance or family comfort.

Furthermore, Jesus assures that **no act of kindness in His name will be forgotten**. Even the smallest gesture of support for His disciples will be rewarded. This reveals the generous heart of God, who honors even the **simplest gestures of faith** and service. He also teaches us that **take up the cross** It is not a burden to bear alone, but an opportunity to experience God's power and grace in our daily lives.

The chapter also teaches us that the mission of spreading the gospel is not optional, but a **commandment**. God sends us to be light in the world, to proclaim the message of **salvation**, and gives us the responsibility to do this with **faith and trust**. Even if the path is difficult, He ensures that we will never be alone. In the end, God rewards **all fidelity and sacrifice** done for His sake.

In short, Matthew 10 calls us to reflect on what it means to truly follow Christ. It challenges us to **prioritize our relationship with Him** above all, to **embrace the sacrifices** that the mission demands and to have confidence that the **divine reward** will be great, even in adversity. Every choice for Christ, even the most difficult ones, is a choice for an eternal purpose and a transformed life.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 11 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

In chapter 11 of Matthew, Jesus begins by answering the question of John the Baptist, who was in prison and sent his disciples to ask if He was the Messiah. Jesus responds by showing His works and inviting John to reflect on the evidence of the Kingdom of God. He states that, although John was great, the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he, reflecting on the difference between the Old Testament and the arrival of the Kingdom.

Jesus also laments over the cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum, which, despite witnessing His miracles, did not repent. He compares these cities to pagan cities, indicating that it will be more tolerable for them on the day of judgment.

Jesus then extends a generous invitation: "Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He offers rest and learning in His company, emphasizing that His yoke is easy and His burden is light, inviting all to surrender themselves to Him to find true peace.

This chapter highlights both Jesus' invitation to repentance and His compassion, showing Jesus' willingness to help and give spiritual rest to all who come to Him.

Matthew 11:1-

"After instructing his twelve disciples, Jesus went out to teach and preach in the towns of the region."

Jesus had finished giving instructions to his disciples on how they should behave during their missions and sent them out. Now, He Himself goes to different places

cities to teach and preach. Here we see the heart of Jesus, which was always in motion, **proclaiming the kingdom of God** wherever he went. He not only trained the disciples, but continued to lead by example.

Matthew 11:2-

"When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him:"

John the Baptist, who was in prison, begins to hear about the deeds of Jesus. He sends his disciples to ask Jesus if He was indeed the Messiah. This question reflects the difficult time John was going through, perhaps with doubts due to the circumstances or seeking **confirmation** about who Jesus really was. Even John, a powerful prophet, experienced moments of uncertainty, showing that hardships can shake even the strongest.

Matthew 11:3-

"Are you the one who is to come or should we expect someone else?"

The question from John's disciples reflects John the Baptist's question: "Are you the promised Messiah?" John knew that the Messiah would bring powerful changes, but he may have been confused by the fact that he was still in prison and the Kingdom did not seem to have manifested itself as traditional Jewish expectations had dictated. This uncertainty represents the hopes that many had about the role of the Messiah, looking for someone who would liberate the people politically.

Matthew 11:4-

"Jesus answered, 'Go back and report to John what you hear and see:'"

Jesus does not answer the question directly, but points to the **evidence of His ministry**. He asks John's disciples to report the works they are seeing: miracles, healing, deliverance, good news being preached to the poor. These are proofs that He is the promised Messiah. Jesus wants John to understand that the kingdom of God is manifesting itself in a way that perhaps he did not expect.

Matthew 11:5-

"The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor;"

Here Jesus is quoting Isaiah 35:5-6 and Isaiah 61:1, which are prophecies about what the Messiah would do. He is showing that **your actions confirm the prophecies**. Healings, miracles, and preaching the gospel to the poor prove that the Kingdom of God is visibly at work. Every miracle is a sign that the time of the Messiah has come. Jesus demonstrates that the Kingdom of God has a deep focus on healing and restoration, both physical and spiritual.

Matthew 11:6-

"And blessed is he who is not offended on my account."

Here, Jesus is encouraging John and his followers **to don't be offended** with His method of fulfilling the messianic promises. He is saying that although the Kingdom of God may not be happening the way they expected, they are blessed if they trust in His way of working and do not turn away. Jesus asks them not to be scandalized or lose faith because of appearances, but to believe in what He is doing.

Matthew 11:7-

"As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to

to speak to the crowd about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind?'"

After John's disciples have left, Jesus turns to the crowd and begins to **praise John the Baptist**. He asks rhetorically whether people went to the desert to see something fragile, like a reed shaken by the wind. The implicit answer is no. John the Baptist was firm and courageous in his message, a prophet who did not bend under circumstances.

Matthew 11:8-

"If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? Indeed, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces."

Jesus goes on to ask the people what they expected to find in John. He was not a luxurious man, dressed in fine clothes or living in comfort, but a prophet dedicated to a divine mission. Those who live in luxury and comfort are in palaces, not in the desert preaching repentance. Here, Jesus highlights the **simple lifestyle** of John and his total dedication to God's calling.

Matthew 11:9-

"Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet."

Jesus states that John was not only a prophet, but **more than a prophet**. This is because John had a special mission: he was the messenger who prepared the way for the Messiah. He was the fulfillment of the prophecies of Malachi 3:1, being the one who would announce the arrival of the Lord. His importance was great, because he was chosen to announce the coming of Jesus, the Savior of the world.

Matthew 11:10-

"This is he of whom it is written: 'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'"

Here, Jesus directly quotes Malachi 3:1, confirming that John the Baptist is the messenger God promised to send before the coming of the Messiah. John played a crucial role in the plan of salvation, preparing the hearts of the people for the coming of Jesus. He was the last of the great prophets of the Old Testament, and his ministry marked the transition to the **fulfillment of God's promises** in Jesus Christ.

Matthew 11:11-

"I tell you the truth, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

Jesus makes a stunning statement here. He acknowledges that John the Baptist is the greatest among those born of women, which means that John was the greatest prophet of all. This is because John had the privilege of directly preparing the way for Jesus, the Messiah. However, Jesus also points out that in the Kingdom of heaven, even the least is greater than John. This reveals the **transcendental nature of the Kingdom** of God, which goes beyond any human position. Greatness in the Kingdom of heaven is measured by spiritual criteria, not by earthly status or function.

Matthew 11:12-

"From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and violent men take it by force."

This verse is interpreted in many ways, but the main idea is that the Kingdom of heaven has been the target of vigorous struggle and even resistance since John's time. Those who wish to enter the Kingdom must **actively and determinedly seek**.
Jesus is

pointing to the seriousness and urgency of getting closer to God. It is not something to be taken passively, but with a fervent and intense search.

Matthew 11:13-

"For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John."

Jesus is here explaining that John marks the end of an era. Before him, all the prophets and the Law pointed to the coming of the Messiah. John, as the last of the Old Testament prophets, was the one who **announced the arrival** of Jesus. He not only spoke about the coming of the Messiah, but had the privilege of seeing Him and introducing Him to the world.

Matthew 11:14-

"And if you are willing to accept it, this is Elijah who was to come."

In this passage, Jesus is referring to John the Baptist as the fulfillment of the prophecy of Malachi 4:5, which spoke of the coming of Elijah before the great day of the Lord. John came in the **spirit and power of Elijah**, fulfilling this prophecy. This does not mean that John was literally Elijah reincarnated, but that he played a similar role to Elijah as a powerful prophet, calling the people to repentance.

Matthew 11:15-

"He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Here, Jesus emphasizes that this is an important spiritual truth that must be understood by those who are ready to receive it. Jesus often used this expression to warn people to pay attention to a **deep truth** that was being revealed. Not everyone would be able to understand or accept what He

was saying about John, but He encourages those who have spiritual sensitivity to understand.

Matthew 11:16–

"To what can I compare this generation? They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to one another:"

Jesus begins to criticize the generation that was present, comparing them to **immature children** who complain when things don't go as they expected. They responded neither to John's message, which preached repentance with austerity, nor to Jesus' message, which preached the gospel with grace and mercy. Jesus points out their lack of receptivity to both John's harsh approach and Jesus' compassionate style.

Matthew 11:17–

"We played the flute, but you did not dance; we sang a lament, but you did not weep."

Here Jesus is using a metaphor. He is saying that just as children did not respond appropriately to different games, the people of this generation did not respond to either the severity of John the Baptist or the compassion of Jesus. **John came with a call of repentance**, and they rejected Him. Jesus came with a message of joy and salvation, and they rejected Him too. In both situations, the people failed to recognize the importance of His messages.

Matthew 11:18–

"For John came fasting and drinking no wine, and they say, 'He has a demon.'"

Jesus is highlighting the unfair criticism that John received. John the Baptist lived an extremely austere life, with

fasting and abstinence, and people accused him of being possessed by a demon. This shows the **prejudice** and the lack of understanding of John's message and mission. Instead of recognizing his holiness, they rejected him, considering his life of renunciation to be something abnormal.

Matthew 11:19-

"The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' But wisdom is justified by her deeds."

Jesus compares the criticism He himself received. Unlike John, Jesus ate meals and associated with all kinds of people, including sinners and tax collectors. In response, people accused Him of being a glutton and a drunkard. **Neither approach seemed to satisfy** the people. Jesus ends by saying that wisdom is justified by works, that is, the fruits of His ministry and that of John prove that both were right in their ways, even if the people rejected them.

Matthew 11:20-

"Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which he had performed most of his miracles, because they did not repent."

Jesus changes his tone here, beginning to condemn those cities that, despite having seen many of his miracles, **did not regret**. He shows that the problem was not a lack of signs or evidence, but the hardness of people's hearts. They witnessed the power of God through Jesus, but chose to remain in their sinful ways.

Matthew 11:21-

"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed among you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago, putting on sackcloth and covering themselves with ashes."

Jesus laments the cities of Chorazin and Bethsaida, which saw many of His miracles, but **did not regret**. He compares these cities to Tyre and Sidon, two pagan cities that would have repented if they had seen the same miracles. This reveals the gravity of the rejection by the Israelite cities, who had more light and revelation, but still chose to ignore it.

Matthew 11:22-

"But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you."

Jesus concludes with a solemn warning: on judgment day, it will be **more tolerable** for the pagan cities like Tyre and Sidon than for Chorazin and Bethsaida. This is because those pagan cities did not have the same access to Jesus' miracles and ministry, and therefore their responsibility was less. The Israelite cities that saw and rejected the Messiah would face a more severe judgment for their unbelief.

Matthew 11:23-

"And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No; you will descend to Hades. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained until this day."

Jesus gives a direct warning to Capernaum, a city where He performed many miracles. He highlights the arrogance of the city, which perhaps considered itself favored by having seen so many signs. However, because of its unbelief, Capernaum would not be elevated, but rather condemned. Jesus compares the city to Sodom, a city notoriously

destroyed by her wickedness. He says that if Sodom had seen the same miracles, she would have repented and survived.

Matthew 11:24–

"But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."

Here Jesus makes a shocking statement: at the final judgment, Sodom, one of the most infamous cities in the Bible, will receive a more lenient judgment than Capernaum. This underscores the gravity of Jesus' rejection by Capernaum, which had seen and experienced the power of God but **did not respond with regret.**

Matthew 11:25–

"At that time Jesus said, 'I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children.'"

Jesus prays a prayer of praise to God, thanking Him for His wisdom. He acknowledges that God has chosen **hide the truths of the Kingdom** from those who consider themselves wise and powerful, revealing them instead to the humble and simple, referred to as "little ones." This emphasizes that the Kingdom of God is not accessed by human wisdom or knowledge, but by **humility and dependence** of God.

Matthew 11:26–

"Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."

Jesus continues His prayer by reaffirming that God's plan to reveal His truths to the humble and hide them from the arrogant is pleasing to the Father. This shows that God's ways are often contrary to expectations.

human, but they are perfect and wise. **The wisdom of God** does not follow the conventions of the world.

Matthew 11:27–

"All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Here, Jesus declares his **divine authority**. He reveals that all things have been handed over to Him by the Father. This includes the revelation of who God is. No one can truly know the Father unless the Son reveals Him. This verse highlights the unique and intimate relationship between Jesus and God the Father and the necessity for knowledge of God to come through Jesus.

Matthew 11:28–

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

This is one of Jesus' best-known invitations. He calls all those who are **tired and oppressed** to come to Him. The promise is of rest, not just physical rest, but a deep rest of the soul. Jesus offers relief to those who are weighed down by the burdens of life, including the weight of legalistic religion that many of His listeners faced.

Matthew 11:29–

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

Jesus invites people to take up His yoke, which is a metaphor for His teaching and way of life. Unlike the heavy burdens imposed by the religion of the time, the yoke of

Jesus is light. He describes himself as meek and humble, offering a teaching that **brings peace and rest** for souls, rather than oppression. Learning from Jesus leads to true spiritual relief.

Matthew 11:30–

"For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Jesus concludes the chapter by reaffirming that His yoke is easy and His burden is light. This means that following Jesus is not a heavy burden, but an experience that brings **freedom and lightness**. Jesus' way is one of grace, mercy, and rest, contrasting with the oppression of legalism. Those who submit to Him will find a lighter, fuller life.

Final Reflection on Matthew 11

Matthew chapter 11 gives us a profound insight into the nature of Jesus' ministry and people's response to Him. First, we have the doubt of John the Baptist, a man of firm faith who, even while in prison, seeks confirmation that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. This teaches us that even the strongest spiritually can have moments of uncertainty and questioning. However, Jesus responds with evidence of His power: healings, miracles, and good news being preached to the poor. **Here we see that Jesus answers doubts with actions, revealing the truth through the fruits of His ministry.**

Jesus also takes the opportunity to praise John the Baptist as the greatest of the prophets and, at the same time, to teach us about the humility of the Kingdom of Heaven. Despite John's greatness, Jesus states that even the least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he, showing the contrast between the world's value system and the values of the Kingdom of God, where **greatness is linked to humility and service.**

Jesus then laments the rejection of His works by cities such as Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. This teaches us about the responsibility that comes with the privilege of witnessing to God's power. **With great revelation comes great responsibility**; the more we are exposed to the truth, the greater the expectation that we will live according to it. Jesus warns that unbelief in His works will lead to more severe judgment.

Finally, Jesus makes one of the most loving and comforting invitations in Scripture: "**Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest**" (v. 28). He promises rest to those who are weary and burdened, not with empty promises, but with the offer of a relationship of peace and rest in His presence. His "yoke" is easy and His "burden" is light, which means that discipleship with Jesus is not burdened by unbearable demands, but is a walk of peace and rest. **grace and relief**, where He accompanies us and gives us strength.

The great lesson of this chapter is that Jesus is the true Messiah, who brings healing, truth, and rest to our souls. In the midst of doubts, rejections, and burdens of life, He invites us to trust Him, to cast our cares upon Him, and to find in His love the relief we so desperately need. The key to a life of spiritual peace is **accept Jesus' invitation** and walk with Him, learning from His meekness and humility.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 12 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 12 teaches us that Jesus came to show that mercy and love for others are more important than strict observance of religious rules. He shows that good deeds should be done on any day, including the Sabbath, and that the value of human life is greater than any rule or tradition. Jesus' mission, according to the prophecies, was to bring justice and salvation to all people,

regardless of their origin or condition. His compassion, gentleness and power inspire us to follow His example of love and service to others, always seeking the good above any formality.

Matthew 12:1

“At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath; and his disciples were hungry and began to pick some heads of grain and eat.”

In this verse, we see Jesus and His disciples walking through the fields on the Sabbath. The disciples, hungry, begin to pick ears of wheat and eat them. Jewish law allowed people to eat ears of wheat from other people's fields.

(Deuteronomy 23:25), but the issue here is the day on which this was done: the Sabbath, a holy day of rest for the Jews. Gathering grain was viewed by the Pharisees as work, which violated their strict interpretation of the Sabbath laws.

Matthew 12:2

“When the Pharisees saw it, they said to him, ‘Look, your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.’”

The Pharisees, a religious group that followed the Law with extreme rigor, accused the disciples of breaking the Sabbath. For them, even the simple act of picking and rubbing the ears of grain was considered work, which, according to their tradition, was forbidden on the Sabbath. The issue here is not whether the disciples were hungry, but rather the strict application of the Law.

Matthew 12:3

“But he said to them, ‘Have you not read what David did when he and those who were with him were hungry?’”

Jesus responds by citing an example from the Old Testament. He reminds the Pharisees of an episode in which David, the great king of Israel, and his companions ate the consecrated bread of the Presence (1 Samuel 21:1-6), which was allowed to be eaten only by the priests. The hunger of David and his men justified an exception to the rule. Here Jesus wants to show that human needs, such as hunger, can justify certain actions that might otherwise be considered a violation.

Matthew 12:4

“How he entered the house of God and ate the showbread, which was not lawful for him to eat, nor for those with him, but only for the priests?”

Jesus continues to explain David’s story, emphasizing that he ate the showbread, something that was not normally allowed for anyone other than the priests. This highlights that mercy and human need can take precedence over strict religious rules.

Matthew 12:5

“Or have you not read in the Law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath and are blameless?”

Here Jesus reminds the Pharisees that the priests themselves were doing work on the Sabbath by preparing sacrifices and performing services in the temple. Although they were technically “working” on the Sabbath, the law considered them blameless because they were serving God. This reinforces the idea that service to God and human needs can override certain restrictions.

Matthew 12:6

“For I tell you that something greater than the temple is here.”

With this powerful statement, Jesus asserts His authority. He says that something greater than the temple is present—He Himself! The temple was the most sacred place for the Jews, but Jesus reveals that He, as the Son of God, is even greater. He is the fulfillment of all God’s promises, and reverence for the temple does not compare to the reverence due Him.

Matthew 12:7

“But if you had known what this means, ‘I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,’ you would not have condemned the guiltless.”

Jesus quotes Hosea 6:6 to teach that God values mercy above sacrifice. The Pharisees were focused on rules and rituals, but they forgot the deeper purpose of the Law: to love God and neighbor. If they had understood the true spirit of the Law, they would not have condemned the disciples for such a simple action motivated by the need for sustenance.

Matthew 12:8

“For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.”

Jesus closes this section by asserting His authority over the Sabbath. As “Son of Man” (a Messianic title), He is Lord of the Sabbath, which means He has the power to interpret and apply the Law. In saying this, Jesus is claiming His divinity and authority over all things, including Israel's most sacred laws.

Matthew 12:9

“And he departed from there and entered their synagogue.”

After the discussion with the Pharisees, Jesus enters the synagogue, the Jewish place of worship and teaching. This shows that Jesus was not departing from Jewish religious practice, but was reinterpreting it in accordance with His mission.

Matthew 12:10

“And there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they asked him, to accuse him, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?”

Inside the synagogue, the Pharisees present Jesus with a man with a withered hand, trying to trap Him. They ask if it is lawful to heal on the Sabbath, as they hope that He will perform the healing so that they can accuse Him of breaking the Sabbath. This reveals the hardness of their hearts, as they are more concerned with upholding tradition than with seeing someone healed and restored.

Matthew 12:11

“But he said to them, ‘Which of you, having a sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not make every effort to lift it out?’”

Jesus answers the Pharisees’ question with a simple and practical analogy. He asks: If a sheep falls into a pit on the Sabbath, which of you would not make the effort to rescue it? The idea here is that even on a day of rest, urgent needs, such as saving an animal in distress, justify action. Jesus shows that life and well-being take priority over legalistic Sabbath observance.

Matthew 12:12

“For of how much more value is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath.”

Jesus states that a human being is worth far more than a sheep. If it is lawful to rescue a sheep on the Sabbath, how much more right would it be to help a person. He declares that it is lawful to do good, that is, to perform acts of kindness and mercy, even on the Sabbath. Jesus places emphasis on the heart of the Law, which is to love one’s neighbor rather than blindly following rules and traditions.

Matthew 12:13

“Then he said to the man, ‘Stretch out your hand.’ And he stretched it out, and it was restored as well as the other.”

Jesus, without hesitation, performs a miracle. He tells the man with the withered hand to stretch it out, and immediately he is healed. This instantaneous healing shows Jesus’ divine power and authority over sickness and physical limitations. Jesus’ act demonstrates that He came to restore and heal, both physically and spiritually, regardless of religious traditions.

Matthew 12:14

“But the Pharisees went out and took counsel against him, how they might destroy him.”

Despite the miracle, the Pharisees were not happy with Jesus. Instead of rejoicing over the healing, they became indignant and began to plan how they could kill Him. This showed the hardness of their hearts and their spiritual blindness. They were more concerned with maintaining their power and influence than with recognizing the power of God manifested in Jesus.

Matthew 12:15

“But Jesus, knowing it, withdrew from there; and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all.”

Knowing of the Pharisees’ plans to kill Him, Jesus leaves that place. However, large crowds continue to follow Him, seeking healing and relief from their illnesses. Jesus, moved by compassion, heals all who come to Him. This verse reinforces Jesus’ continued willingness to help and heal, even in the face of persecution and threats.

Matthew 12:16

“And he warned them not to make him known.”

Jesus asks that people not make it widely known who He is. This request may seem strange, but it reflects the fact that Jesus knew that His time to be fully revealed had not yet come. He wanted to avoid a premature confrontation with the religious authorities, and He also wanted people to follow Him for what He had said.

taught and because of who He was, and not just because of the miracles He performed.

Matthew 12:17-18

“That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying, Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased: I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall declare judgment to the Gentiles.”

These verses show that Jesus’ actions were fulfilling an ancient prophecy from Isaiah (Isaiah 42:1-4). Jesus is the “chosen servant,” loved by God and filled with the Holy Spirit. His mission includes proclaiming righteousness and judgment not only to Jews but also to Gentiles (non-Jews). This reflects the universality of Jesus’ mission: He came to bring salvation to all people.

Matthew 12:19

“He will not quarrel or cry out, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets.”

This prophecy goes on to describe Jesus’ character. He would not be a loud leader, seeking attention or arguing in public to promote His power. Instead, He would act humbly, not seeking recognition for His actions. Jesus chose the path of meekness and compassion rather than violence or direct confrontation with the authorities.

Matthew 12:20

“A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory.”

Here Isaiah prophesies that Jesus will be kind and compassionate, especially to the weak and vulnerable. The “bruised reed” and the “smoking flax” are metaphors for people who are spiritually broken and nearly without hope. Jesus will not despise them, but will restore them. He will care for the wounded until justice triumphs.

Matthew 12:21

“And in his name the Gentiles will hope.”

This verse emphasizes that Jesus’ message would be accepted and brought to the Gentiles, those who were not part of the original covenant with Israel. The hope would not be for the Jews alone, but for the entire world. In Jesus, the Gentiles would find the same hope and salvation as Israel.

Matthew 12:22

“Then they brought to Him one who was demon-possessed and blind and mute, and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw.”

This verse shows us another of Jesus’ many miraculous healings. He heals a demon-possessed man who was also blind and mute. After being healed, the man can see and speak. This miracle highlights Jesus’ power not only over physical illness but also over spiritual evil, showing that Jesus is Lord over all things, including evil spirits.

Matthew 12:23

“And all the multitudes were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?”

After Jesus healed the demon-possessed man who was blind and mute, the crowd was amazed. They began to wonder if Jesus could be the "Son of David," a messianic title indicating the expected king from the line of David who would bring salvation to Israel. This questioning reflects that the people recognized something special in Jesus and began to suspect that He might be the promised Messiah.

Matthew 12:24

"But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This man casts out devils only by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."

The Pharisees, seeing the impact Jesus was having, tried to discredit Him. They claimed that Jesus' power to cast out demons did not come from God, but from Beelzebub, the prince of demons. This accusation was serious because they were essentially attributing God's works to the power of the evil one. This response from the Pharisees reveals the hardness of their hearts and their resistance to accepting the truth.

Matthew 12:25

"But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, "Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand."

Jesus, knowing what they were thinking, responds logically. He says that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. If Jesus were casting out demons by the power of Satan, that would mean that Satan's kingdom was destroying itself, which would make no sense. This statement by Jesus refutes the Pharisees' accusation and exposes the irrationality of what they were saying.

Matthew 12:26

“And if Satan casts out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then will his kingdom stand?”

Jesus goes on to explain that if Satan were fighting against himself, then his kingdom would be in ruins. He points out that it is illogical to think that Satan would help destroy his own kingdom. By doing so, Jesus makes it clear that His power to cast out demons did not come from Satan, but from God.

Matthew 12:27

“And if I by Beelzebub cast out demons, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they will be your judges.”

Jesus confronts the Pharisees directly by mentioning that other Jews who also performed exorcisms were recognized as being from God. He asks ironically: If Jesus is being accused of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, then why aren't the exorcisms performed by other Jews also attributed to the devil? With this question, Jesus puts the Pharisees in a position where their own words are turned against them.

Matthew 12:28

“But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.”

Here Jesus reveals the true source of His power: the Spirit of God. He states that if He is casting out demons by the power of God, then the kingdom of God is already present among them. Jesus is making it clear that His works are proof that the Messiah and the kingdom of God have already arrived.

Matthew 12:29

“Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.”

Jesus uses an illustration to show that He has authority over Satan. He compares Satan to a “strong man” whose house (his domain) is invaded. In order to plunder a strong man’s house, you must first bind him. Jesus is saying that by casting out demons, He is actually defeating Satan and taking control of what was previously under his control. Jesus’ power is so great that He “binds” Satan and takes back what belongs to him.

Matthew 12:30

“He who is not with me is against me, and he who does not gather with me scatters.”

Here Jesus speaks about the need to take a stand in relation to Him. There is no neutrality when it comes to Jesus. Those who do not join Him in His mission are inevitably working against Him. This highlights the seriousness of choosing to follow Jesus and contribute to His kingdom, or to turn away and oppose Him.

Matthew 12:31

“Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven.”

Jesus begins by warning about the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. He states that all sins and blasphemies can be forgiven except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. This sin refers to attributing the works of God to the devil.

carried out by the Spirit of God. This is considered unforgivable because by deliberately rejecting the truth of God and His Spirit, one closes the way for repentance and forgiveness.

Matthew 12:32

“And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.”

Jesus makes a distinction here: those who speak against Him (the Son of Man) can be forgiven, but those who blaspheme against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. This means that even if someone does not fully understand the person of Jesus at a given time, there is still room for repentance. However, rejecting the Holy Spirit, who clearly testifies to the truth, is a more serious sin because it is a willful rejection of God’s work.

Matthew 12:33

“Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad: for the tree is known by its fruit.”

Jesus concludes by speaking of the principle that a tree is known by its fruit. If the tree is good, it will produce good fruit; if it is bad, it will produce bad fruit. He is saying that the nature of a person or a work can be recognized by the results it produces. In the case of the Pharisees, their actions and words reveal their inner corruption, while Jesus’ miracles and actions reveal that He is truly of God.

Matthew 12:34

“You brood of vipers! How can you, being evil, speak good things? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.”

Jesus confronts the Pharisees and other religious leaders with strong words, calling them a “brood of vipers.” This expression emphasizes the spiritual poison they spread. He emphasizes that the evil of their hearts is reflected in the words they speak. From this, Jesus teaches a fundamental principle: what is in a person’s heart ends up being revealed in their words and actions. A heart full of evil can only produce evil words.

Matthew 12:35

“A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good things, and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil things.”

Here, Jesus reinforces the idea that the goodness or evil of a person’s heart is manifested externally. He compares the heart to a treasure. If someone has a “good treasure” in their heart, their actions and words will be good. If someone has an “evil treasure,” their actions and words will be evil. This metaphor shows the importance of cultivating a pure heart, full of goodness and truth.

Matthew 12:36

“But I say to you that for every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.”

Jesus warns that even “idle” words (careless or irresponsible words) will be taken into account on the Day of Judgment. This means that God observes and judges not only our great actions and words, but also those we consider unimportant. This

verse reminds us that we are responsible for everything we say, and that our words have consequences.

Matthew 12:37

“For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”

Jesus points out that our words have the power to justify or condemn. They reflect the state of our hearts and can bring either blessings or curses. In the final judgment, the words we have spoken throughout our lives will be an indicator of our faith and character. If our words were good and true, we will be justified. If they were evil, we will be condemned.

Matthew 12:38

“Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said, ‘Teacher, we want to see a sign from you.’”

Despite all they had seen, the Pharisees asked for one more “sign” as proof of Jesus’ authority. This request demonstrated their unbelief, even after witnessing miracles. They were seeking a sign as an attempt to test or discredit Jesus, rather than genuinely believing in Him. This reflected their lack of faith and spiritual resistance.

Matthew 12:39

“But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and no sign shall be given it, except the sign of the prophet Jonah.”

Jesus responds with a strong rebuke, calling them a "wicked and adulterous generation." They are adulterers in the sense that

spiritual, because their lack of faith leads them to turn away from God. Jesus says that the only sign that will be given to them is the "sign of Jonah." This reference points to the time that Jonah spent in the belly of the fish (three days and three nights), prefiguring the death and resurrection of Jesus, which would be the greatest sign of his divine authority.

Matthew 12:40

"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Jesus explains the "sign of Jonah" by prophesying His own death and resurrection. Just as Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days, Jesus would be "in the heart of the earth" (buried) for three days before being resurrected. This event would be the definitive proof of who He was, yet many would continue to reject Him. Here, Jesus is pointing to the future central event of the gospel: His resurrection.

Matthew 12:41

"The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah. And behold, a greater than Jonah is here."

Jesus draws a comparison between the Ninevites and the leaders of Israel. When Jonah preached to them, the Ninevites repented, recognizing God's message. But now someone greater than Jonah—Jesus Himself—was among them, and the Pharisees and many other Jews were unrepentant. On Judgment Day, the Ninevites, who responded to Jonah's preaching, will be a witness against this unbelieving generation.

Matthew 12:42

“The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon. And, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.”

Here Jesus uses another example: the queen of the South (Queen of Sheba), who traveled from afar to hear Solomon’s wisdom. She recognized the greatness of God in Solomon, but the Jewish leaders rejected someone even greater—Jesus. The queen will be, like the Ninevites, a witness against them at the trial, because she honored Solomon’s wisdom, while they rejected the very Son of God.

Matthew 12:43

“And when the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.”

Jesus begins to talk about the spiritual nature of deliverance and sin. He explains that when an unclean spirit leaves a person, it wanders through dry places (spiritual deserts) seeking rest but finds none. This teaches us that after a person is delivered, there is a risk of relapse if the void left by the unclean spirit is not filled with God’s presence.

Matthew 12:44

“Then he says, ‘I will return to my house from which I came.’ And when he returns, he finds it empty, swept and put in order.”

The unclean spirit, finding no rest, decides to return to the person from which it was cast out. It finds the "house" (the person) swept and organized, but "unoccupied." This means that although the person has been freed, it has not filled its

your life with the things of God. This situation of spiritual emptiness makes you vulnerable to new attacks from the enemy.

Matthew 12:45

“Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So it will be with this evil generation.”

Here, Jesus continues the parable about the unclean spirit that leaves a person, but returns with seven even more evil spirits. This results in a worse condition than the initial one. The idea here is that if a person does not fill his life with God after being delivered, he can fall into an even more degraded spiritual state. Jesus compares this situation to the generation of the time, who, even after seeing miracles and hearing His message, remained in unbelief. A lack of spiritual commitment can lead to a much more critical state that is difficult to reverse.

Matthew 12:46

“While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and brothers stood outside, wanting to speak to him.”

In this verse, the scene shifts to an episode where Jesus' mother Mary and his brothers seek him out while he is teaching the crowd. This indicates that his family, like any other, had concerns and times when they wanted to be with Jesus. The context suggests that they were trying to call him out, possibly out of concern for him, but it also highlights a deeper point that Jesus will make in the following verses.

Matthew 12:47

“And someone said to him, ‘Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you.’”

Here, a messenger informs Jesus that His mother and brothers are outside, wanting to speak with Him. This detail adds a personal touch to the narrative, showing that Jesus had normal family relationships, but what He says next has important spiritual significance.

Matthew 12:48

“But he answered and said to him, ‘Who is my mother? And who are my brothers?’”

Jesus’ answer may seem a bit cold or distant at first glance, but He is using this situation to teach a deeper spiritual truth. By asking, “Who is my mother? And who are my brothers?” He is about to redefine the concept of family, not in biological terms, but in spiritual terms.

Matthew 12:49

“And he stretched out his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren.”

Jesus points to His disciples and declares that they are His true family. This does not mean that He rejects or dishonors His biological family, but He is affirming that those who follow God’s will, who listen and obey, are His spiritual family. He is redefining relationships with God and with others based on faith and obedience to God’s will, not just blood ties.

Matthew 12:50

“For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

Here Jesus makes it clear that the true family of God is made up of those who do the will of the heavenly Father. This broadens the concept of family to include all who believe and obey God, showing that the relationship with Him transcends natural human relationships. Jesus' family is defined by obedience and spiritual fellowship, not simply by blood ties.

Final Reflection on Matthew 12

Matthew chapter 12 offers us several valuable lessons on how to live in true and obedient ways before God, and how the Kingdom of God is radically different from human expectations. Jesus teaches us through His miracles, teachings, and confrontations with the Pharisees that true righteousness and the heart of God are not based on rigid religious rules or human traditions, but on a genuine commitment to His will.

One of the central points of the chapter is Jesus' critique of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees. He makes it clear that God's law must be interpreted with mercy, compassion, and the intention to restore and heal people, not to oppress or condemn. This is exemplified most strikingly when He heals on the Sabbath and challenges the tradition that certain acts of kindness are “wrong” on that day. Jesus shows us that mercy triumphs over sacrifice, and that He came to save, not to condemn.

Another important point is the teaching about the true family of Jesus. He invites us to rethink our concepts of family, placing obedience to God's will above blood ties. The true family of Christ is formed by those who hear the Word of God and practice it. Communion with God and with brothers and sisters in

faith is what makes us truly part of the Kingdom of God.

Furthermore, the chapter emphasizes the seriousness of rejecting the Holy Spirit. Jesus speaks of the sin against the Holy Spirit, an unforgivable sin, warning us of the gravity of rejecting God's power and His transforming work in our lives.

Finally, Matthew 12 challenges us to evaluate our spiritual attitudes, our relationship with Scripture, and with Jesus Himself. The Kingdom of God is open to those who have a heart willing to obey, learn, and grow in holiness. Instead of relying on appearances or traditions, we should seek a life of authentic faith, where love, mercy, and obedience to God are the principles that guide our actions.

May we reflect on these teachings, allowing them to shape our daily lives, our understanding of God's Word, and our commitment to the Kingdom of God, living as true members of the family of Christ.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 13 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

In Matthew 13, Jesus uses simple, accessible, yet profound language to teach about how people respond to the message of God's Kingdom. He describes four types of soil (human hearts) that reflect how God's Word can be received. The parable of the sower challenges us to examine how we are receiving God's Word in our lives. Are we like rocky soil, which is quick to take root but doesn't have deep roots? Or are we like good soil, which welcomes the message and produces fruit?

Furthermore, Jesus' invitation to "he who has ears, let him hear" calls us to reflect on the attitude with which we listen to Christ's words. It is not just about listening, but about listening with a heart willing to learn and apply the message of the Gospel.

This parable also reminds us of the need to cultivate "good soil" in our hearts – an open and receptive heart, ready to be transformed by the Word of God.

Verse 1: "That day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea."

- In the context of this verse, Jesus was in a house, probably in the region of Galilee, and decided to go out to an open-air place, by the sea, to teach people. This change of scenery shows Jesus' willingness to approach people and teach in an accessible way. He often uses common spaces to teach His lessons.
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Verse 2: "Large crowds gathered around him, so that he got into a boat and sat there. The whole crowd was standing on the shore."

- Jesus' popularity grew, and people came from all over to hear His teachings. As a large crowd gathered, He climbed into a boat so that everyone could see and hear Him clearly, without the crush of the crowd interfering with His preaching. The boat served as an improvised "stage" for Him, taking advantage of the sea to amplify His voice.
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Verse 3: "And he spoke many things to them in parables, saying, 'A sower went out to sow.'"

- Jesus begins his teaching by using a "parable," which is a simple, symbolic story that conveys a profound spiritual truth. He tells of a sower who goes out to sow his seed, an image very familiar to those who lived in an agricultural society. The parable of the sower is a way of illustrating how different types of people respond to the message of the Kingdom of God.
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Verse 4: "As he was sowing, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them."

- The seeds that fall along the path represent those who hear the word of God but do not understand it or accept it deeply. When there is no receptive heart, the message is easily "stolen," just as birds come and eat the seeds that fall along the path.
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Verse 5: "Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up because they had no depth of soil."

- Here, the seeds represent people who receive the Word of God with joy, but, because they do not have deep roots, they soon give up when faced with difficulties or tribulations. They are compared to rocky soil, where the roots cannot penetrate deeply, and the plant soon withers when the sun shines brightly.
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Verse 6: "But when the sun rose, the plants withered, and because they had no root, they withered away."

- This verse explains how hardship and persecution can cause those who were initially excited by Jesus' message to abandon their faith. A lack of a solid foundation in God's word and an understanding of His commitment to the Christian life results in people falling away.
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Verse 7: "Other seeds fell among thorns, which grew up and choked them."

- The seeds that fall among the thorns represent those whose hearts are choked by the concerns about worldly things, such as wealth, status, and earthly pleasures. While they may start out well, these distractions become more important than God's Word and eventually stifle spiritual growth.
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Verse 8: "But other fell on good ground and yielded fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, and some thirtyfold."

- Here, the seeds that fall on good soil represent people who hear the Word, understand it, and apply it to their lives, producing spiritual fruit. These fruits vary in quantity, but the most important thing is that they grow and bear fruit, representing the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives.
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Verse 9: "He who has ears, let him hear."

- This is an invitation from Jesus for all who hear His words to be attentive and willing to listen with their hearts, not just with their physical ears. He calls everyone to deeply understand what He is teaching, not just to listen.

superficially.

Verse 10: "Then the disciples came to him and asked, 'Why do you speak to them in parables?'"

- The disciples, curious, ask why Jesus chose to speak in parables rather than being direct in His teaching. This question shows that they did not fully understand the purpose of parables and the way Jesus used these stories to reveal spiritual truths.
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Verse 11: "He replied, 'Because it has been given to you to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.'"

- Jesus explains to the disciples that, unlike the crowd, they have the privilege of understanding the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." The "mysteries" are the deep truths about the Kingdom of God that not everyone has the ability to understand. To the disciples, these mysteries are revealed, but to the

For others, understanding is more difficult. This is a consequence of how each person responds to God's message, whether with receptivity or rejection.

Verse 12: "For whoever has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, from him will be taken away even what he has."

- This verse is an explanation of how the Kingdom of God works. When someone receives the Word of God and puts it into practice, he grows spiritually, receives more understanding and experience of God. However, those who do not value the message, who do not accept it, end up losing even the little understanding they had. This is a way of highlighting the importance of living and applying the teachings of Jesus.
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Verse 13: "Therefore I speak to them in parables: because seeing they do not see; and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand."

- Jesus uses parables as a way to convey His message to those who are willing to understand, but at the same time, He reveals that many are not willing or able to understand, even though they hear and see. The parables serve to separate those who are truly seeking to understand the Kingdom of God from those who are merely listening without committing.
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Verse 14: "In them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled: 'You will hear, but will not understand; you will look, but will not see.'"

- Jesus quotes Isaiah 6:9-10, a prophecy that describes how people, despite being physically present and hearing the message, would be unable to

understand it spiritually. This hardening of the heart is a consequence of the spiritual distance of many.

Verse 15: "For this people's heart has grown dull; they have barely heard with their ears, but they have closed their eyes; lest, though they should not see with their eyes, nor hear with their ears, nor understand with their heart, nor be converted, I should heal them."

- Jesus reveals the real problem: the hardening of people's hearts. They choose not to hear, see, or understand, blocking God's action in their lives. This verse speaks of the personal choice to resist God's message. This is a warning about the dangers of spiritual insensitivity.
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Verse 16: "But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear."

- Jesus makes a positive statement to the disciples, saying that they are "blessed" because they have the ability to see and hear God's message in a spiritual way. They are privileged because they have an open heart to understand and apply God's Word, something that not everyone has.
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Verse 17: "For truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous men have longed to see what you see, and have not seen it; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard it."

- Jesus states that the disciples are living in a special time where they have the privilege of knowing God's revelation through Him. Many prophets and righteous people of the Old Testament, who lived before Jesus, longed to see the coming of the Messiah and hear the message

of the Kingdom, but could not. The disciples are blessed to live in this time of revelation.

Verse 18: "Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower."

- Jesus now returns to speak directly about the parable of the sower, explaining to the disciples the deeper meaning of this parable. He prepares the disciples to understand what the story represents. spiritually.
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Verse 19: "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart—the same is true of what was sown along the path."

- Here Jesus explains the first part of the parable. The seeds that fall along the path represent people who hear the Word of God but do not understand it. The "evil one" (Satan) comes and takes the Word away because the person's heart is not open to receive it. Lack of understanding prevents the Word from having an effect, and so it is easily stolen.
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Verse 20: "And he that received seed on rocky places is he that heareth the word, and receiveth it with joy;"

- Here, Jesus speaks about the second situation: when someone hears the Word with enthusiasm, but does not have a solid foundation. The person receives the message with joy, but when difficulties or temptations arise, the lack of deep roots causes him to give up easily.
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Verse 21: "But though he has little root, he lasts only a while; and when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away."

- This verse explains that when difficulties or persecutions arise, a person who does not have deep spiritual roots abandons his faith. He does not have a solid commitment to God's Word and therefore succumbs to external pressures.
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Verse 22: "And he that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful."

- Jesus explains the third type of soil: the one that receives the Word, but allows the worries of life and the pursuit of money and success to distract it. These distractions "choke" the Word, preventing it from bearing fruit. Here we see how the desires and pursuits of the world can kill spiritual growth.
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Verse 23: "But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; and it beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

- Here, Jesus explains the fourth and final reaction to the sown word. The "good soil" represents those who hear the Word of God, understand it, and apply it to their lives. They not only hear it, but they understand it deeply and let it bear fruit. Jesus also mentions that the fruits are different, some producing more, others less, but all are genuine. The central point is that when the Word finds a prepared heart, it generates transformation and fruit.
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Verse 24: "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field."

- Jesus begins another parable, comparing the Kingdom of Heaven to a man who sowed good seed in his field. The parable of the "wheat and the tares" that follows teaches about the coexistence of good and evil in the world and the patience that must exist until the time of harvest.
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Verse 25: "But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way."

- The "enemy" here is Satan, who sows "tares" (a plant similar to wheat, but useless and harmful) in the field. This represents the presence of evil in the world. While people are distracted or inattentive, Satan works secretly to corrupt what is good, placing evil in the midst of people's lives, trying to destroy the good that has been sown.
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Verse 26: "And when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also."

- As the crop grows, the "tares" appear alongside the wheat, that is, evil ends up appearing alongside good. This part of the parable reflects how, throughout history and even in our lives, good and evil coexist. It can be difficult to identify evil.

immediately, but it appears at the moment when the fruits begin to manifest.

Verse 27: "And the servants of the lord of the field came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? where then come from that tares?"

- The servants realize that something strange is happening. They wonder where the "weeds" came from, since the master had sown good seed. This represents the surprise and bewilderment of righteous people in the presence of evil. They do not understand how evil can arise in a world created by God.
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Verse 28: "He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' And the servants said to him, 'Do you want us to go and pull it out?'"

- The master of the field recognizes that the "weeds" were sown by the enemy, that is, Satan. The servants' response is logical: they want to pull out the weeds, but the master says that this is not the best thing to do now. Patience and wisdom are necessary to deal with the presence of evil.
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Verse 29: "But he said, No; lest while they gather up the tares, they root up the wheat with it."

- The Lord's answer is that evil must be left until the time of harvest. If the weeds were pulled out too early, there could be a risk of damaging the wheat, which represents good. This teaches us about God's patience and how sometimes evil must coexist with good until the final judgment.
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Verse 30: "Let both grow together until the harvest. And in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

- In the end, there will be a separation: the weeds (the evil) will be removed and thrown into the fire, while the wheat (the good) will be kept in the barn, symbolizing salvation. Jesus is talking about the final judgment, where the

people will be separated according to their faith and their actions.

Verse 31: "Another parable he told them: The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field."

- The parable of the mustard seed speaks about the small beginning of the Kingdom of God. The mustard seed is one of the smallest seeds, but when it grows, it becomes a large tree. This represents how the Kingdom of God began small, with the coming of Jesus and the beginning of the gospel, but will grow in a grand and powerful.
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Verse 32: "Which indeed is the smallest of all seeds, but when it is grown, it is the greatest of herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and dwell in its branches."

- This explanation shows that, despite starting small, the Kingdom of God will grow enormously, bringing great impact. The tree, which grows from such a small seed, symbolizes the growth of the Kingdom of God and its influence throughout the world. The "birds of the air" that come to live in the branches indicate the people who will be attracted to this Kingdom and find refuge in it.
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Verse 33: "Another parable he told them: The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, until the whole batch of dough was leavened."

- Here, Jesus compares the Kingdom of God to yeast. Yeast is a small thing that has a big effect.

over the masses. In the same way, the Kingdom of God begins quietly, but its influence spreads everywhere, transforming everything around it. This growth, often imperceptible and silent, is powerful and inevitable.

Verse 34: "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitudes in parables: and without a parable spake he nothing unto them:"

- Here the evangelist explains that Jesus used parables as his primary teaching method. He spoke to the crowd in a way that was accessible and understandable, but at the same time, these stories contained deep meanings, which could only be fully understood by those who were truly seeking to understand.
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Verse 35: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables, and utter things which have been kept secret since the foundation of the world."

- Matthew refers to the fulfillment of an Old Testament prophecy, specifically Psalm 78:2, which speaks of how the Messiah would use parables to reveal hidden truths. Jesus, as the fulfillment of God's promises, used this method to communicate the Kingdom of God in a way that was both mysterious and revealing, depending on the disposition of each listener's heart.
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Verse 36: "Then he left the crowd and went into the house. And his disciples came to him and said to him, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

- After speaking to the crowd in parables, Jesus leaves with his disciples and, at this moment, they

seek a deeper explanation of the meaning of the parable of the tares. This shows that the disciples were willing to learn more and had a sincere desire to understand Jesus' teaching.

Verse 37: "And he answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man:"

- Jesus begins His explanation by saying that He Himself is the "sower," the one who sows the "good seed" in the field. The good seed is the Word of God, and Jesus, as the Son of Man, is the one who came to bring this Word to humanity, so that the Kingdom of God might be established.
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Verse 38: "The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; and the tares are the children of the wicked one."

- Jesus explains that the "field" of the parable is the world in which we live. The "good seed" represents the people who belong to the Kingdom of God, that is, those who hear and obey the Word of God. The "tares" represent those who follow the evil one, that is, people who, even though they live in the world, reject the Kingdom of God and live in opposition to Him.
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Verse 39: "The enemy who sowed the tares is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels."

- The "enemy" who sows the tares is the devil, who tries to corrupt God's good work in the world by sowing evil where there is good. The "harvest" is the end of the world, the moment of final judgment, when God will separate good from evil. The "reapers" are the angels, who will be sent to carry out this separation during the final judgment.

Verse 40: "As the tares are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age."

- Just as the weeds are gathered up and burned, evil will be destroyed at the end of time. The separation between good and evil will be final, and those who reject the Kingdom of God will be condemned, just as the weeds are thrown into the fire.

Verse 41: "The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers."

- Jesus describes the action of the angels during the final judgment. They will be sent to "harvest" (or separate) all those who, despite being in the world, have lived in sin, practiced iniquity and caused scandals (scandals here refer to those who lead others away from the path of God). These will be removed from the Kingdom of God.

Verse 42: "And they shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

- The fate of the wicked, those who oppose the Kingdom of God, will be eternal punishment, represented by the "furnace of fire," an image of suffering and separation from God. The "weeping and gnashing of teeth" are symbols of anguish, regret, and eternal suffering for those who have not followed God.

Verse 43: "Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

- In contrast to the fate of the wicked, the righteous (those who belong to the Kingdom of God) will shine like the sun, a symbol of honor, glory, and eternal joy. This verse speaks of the reward of the faithful, who will experience the fullness of the Kingdom of God. Jesus ends with an invitation to listen and understand His words, urging everyone to pay attention and repent, listening with a heart willing to follow the truth.

Verse 44: "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it and, being overjoyed, went and sold all that he had and bought that field."

- Jesus now uses the parable of the hidden treasure to illustrate the incomparable value of the Kingdom of Heaven. The "treasure" is the Kingdom of God, which, when someone actually finds it, they are so amazed that they are willing to give up everything they have to acquire it. This shows the greatness and value of the Kingdom of God, which should be more precious to us than anything in this world.

Verse 45: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking goodly pearls."

- Jesus compares the Kingdom of Heaven to a merchant searching for precious pearls. The search for pearls symbolizes the sincere and diligent desire to find something of eternal value, which represents the search for the Kingdom of God. Just as a merchant is always searching for the best pearls, human beings, upon discovering the truth of the Kingdom, must strive to acquire this priceless treasure.
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Verse 46: "And when he had found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it."

- Here, the pearl of great price represents the Kingdom of Heaven. When one finds the true Kingdom of God, it is like finding something incomparably precious. The merchant, by selling everything he has to buy the pearl, symbolizes total commitment, sacrifice, and willingness to renounce what is earthly in order to cling to what is eternal. This teaches us that, in knowing the Kingdom of God, we must be willing to give up everything that is not compatible with life in the Kingdom.
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Verse 47: "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind."

- Jesus makes another comparison with the Kingdom of Heaven, this time with a fishing net. When the net is cast into the sea, it catches many different types of fish, symbolizing the way in which the Kingdom of God is extended to all people, without exception. The message of the gospel is universal and reaches all people, regardless of their origin or condition. The Kingdom of God is for all who respond to the call.
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Verse 48: "And when it was full, they drew it to shore: and they sat down, and gathered the good into baskets, but cast the bad away."

- After casting the net and catching fish of various kinds, the net is brought to shore, where the good fish are selected and the bad are discarded. This symbolizes the final judgment, when people will be separated into the righteous and the unrighteous. The righteous (the good fish) will be welcomed into the Kingdom of God, while the

unjust (the bad fish) will be discarded,
representing condemnation.

Verse 49: "So it will be at the end of the age: the angels will come out and separate the wicked from among the righteous."

- This verse refers to the end of time, when the final judgment will be carried out. The angels will play the role of separators between the righteous and the wicked, and this separation will be final. The destiny of the righteous is eternal life with God, while the wicked will be thrown into the fire, in eternal punishment.
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Verse 50: "And they shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

- The punishment for the wicked is described as a "furnace of fire," which symbolizes eternal suffering. The expression "weeping and gnashing of teeth" conveys the idea of pain, regret, and suffering, showing how terrible separation from God will be for those who reject His Kingdom.
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Verse 51: "Have you understood all this? And they said unto him, Yea, Lord."

- Jesus asks His disciples if they understand the parables He told them, and they answer in the affirmative. This question is important because Jesus wants His followers to understand the profound truths of the Kingdom of God. He hopes that by listening to His words, people will be transformed in their way of thinking and acting, actively seeking the Kingdom.
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Verse 52: "And he said unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old."

- Here, Jesus compares those who are well-instructed in the Kingdom of God to a "man who is the head of a household" who has access to a treasure trove of good things, both new and old. This means that as disciples of Jesus, we should be able to understand and apply both the ancient truths of the Old Testament and the new revelations brought by Christ. Knowledge of Jesus enables us to use and share wisdom from various ages to teach, guide, and edify others.
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Verse 53: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence."

- After teaching the parables, Jesus moves on, concluding His lesson. From this point, He begins to move away from the crowd, since the teaching of the parables is a time of preparation for what would come next in His ministry.
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Verse 54: "And when he came into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these works of power?"

- Jesus returns to His hometown of Nazareth and begins teaching in the synagogue. The people are amazed at His wisdom and miracles, but they wonder where He got them from. They recognize Jesus' power, but they cannot understand it. completely His origin and authority.
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Verse 55: "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?"

- The people in Nazareth began to question Jesus' identity. They knew His family and saw Him as the "carpenter's son," someone who had grown up as an ordinary person among them. For many, this was a difficulty, as they could not accept that someone from such a simple background could have so much wisdom and power.
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Verse 56: "And his sisters are not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?"

- The doubt remains. People question even more: How could Jesus, who grew up among them, have such extraordinary abilities? They could not understand how the "carpenter's son" could be the promised Messiah, and this creates a block in their hearts.
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Verse 57: "And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house."

- Jesus realizes that the people of Nazareth were offended and disbelieving Him. He uses a popular proverb to explain that prophets are often despised in their own land and among their own family. This reflects how it is often more difficult to accept major changes or revelations from someone who is familiar or close.
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Verse 58: "And he did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief."

- Jesus, then, did not perform many miracles in Nazareth because of the people's unbelief. Their lack of faith prevented them from experiencing the blessings and miracles He could have performed among them. This shows the power of faith and the importance of being open to God's work in our lives.
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Final reflection on Matthew 13:

- Matthew chapter 13 is one of the richest in teachings from the Lord, filled with parables that reveal profound truths about the Kingdom of Heaven. Throughout this chapter, Jesus uses simple but profound parables to convey valuable spiritual teachings.
- The first lesson we can take from this chapter is about **human response to the gospel**. In the parable of the sower (verses 1-23), Jesus teaches us that the Word of God will be received in different ways by human hearts. Some will reject it outright, others will accept it with joy but will not have deep roots. Some will be distracted by the worries of life, while others will hear it and bear abundant fruit. This challenges us to reflect on the type of soil in our hearts. Are we allowing the Word of God to bear fruit in our lives, or are we allowing difficulties, superficiality, or distractions to prevent us from growing spiritually?
- The parables of **mustard** and of the **yeast** (verses 31-33) tells us about the transformative power of the Kingdom of God. Just as a tiny mustard seed can grow into a large tree, the Kingdom of God starts small but spreads and has an immense impact. This reminds us that although we may be small or insignificant in the eyes of the world,

God's action in our lives can have an eternal impact if we are faithful.

- However, the parables of the **hidden treasure** and of the **pearl of great price** (verses 44-46) invite us to reflect on the **priority of the Kingdom of God** in our lives. Just as someone who finds a treasure or a precious pearl sells everything to acquire it, we must be willing to let go of everything that is secondary and value the Kingdom of God above all else. This Kingdom is not something that can be traded with the world; it is a priceless treasure that must be our highest priority.
- The chapter ends with a **reflection on the final judgment** (verses 47-50), when there will be a separation between the righteous and the wicked, symbolized by the good and bad fish in the net. This reminds us of the seriousness of our response to the gospel. We cannot delay or ignore our decision to follow Christ, for time is running out and there will be a final judgment.
- **In summary, Matthew 13 calls us to reflect deeply on how we receive God's Word, how we live in response to His Kingdom, and how we value eternal things. The Kingdom of God, though it begins small, is powerful and transformative. We must give Him central place in our lives, seeking Him as the most precious treasure and willing to live according to His principles. In doing so, we will experience the eternal impact of His grace in our lives and in the lives of those around us.**

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 14 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

In Matthew 14 we see the power of Jesus to meet our needs, even when circumstances seem impossible. He demonstrates that when we place the little we have in His hands, He can do incredible things, multiplying our resources and blessing us.

abundantly. Furthermore, Jesus' compassion for people is an example for us. He cared about the physical needs of the multitude, and He teaches us to look out for the needs of others, even when we are struggling. May we have the same faith in Christ, trusting that He can turn our lack into abundance if we place our lives in His hands.

Verse 1: "At that time Herod the tetrarch heard about Jesus"

Here we see that Herod Antipas, the tetrarch of Galilee, heard about Jesus and began to become concerned about what was happening. A "tetrarch" is a ruler who controls a quarter of a larger region. Herod Antipas, Herod's son, was ruling Galilee and Perea, and rumors of Jesus' miracles reached his ears, which created both interest and concern in him.

Verse 2: "And he said to his servants, 'This is John the Baptist; he has been raised from the dead, and that is why these powers are at work in him.'"

Herod believed that Jesus was John the Baptist resurrected. This reveals a certain fear and confusion. Herod knew that he had ordered John's death (as we will see below), and this idea that John had come back from the dead to perform miracles may have been an attempt to justify what was happening around him.

Verse 3: "For Herod had arrested John and bound him with chains and thrown him into prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife."

This verse tells us why John the Baptist was imprisoned. Herod had married Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. This was a great scandal, since the marriage was considered illicit by Jewish law. John the Baptist, being a prophet who spoke the truth, publicly rebuked Herod for this immoral union, which led Herod to arrest John.

Verse 4: "For John had said to Herod, 'It is not lawful for you to have her as your wife.'"

John was not afraid to speak the truth, even if it meant confronting Herod, a powerful man. He condemned Herod's behavior, saying that it was a sin for him to have his brother's wife. John's courage in denouncing sin, without fear of the consequences, is an example of faithfulness to God's word.

Verse 5: "And Herod wanted to kill him, but he feared the people, because they considered him a prophet."

Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people, who saw him as a prophet. John the Baptist was highly respected by the people, who believed that he spoke for God. Herod, therefore, was cautious, because he knew that if he killed John, it would cause a popular revolt.

Verse 6: "But when Herod's birthday was celebrated, the daughter of Herodias danced before them and pleased Herod."

Here we see a festive event where Herodias' daughter (Salome) danced for Herod's guests. This took place during Herod's birthday party, at a great feast. Her dancing pleased Herod so much that he was willing to do anything she asked.

Verse 7: "So he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked."

Herod, influenced by the dance and the momentary pleasure, made an unrestricted promise, swearing to give Herodias' daughter anything she asked for, even if it was something very difficult or unthinkable. This shows how impulsive and unwise Herod was in his decisions.

Verse 8: "She, prompted by her mother, said, 'Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist.'"

Salome's mother, Herodias, knew that this was her opportunity to take revenge on John the Baptist, and she urged her daughter to ask for John's head on a platter. This reveals the level of resentment and anger that Herodias felt toward John, who had publicly denounced her. She wanted John silenced because he had exposed her sin.

Verse 9: "And the king, being sad, commanded that it be given to him: but for the oath's sake, and for the sake of them that sat at meat with him, he commanded it to be given to him."

Although Herod was sad and reluctant to kill John, he felt bound by his word, since he had made a public oath in front of his guests. He did not want to lose face, and so he ordered that the request be carried out, even if it was something terrible and contrary to his will.

Verse 10: "And he had John beheaded in the prison."

Herod's order was carried out, and John the Baptist was beheaded in prison. His death was tragic and unjust, but it was part of God's plan. John was a faithful messenger who was undeterred from preaching the truth, even if it meant his death. His death foreshadowed the kind of persecution that Christians and even Jesus would later face for their faithfulness to the truth and God's will.

Verse 11:

"And his head was brought on a platter and given to the damsel, and she brought it to her mother."

At Herod's command, the head of John the Baptist was brought to Princess Salome on a platter. She, in turn, delivered the head at the request of her mother, Herodias. This is a reflection of Herodias' revenge against John, who had publicly denounced her for her illicit marriage to Herod.

Verse 12:

"And John's disciples went and took up the body, and buried it, and went and preached Jesus."

When John's disciples heard of their master's death, they buried him with respect and then went to tell Jesus what had happened. This gesture demonstrates the great love and respect that the disciples had for John the Baptist, as well as the need to share this sad news with Jesus, who had a special relationship with John.

Verse 13:

"But when Jesus heard it, he withdrew from there in a boat to a solitary place by himself. And when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the cities."

When Jesus learned of the death of John the Baptist, He withdrew to a deserted place to reflect and probably to seek comfort from the Father. However, the crowds, upon learning of His location, followed Him on foot, regardless of the distance, because they were thirsty for His message and miracles.

Verse 14:

"And Jesus went out, and saw a great multitude; and he had compassion on them, and healed their sick."

When Jesus saw the great multitude, He was moved with compassion. Even in a moment of personal sorrow, He did not turn inward but cared for the needs of others, healing the sick. This teaches us that even in the midst of our own difficulties, we should keep our hearts focused on others and their needs.

Verse 15:

"When evening came, his disciples came to him and said, 'This is a deserted place, and the hour is already late. Send the crowd away so they can go to the villages and buy food.'"

The disciples, concerned about the crowd's hunger and the fact that it was late, suggested that Jesus send the people away so that He could look for food in the villages. They did not think that Jesus could do anything about it.

Verse 16:

"But Jesus said to them, 'They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat.'"

Jesus, with authority and faith, answered the disciples, saying that it was not necessary to send the crowd away, but that they themselves should give food to everyone. Jesus

I knew He would perform a miracle and didn't need the people to leave.

Verse 17:

"And they said unto him, We have here but five loaves and two fish."

The disciples responded by showing their limitations. They only had five loaves of bread and two fish, which was clearly insufficient to feed so many people. The lack of human resources was evident, but Jesus was about to demonstrate that nothing is impossible for God.

Verse 18:

"And he said, 'Bring them hither to me.'"

Jesus asked the disciples to bring the few loaves and fish they had. By doing so, He was preparing the ground for a great miracle, showing that even when we have little, in God's hands, little can become enough to meet great needs.

Verse 19:

"And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves and the two fish, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave to the disciples, and the disciples to the multitude."

Jesus organized the crowd and, with an act of faith and prayer, blessed the loaves and fish. He prayed to the Father, acknowledging God's sovereignty over provision, and

then he divided the food for the disciples to serve to the crowd. This moment shows how we should depend on God in all aspects of our lives, including our most basic needs.

Verse 20:

"And they all ate and were satisfied; and they picked up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces that were left over."

The miracle happened: everyone ate and was satisfied, and there were twelve baskets full of broken pieces left over. This detail is significant, for the number twelve symbolizes God's fullness and providence. Jesus not only met the immediate need, but He was abundant in His provision.

Verse 21:

"And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children."

The number of people fed was immense—about 5,000 men, not counting women and children. This demonstrates the magnitude of Jesus' miracle. He not only satisfied the hunger of many, but He also used the few resources available to perform a great miracle.

Verse 22:

"And straightway Jesus constrained his disciples to get into the ship, and to go before him unto the other side, unto Bethsaida, while he sent the multitudes away."

After the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves, Jesus sent the

He sent his disciples across the sea and sent them to Bethsaida. He, in turn, remained behind to dismiss the crowd. This shows the leadership of Jesus, who knew how to guide His disciples and was also concerned about the well-being of the people who followed Him.

Verse 23:

"And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into the mountain by himself to pray: and when even was come, he was there alone."

After feeding the 5,000 people, Jesus dismissed the crowd and withdrew to a secluded place on a mountaintop to pray. Jesus prioritized time for communion with the Father. Even with the great demands of His ministry, He knew the importance of being alone with God in prayer, seeking strength and spiritual renewal. This example teaches us to seek moments of solitude to connect with God and renew our strength.

Verse 24:

"But the boat, now far offshore, was tossed by the waves, for the wind was against it."

While Jesus was praying, the disciples were in the boat, crossing the sea. However, they were facing difficulties, as the wind was against them, making the crossing difficult. This detail symbolizes the difficulties we face in life. Sometimes, we are in situations where everything seems to be against us, but even in these moments, God is attentive to our struggle.

Verse 25:

"But in the fourth watch of the night he came unto them, walking on the sea."

In the "fourth watch," which corresponds to the end of the night (between 3:00 and 6:00 in the morning), Jesus came to His disciples, walking on the water. This is a great miracle, because not only did He control the forces of nature, but He demonstrated His absolute power over them. Jesus is able to act in our lives in supernatural ways, even when we are in our darkest and most desperate moments.

Verse 26:

"When the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, 'It is a ghost!' And they cried out in fear."

When the disciples saw Jesus walking on the water, they were afraid because they did not believe that anyone could do such a thing. They thought it was a spirit. Fear was a natural reaction to something they could not understand. This shows that when something out of the ordinary happens in our lives, our first reaction may be fear or doubt, but we need to learn to recognize the presence of Jesus, even in the most unusual situations.

Verse 27:

"But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, 'Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.'"

Jesus, knowing His disciples' fear, spoke words of comfort to them. He reassured them, telling them that it was He and that they need not fear. Jesus always presents Himself to us in times of anguish and fear, offering His peace and inviting us to trust in Him.

Verse 28:

"And Peter answered and said, 'Lord, if it is you, bid me come to you on the water.'"

Peter, moved by faith, asked Jesus to allow him to walk on the water to Him. He wanted to prove that he believed in Jesus' word and wanted to experience the miracle.

personally. This request shows Peter's willingness to do something extraordinary, as long as it was Jesus' will. It also teaches us that in moments of faith, we should ask Jesus for what seems impossible to us, trusting in His power.

Verse 29:

"And he said, 'Come!' And Peter got down out of the boat and walked on the water to come to Jesus."

Jesus responded affirmatively to Peter's request, saying, "Come."

Peter then got out of the boat and walked on the water, beginning to approach Jesus. This act of faith was a unique experience for Peter, but it also serves as an example for us that when we respond to Jesus' call, we can do extraordinary things. Faith in Jesus gives us the courage to take bold steps.

Verse 30:

"But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and, beginning to sink, cried out, saying, 'Lord, save me!'" When Peter saw the force of the wind and the waves, he became afraid and began to sink. He took his eyes off Jesus and focused on the circumstances around him, which caused him to be afraid. This illustrates how difficulties and challenges can cause us to doubt and lose focus on Jesus. When we take our eyes off Him, we can drown in our worries. However, Peter's response to asking for help shows that even in our failures, we should cry out to Jesus for help.

Verse 31:

"And immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him, and said to him, 'You of little faith, why did you doubt?'"

Jesus immediately reached out and saved Peter, questioning his lack of faith. Jesus does not rebuke Peter, but exhorts him to have more confidence. Even when our faith is small and wavering, Jesus is always ready to help us and lift us up. This passage teaches us to trust Christ completely, without hesitation.

Verse 32:

"And when they went up into the ship, the wind ceased." When Jesus and Peter got into the boat, the wind stopped. This shows that when Jesus is present in our lives, storms and hardships come to an end. Jesus has the power to calm the winds and bring peace to our hearts. When we allow Him to guide us, we find rest.

Verse 33:

"And those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, 'Truly you are the Son of God.'"

The disciples, seeing the miracle, recognized Jesus' divinity and worshiped Him. They finally understood more deeply who He was. Fear and doubt were transformed into adoration and praise. This is the effect that the revelation of Jesus' power has on our lives: It leads us to genuine worship, acknowledging His sovereignty.

Verse 34:

"And when they had crossed over, they came to the land of Gennesaret." After the miracle of Jesus calming the wind and getting into the boat with Peter, the group continued on their journey and arrived in the region of Gennesaret, a place on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Gennesaret was an area known for its fertility and beauty, but more importantly, it was a place where Jesus would perform many miracles. He was constantly on the move, fulfilling His mission of preaching the gospel and healing people.

Verse 35:

"And when the men of that place recognized him, they spread it throughout all that land, and brought to him all who were sick."

As soon as Jesus arrived in Gennesaret, the people recognized Him as a man of great power and compassion. They began to spread the news of His arrival, bringing all the sick and infirm to be healed. Jesus was seen as someone who could transform lives, not only through teaching, but also through healing. This verse highlights the people's desire to be close to Jesus to receive His blessings, something we can also learn from: the need to draw close to Christ to be restored in every area of our lives.

Verse 36:

"And they begged him that he would just put on the edge of his cloak; and as many as touched it were made whole."

The people had so much faith in Jesus that they believed that if they just touched the hem of His garment, they would be healed. This gesture reflects the deep trust that the people had in the power of Jesus. He did not need to make a grand gesture or elaborate prayers; His presence and power were enough to heal. This simple but profound faith teaches us that often, God does not require great sacrifices from us, but a heart that trusts in His power and authority. Even the simplest gestures, when done in faith, can result in great miracles.

Final Reflection on Matthew Chapter 14

Chapter 14 of Matthew is filled with intense moments and great lessons about faith, obedience, and the revelation of Jesus' power. We can observe two main moments that mark this chapter: the death of John the Baptist and the miracles performed by Jesus.

First, the death of John the Baptist (vv. 1-12) reminds us of John's faithfulness to the truth and the Kingdom of God, even in the face of danger and death. John was a courageous prophet who proclaimed the message of repentance, and his tragic death teaches us about the cost of faithfulness to God. John's courage to confront Herod's sin, even knowing the consequences, challenges us to live with the same boldness and faithfulness, no matter the personal costs.

Then the miraculous feeding (vv. 13-21), where Jesus feeds five thousand men with just five loaves of bread and two fish, reveals the generosity and power of Christ. He not only cares about people's spiritual needs, but also about their physical needs. This miracle is a clear sign that in Christ we have everything we need, whether for our soul or our body. Jesus teaches us that He is our provider and that we should not worry excessively about our needs, because He cares for us.

Walking on Water (vv. 22-33) This is one of the most powerful moments in the chapter. When Peter tried to walk on water toward Jesus, he took a step of faith, but when he felt the strong wind, he began to sink. This illustrates our own journey of faith: we can take bold steps toward the Lord, but when we focus on the difficulties around us, our faith can waver. Jesus, however, immediately reaches out His hand to save us. He teaches us that even when we doubt, He is always ready to rescue us.

Finally, the healings at Gennesaret (vv. 34-36) show the continuity of Jesus' ministry of restoring lives. He is the Savior not only of our souls, but also of our bodies. Wherever He goes, there is healing and transformation, and the crowds were always approaching Him, seeking complete restoration.

Conclusion: Matthew chapter 14 challenges us to live with unshakable faith, to trust in the power of Jesus as our provider and savior, and to not be overcome by fear, even when difficulties seem insurmountable. When we focus on Jesus, He empowers us to accomplish the impossible and experience His provision and care in surprising ways. Like Peter, we must learn to walk on the waters of life with faith, knowing that when we falter, He will always be there to sustain us. May we then continue to trust in Jesus, our Lord and Savior, who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 15 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

In Matthew 15, Jesus teaches us profound lessons about true purity and worship. He denounces the religiosity that is more concerned with external rules than with the heart. True faith is that which honors God in spirit and truth, and not in appearance. What comes from our hearts—our words, attitudes, and actions—is what truly defines us before God. Jesus challenges us to reflect on what we truly value in our spiritual life: human traditions or true obedience to the word of God.

Verse 1: "Then the Pharisees and teachers of the law who had come from Jerusalem came to Jesus and asked, "Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat."

In this verse, the Pharisees and teachers of the law, religious authorities, question Jesus about the practice of his disciples, who do not follow a specific religious tradition—washing their hands before meals. This tradition was not a requirement of the law of Moses, but rather a practice that the religious leaders had established to demonstrate ritual purity. Jesus, however, is not fooled by these human rules and responds firmly and profoundly.

Verse 2: "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition?"

Jesus challenges the Pharisees, saying that while they are so concerned with a human tradition, they themselves are violating God's commandments. Jesus points out that the rules they created often went against God's principles. Here He begins to point to the heart of the

Question: When our human traditions and rules conflict with God's commandments, they become obstacles to true faith.

Verse 3: "For God said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Whoever curses his father or mother is to be put to death.'

Jesus quotes the fifth commandment, "Honor your father and your mother" (Exodus 20:12), which is a direct command from God. He is showing that the Pharisees were neglecting to obey God's more important commandments while they were concerned with man-made rules. By citing the gravity of the sin of dishonoring one's parents, Jesus emphasizes the seriousness of disobeying God's commandments.

Verse 4: "But you say that whoever says to his father or mother, 'Whatever you may receive from me has already been given to God,' does not need to honor his father or mother. So you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition."

Here, Jesus reveals the practice of the Pharisees who, in the name of tradition, allowed a person to dedicate material resources to the temple and, by doing so, was exempt from the responsibility of caring for their elderly parents. Jesus accuses them of distorting the word of God, manipulating traditions so as not to obey the commandment that requires caring for one's parents. This criticism from Jesus is strong, because He is warning about how traditions can be used to deceive and avoid true responsibility before God.

Verse 5: "Thus you by your tradition nullify the word of God."

Jesus is blunt: when tradition goes against God's word, it loses its validity and authority. Jesus' teaching here is very clear—we cannot allow our human traditions or rules to be more important than God's principles and commandments. Traditionalisms can lead us away from God's purpose and even cause us to live hypocritically.

Verse 6: "You hypocrites! Isaiah rightly prophesied about you: 'These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.'"

Jesus calls the Pharisees "hypocrites" because their actions were at odds with their words. They professed to love God, but their actions did not reflect this. He quotes Isaiah 29:13, which denounces this kind of superficial religion—words and rituals without a sincere heart before God. True worship of God comes from the heart, not just outward rituals.

Verse 7: "They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human doctrines."

Jesus goes even deeper into his criticism, stating that although they followed rituals and traditions, they were not truly worshiping God. Their worship was empty, as it was based on man-made rules rather than the true will of God. This alerts us to the importance of evaluating our own religious practices: are they based on God's word or on human traditions?

Verse 8: "What goes into the mouth does not defile a person; but what comes out of the mouth, this is what defiles a person."

Here, Jesus clarifies a common misunderstanding among religious people of the time. They believed that impurity was transmitted by what they ate, but Jesus teaches that true impurity comes from what comes from the heart, that is, from words and actions. What we say and how we act are signs of our inner state. The problem is not what we eat, but what goes on inside us—our thoughts, motivations, and feelings.

Verse 9: "Then the disciples came to him and asked, 'Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this word?'"

The disciples notice that Jesus' word offended the Pharisees. This is an example of how God's truth often defies human and religious conventions. Jesus' word, which is always the truth, disturbed those who were more concerned with their own traditions than with God's true will.

Verse 10: "He replied, 'Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.'"

Jesus states that in the end, human traditions that are not based on God's word will be removed. He uses the metaphor of a plant to illustrate that any practice or teaching that does not come from God, even if it seems well-established, will be removed by Him. Here, He reaffirms God's sovereignty and authority over all religious traditions.

Verse 11: "What goes into the mouth does not defile a person; but what comes out of the mouth, this is what defiles a person."

Jesus begins to explain that what makes a person impure is not what he physically ingests, but what comes out of his heart and mouth. He reflects on the Jewish law of ritual purity, which concerned what one ate and how one ate it. Jesus states that it is not food or drink that can make someone spiritually impure, but the words and actions that come from the heart, as these reveal the true inner state of the person. Therefore, impurity lies in what one thinks, what one feels, and what one expresses.

Verse 12: "Then the disciples came to Jesus and said, 'Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this word?'"

The disciples realize that the Pharisees are offended by Jesus' talk about inner purity. They are so committed to the tradition of the law and the observance of external rules that Jesus' statement about true purity makes them uncomfortable. Jesus is directly challenging their values and superficial understandings of faith.

Verse 13: "He replied, 'Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.'"

Here, Jesus says that everything that does not originate with God will be removed. He uses the metaphor of a plant to illustrate how human traditions and beliefs that are not in accordance with God's will are not stable and will eventually be removed. God's truth will prevail, and no matter how firm human traditions may seem, they will not stand up to God's judgment. Jesus is also saying that we should not follow religious leaders or practices that are not based on God's word.

Verse 14: "Let them alone; the blind are leading the blind. If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into a ditch."

Jesus is very clear here: the religious leaders, represented by the Pharisees, are blind because they do not understand the true will of God. They lead others who are also blind to the truth, and as a result, both the leaders and their followers will be lost spiritually. This expression "the blind leading the blind" is a direct criticism of those who, although they have religious authority, fail to understand and live by the true word of God.

Verse 15: "Peter answered, 'Explain the parable to us.'"

Peter, as always, has a sincere desire to understand what Jesus is saying. He recognizes that Jesus' message is profound and needs explanation. This shows that even among the disciples there was a need to learn more about Jesus' teachings and to understand the depth of His word.

Verse 16: "Jesus answered, 'Are you still so foolish?'"

Jesus, with a tone of surprise and even correction, responds to Peter. He is pointing out the disciples' lack of understanding of what He was teaching. Despite living with Jesus and learning directly from Him, they still had difficulty understanding the depth of the teachings He was bringing. This moment is an invitation for all of us to seek to better understand Jesus' word and apply it to our lives.

Verse 17: "Do you not understand that whatever goes into the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled from the body?"

Jesus explains further, using a simple metaphor to show that what we eat does not affect our spiritual purity. Food enters the stomach, is processed and eliminated naturally from the body. This symbolizes that food has no impact on our inner purity or relationship with God.

Verse 18: "But what comes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and these defile a man."

Here is the central point of Jesus' teaching: what truly defiles a person is not food, but what comes out of the mouth, that is, words. What we say reflects what is in our hearts. If our hearts are filled with evil, hatred, envy, anger, or other negative emotions, this shows in the words we speak. True purity is internal and is related to our character and thoughts.

Verse 19: "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander."

Jesus lists attitudes and actions that arise from an impure heart: murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, and slander. These things, which are attitudes that hurt others and God, reveal the condition of a person's heart. If the heart is not purified, our actions will also be impure. What is inside us is always reflected in what we do and say.

Verse 20: "These are the things that defile a man; but eating with unwashed hands does not defile a man."

Jesus concludes by clarifying that the things that truly make us impure are those that come from our hearts: the sins and wrong attitudes we practice. The act of not washing our hands is not what makes us impure, but what truly contaminates a person is the sin that comes from within, from the heart. This unmaskes the superficial religiosity that concerns itself with external details while ignoring the state of the heart.

Verse 21: "Jesus left there and withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon."

After this teaching, Jesus withdraws to the region of Tyre and Sidon, outside Galilee. This geographical movement shows that Jesus was taking his message not only to the Jews, but also to other regions, including the Gentiles, or non-Jews. This reinforces the universality of Jesus' mission, which is not limited to one people, but seeks salvation for all.

Verse 22: "A Canaanite woman from that region came crying out, 'Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is in terrible distress because of a demon.'"

Here we see the entrance of a Canaanite woman, an example of a Gentile, who seeks Jesus' help. She recognizes Jesus as the Messiah, calling him "Son of David," which shows her faith. She cries out for mercy, as her daughter is possessed by a demon. This is a moment when Jesus interacts with those who, seemingly, were beyond the reach of his mission, showing that salvation is for all who have faith, regardless of their background.

Verse 23: "Jesus answered not a word."

In this verse, Jesus initially does not respond to the Canaanite woman's cry. This may seem strange at first glance, but there is a deep spiritual reason behind it. Jesus knew that the woman, being a Gentile (non-Jewish), was asking for something beyond the immediate scope of His primary mission, which was initially addressed to the Jewish people. However, He wanted this woman's faith to be clearly demonstrated and for her request to be understood by all as an expression of genuine faith.

Verse 24: "He replied, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.'"

Jesus responds to the woman with a statement that reinforces the initial focus of His mission. He was sent first to the people of Israel, who, according to Scripture, were God's chosen people to receive salvation. This statement by Jesus is not a slight, but a clarification that, up until that point, His mission had been directed specifically to the Jews. He knew that His mission would expand beyond Israel, but at this point He was teaching and preparing His disciples for the universal reach of His message.

Verse 25: "But she came and knelt before him, crying out, 'Lord, help me!'"

Here we see the woman's persistence. She kneels before Jesus, an expression of humility and reverence. She recognizes that, despite not being Jewish, she is standing before the Messiah and desperately seeks his help. This act of faith and humility is a demonstration of trust in who Jesus is and in His power to heal.

Verse 26: "He replied, 'It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.'"

Jesus makes an analogy, comparing the children (the Jews) to the little dogs (the Gentiles). He is showing that, at the moment, his mission is primarily for the Jews, and giving them the bread (the blessing and healing) before completing that mission would be unfair. However, this response serves to test the woman's faith and help her demonstrate her humility and trust in God's mercy.

Verse 27: "She replied, 'Yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.'"

The woman, with great wisdom and humility, responds with faith. She recognizes that although the Gentiles are not Jesus' primary focus at this time, they too have access to His mercy and grace. The woman demonstrates that even a small portion of God's power, like a crumb, would be enough to heal her daughter. This reveals her great faith, and Jesus realizes that she is not asking for something unreasonable, but is trusting fully in His goodness and power.

Verse 28: "Then Jesus said to her, 'Woman, you have great faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed at that very moment."

Jesus praises the woman's faith, who was persevering and humble in her search. He recognizes her as someone with great faith, which is a powerful lesson for all of us. Jesus then answers her request and her daughter is healed immediately. This shows that, for Jesus, true faith knows no cultural or social barriers. It is based on trust and humility before God.

Verse 29: "Jesus left that place and went to the Sea of Galilee. He went up on a mountain and sat down there."

After healing the Canaanite woman's daughter, Jesus returns to the region of Galilee, where He continues to teach and perform miracles. This geographic movement indicates the continuity of His mission, but now He begins to broaden His reach, and Gentiles are more explicitly included.

Verse 30: "A great multitude came to him, bringing with them the lame, the blind, the maimed, the mute, and many others, and they laid them at his feet, and he healed them."

Jesus continues to demonstrate His power and compassion by healing a large crowd of people who were in need. He heals the lame, blind, crippled, mute, and others, showing that His mission to bring restoration is not only spiritual, but also physical. The crowd recognizes Jesus as the One who can transform lives and bring healing.

Verse 31: "The crowds were amazed when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled healed, the lame walking, and the blind seeing; and they praised the God of Israel."

The miraculous healings performed by Jesus generate admiration and praise from the crowd. They recognize that only the power of God could perform such wonders. This reflects the impact of Jesus' work, which brings not only physical healing but also worship to God, as the people understand that He is the one sent by God.

Verse 32: "Jesus called his disciples to him and said to them, 'I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry, or they will collapse on the way.'"

Jesus shows His compassion for the crowd that followed Him. He knew that they were hungry and there were a large number of people, so He felt the responsibility to take care of their physical needs as well. This shows the comprehensive care of Jesus, who not only cares for the soul, but also for the material needs of the people.

Verse 33: "The disciples asked him, 'Where can we get enough bread in this wilderness for so great a crowd?'"

The disciples were worried about the situation, because they were in a deserted place and did not have enough resources to feed so many people. They were still learning to trust Jesus to supply all their needs, and this moment would be an opportunity for Jesus to show His power once again.

Verse 34: "Jesus asked, 'How many loaves do you have?' They replied, 'Seven, and a few small fish.'"

Jesus asks the disciples to check what is available. They had seven loaves of bread and a few fish, which seemed insufficient to feed the large crowd. However, Jesus knew that what little they had was enough when placed in His hands.

Verse 35: "He ordered the crowd to sit down on the ground."

Jesus, with authority, organizes the crowd so that they can receive the miracle in an orderly and peaceful manner. This also reflects the way God organizes the lives of those who follow Him: with peace, order, and structure.

Verse 36: "And he took the seven loaves and the fish, and when he had given thanks, he brake them, and gave them to the disciples, and they to the multitude."

When Jesus multiplied the loaves and fishes, he gave an example of gratitude to God before sharing. This gesture of giving thanks before distributing shows the principle that we should be grateful for everything God gives us, even when circumstances seem impossible.

Verse 37: "They all ate and were satisfied, and they picked up seven baskets full of the broken pieces that were left over."

The miracle is complete: everyone in the crowd ate and was satisfied, and there was still food left over, which demonstrates the abundance of Jesus' power. The number seven, which appears in the text, is significant, representing fullness or totality. The miracle not only met immediate needs, but also demonstrated God's generosity.

Verse 38: "Those who ate were four thousand men, besides women and children."

The number of people who were fed is significant. Four thousand men, not counting women and children, shows that it was a great miracle. Jesus took care of a

great multitude, showing His power and compassion without restraint.

Verse 39: "After this Jesus sent them away, got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan."

After performing the miracle, Jesus dismisses the crowd and withdraws to the region of Magadan, indicating that His ministry continued to expand, and He continued on a mission, ready to face the challenges that awaited him.

Final Reflection on Matthew Chapter 15

Matthew chapter 15 offers us profound lessons about what really matters to God: sincerity of heart and obedience to His word, more than human traditions. Jesus begins by challenging the religious conventions of the time, explaining that purity and holiness do not depend on external rituals, but on a transformed heart. He teaches us that true impurity comes from the human heart, from bad intentions and attitudes, such as malice, envy and pride.

Jesus, in responding to the criticisms of the Pharisees and teachers of the law about traditions, reminds us that the exterior is only a reflection of the interior. There is no point in following religious rules to the letter if this is not accompanied by a sincere heart and a true internal change. He calls us to reflect on our own actions and attitudes, not just on how we present ourselves to others.

Furthermore, Jesus' encounter with the Canaanite woman, who humbly seeks His help, teaches us an important lesson about faith and persistence. She was not Jewish, but she showed unwavering trust in Jesus, recognizing His authority and goodness. Jesus' response to her, initially harsh, reveals the greatness of the faith He values. The woman, by demonstrating true and humble faith, receives

the cure for her daughter, showing that genuine faith can overcome cultural and religious barriers.

The chapter also reminds us of how Jesus cares about people's suffering. He heals the sick, casts out demons, and feeds thousands with a few loaves and fish, revealing His compassion and divine power. These actions demonstrate the heart of God, who is always attentive to the needs of His children and willing to act on their behalf.

Final Reflection:

Matthew 15 challenges us to go beyond the superficiality of religiosity and seek a true faith, which manifests itself in attitudes of humility, obedience and trust in God. It teaches us that, for God, what matters is the purity of the heart and not the mechanical fulfillment of rituals. It also calls us to a persevering and bold faith, like that of the Canaanite woman, who, with humility and faith, received the Lord's answer. Jesus demonstrates, in this chapter, that the true Christian life is one that cares for others, that is moved by compassion and that is not limited to what is visible, but seeks a sincere relationship with the Lord. Thus, we are invited to reflect on the depth of our own faith, our motivations and our willingness to follow the voice of God above human conventions.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 16 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 16 Jesus teaches His disciples, and by extension us, profound lessons about faith, trust, and discernment. He calls them to focus on spiritual matters rather than material needs.

Jesus confronts them with

concern for physical bread, reminding them of how He had already provided for them in past miracles. Jesus uses these everyday situations to teach us about God's faithfulness. He calls us to trust Him for our needs.

needs, as He has always done with His people. He also warns us about the dangers of allowing ourselves to be influenced by erroneous doctrines, which can spread silently and affect our faith. The central message is: we must trust in God's provision and remain attentive to what He teaches us, not allowing the distractions or concerns of the world to take us away from the spiritual purpose He has for our lives.

Verse 1: "Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came and tempted him, asking him to show them a sign from heaven."

In this verse, we see that the Pharisees and Sadducees, two religious groups that often opposed Jesus, approach Him to test Him. They ask for a "sign from heaven," that is, they want Jesus to perform an impressive miracle to prove His authority and identity. Although these groups were looking for signs and wonders, their hearts were filled with unbelief. The demand for divine signs was a way to try to discredit Jesus by questioning His authenticity.

Verse 2: "But he answered them, When it is evening, you say, 'It will be fair weather,' for the sky is red."

Jesus responds to this demand for signs by reflecting on how people of his time could predict the weather. They could look at the sky and, depending on the color of the sky, tell whether the weather would be good or bad. He is showing that people have discernment about natural things, but fail to discern spiritual signs.

Verse 3: "And in the morning, It will be stormy today, for the sky is red and cloudy. You know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot discern the signs of the times."

Jesus makes a comparison between weather forecasts and people's lack of spiritual perception. They know how to discern the signs of nature (weather), but they are unable to perceive the meaning of "spiritual things", that is, the signs of the times, which indicate the arrival of the Kingdom of God. Here, He questions their inability to understand the signs He is giving, such as miracles and teachings, which are clear indications of His divine mission.

Verse 4: "A wicked and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." And he left them and went his way.

Jesus calls this generation "wicked and adulterous" because, although they were demanding supernatural signs, they were unwilling to accept the clear signs of God already revealed through Him. The "sign of Jonah" that He refers to is an allusion to the prophet Jonah, who spent three days in the belly of the fish, which is a symbol of the death and resurrection of Jesus (He would remain in the tomb for three days and three nights before rising again). Jesus uses this metaphor to show that the only sign He would give would be His death and resurrection, which would be the greatest and most definitive sign of His mission and identity. After

this statement, Jesus walks away, indicating that He would not give in to the superficial demand for signs.

Verse 5: "And the disciples, when they were gone over to the other side, forgot to take bread."

In this verse, we see that the disciples cross the sea, but forget to take bread, which seems like a simple detail. However, Jesus will use this situation to give an important spiritual lesson. This forgetfulness of bread will be the key to a deeper warning that He will give.

Verse 6: "And Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

Jesus begins by speaking to His disciples about "the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees." Leaven is a metaphor for something that can spread and influence in a negative way. Here, He is referring to the false doctrine and hypocrisy of these religious groups. The leaven symbolizes the pernicious influence of their wrong beliefs and corrupt attitudes that could spread to the disciples and other followers.

Verse 7: "And they reasoned among themselves, saying, This saith not, because we brought no bread."

The disciples did not immediately understand what Jesus meant. They thought He was talking about forgetting their bread on the journey. They were concerned about a physical need, while Jesus was talking about something spiritual. This reveals how the disciples sometimes focused on material concerns rather than understanding the spiritual lessons Jesus was teaching.

Verse 8: "But Jesus, knowing it, said, 'Why do you reason among yourselves, O you of little faith, about having no bread?'"

Jesus, knowing that they were worried about the bread, rebukes them for their lack of faith. He calls the disciples "you of little faith" because, even though they had seen the miracles of Jesus, they were still worrying about material matters as if they did not have a God who provided for them. Jesus wants them to understand that if He can feed thousands with a few loaves and fish, He can take care of all their needs.

Verse 9: "Do you still not understand? Do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand men, and how many baskets you took up?"

Jesus reminds them of a recent miracle when He fed five thousand people with just five loaves of bread and two fish, and how baskets full of food were left over. He uses this example to illustrate that God will always provide what is needed and that they do not need to worry about physical bread, but rather spiritual bread.

Verse 10: "Nor the seven loaves for the four thousand men, and how many baskets did you take up?"

He again reminds them of another miracle, when He fed four thousand people with seven loaves of bread, and how there was more than enough left over. Jesus is teaching that God's provision is abundant and that as the disciples focus on His word and mission, they should trust that He will meet their physical needs as well. The point is that faith should be in Jesus' ability to provide and not in concern for material possessions.

Verse 11: "How is it that you do not understand that I spoke to you not about bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

Here Jesus makes an important correction to the disciples. They still think He is talking about bread, as in the previous verses when they were concerned about not having brought food. But in fact, Jesus is warning them about "leaven"—that is, the false doctrines and hypocritical, legalistic attitudes of the Pharisees and Sadducees. He wants them to focus on spiritual teaching, not on material matters like bread.

Verse 12: "Then they understood that he was not telling them to beware of the leaven in bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

Finally, the disciples understand that Jesus was not talking about bread, but about the doctrines of these religious sects. Leaven, like yeast in dough, can spread and corrupt everything, so too could the false doctrines and attitudes of the Pharisees and Sadducees corrupt people's faith and hearts.

Verse 13: "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"

Jesus now takes his disciples to a region called Caesarea Philippi and asks an important question: "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" He wants to know what people think about Him. This question is a crucial point in the disciples' journey of faith, because it helps them understand the revelation of who Jesus is.

Verse 14: "And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist; and some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets."

The disciples respond to the various opinions people had about Jesus. Some thought He was John the Baptist, others thought He was Elijah (one of the greatest prophets), and still others said He was Jeremiah or another resurrected prophet. But these answers do not fully capture the true identity of Jesus, who is far greater than any other prophet.

Verse 15: "But who do you say that I am?"

Now Jesus asks His disciples a question directly: "But who do you say that I am?" He doesn't want to know what people in general think, but what the disciples, who are with Him every day, believe about His identity. This is a personal question that challenges us to this day: Who is Jesus for us?

Verse 16: "Then Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Peter, inspired by God, makes one of the most important statements in the Bible: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." The word "Christ" means "the Anointed One," the one sent by God to save humanity. Peter recognizes that Jesus is not just a great prophet, but the promised Messiah, the Son of God, who has a unique and divine relationship with the Father.

Verse 17: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Jesus acknowledges Peter's divine revelation in declaring who Jesus really is. He states that Peter did not come to this conclusion through human wisdom, but through direct revelation from God the Father. This teaches us that true understanding of who Jesus is does not come from human reasoning alone, but from God's action in our hearts.

Verse 18: "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against it."

Here Jesus makes an important statement about Peter and the church. He says that Peter (whose name means "rock") would be the foundation of His church. Jesus is saying that upon this "rock"—faith in who He is, as confessed by Peter—He would build His church. The expression "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" means that despite difficulties and opposition, the church will be victorious because it is founded on the truth of Jesus Christ.

Verse 19: "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

In this verse, Jesus gives Peter special authority. The "keys of the kingdom of heaven" represent the power to open and close the doors of God's kingdom. This symbolizes Peter's role, and by extension the church's, to preach the message of salvation, connecting people to God's kingdom and untying them from their sins. This authority is given to the church that preaches and teaches God's revealed truth.

Verse 20: "Then he charged his disciples that they should tell no man that he was the Christ."

Even though Peter made this correct statement about Jesus, Jesus instructed the disciples not to make this public yet. This may seem contradictory, but Jesus knew that His mission on earth had to follow a divine plan and that His identity had to be revealed at the right time, clearly and fully, especially through His death and resurrection.

Verse 21: "From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised on the third day."

Here, Jesus begins to prepare the disciples for what is to come. He begins to explain that His mission includes suffering at the hands of the religious authorities in Jerusalem, being killed, and then being resurrected on the third day. This revelation is a major turning point in Jesus' ministry, as He begins to focus on the purpose of His death and resurrection as the means of bringing salvation to the world.

Verse 22: "Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, 'Have mercy on yourself, Lord! This shall never happen to you.'"

Peter, who had just made the wonderful statement about Jesus, now reacts in a human way. He cannot accept the idea that Jesus, the Messiah, would suffer and die. Peter thinks he is defending Jesus, but in reality he is acting contrary to Jesus' plan.

Verse 23: "But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of men."

In this verse, after Peter tries to stop Jesus from following God's plan (to suffer and die), Jesus severely rebukes him. He calls Peter a "stumbling block" because Peter's actions were distracting Jesus from fulfilling God's purpose. The phrase "Get thee behind me, Satan" is a strong rebuke, indicating that Peter's words were being influenced by a human mindset rather than God's will. Jesus reveals that often our concerns and actions can be guided by our own limited ideas rather than by God's wisdom.

Verse 24: "Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.'"

Here Jesus teaches the fundamental principle of discipleship: self-denial. Following Jesus is not easy; it requires sacrifice, humility, and surrender to God's will. "Denying oneself" means leaving behind selfishness, one's own desires, and plans in favor of God's plan. The cross, a symbol of suffering and rejection, is a call to be willing to suffer for Christ and His cause. Jesus makes it clear that the path of following Him involves difficult choices and the willingness to carry the cross, which represents pain, rejection, and, in many cases, suffering.

Verse 25: "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it."

Here, Jesus offers a paradoxical truth. The world teaches that we must protect and preserve our lives at all costs.

It may cost us, but Jesus teaches us that if we live only for ourselves and our own interests, we will miss the true purpose of life. However, when we choose to lose our lives for the sake of Christ and His gospel—that is, when we prioritize God and His will over our own selfish desires—we find true life, which is full and eternal.

Verse 26: "What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and forfeit his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?"

Jesus raises an essential question about the value of material things in comparison to the human soul. Even if one gains all the power, wealth, and success in this world, it is worth nothing if one's soul is lost. What is more valuable than the soul? The answer is nothing. This challenges us to reflect on what we are truly seeking in our lives. What are we willing to sacrifice in order to gain what is eternally and truly valuable?

Verse 27: "For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each person according to what he has done."

Jesus speaks of His glorious return at the end of time. He will come with all the glory of the Father, accompanied by the angels, to judge the actions of all. Each person will be rewarded according to what they have done, whether for good or for evil. This verse is a reminder that our choices and actions have eternal consequences. What we do while we are in this world has an impact on the eternal future.

Verse 28: "Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

Jesus states that some of those who heard Him while He was still alive would see the Kingdom of God manifested in a visible way. This refers to events that would occur shortly after this speech, such as Jesus' transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8), where He showed His heavenly glory to some of His disciples. It may also refer to His resurrection and the growth of the church, which are manifestations of the Kingdom of God on earth. Jesus is saying that although His coming in glory is yet to come, there were already visible signs of the Kingdom of God in action.

Final Reflection on Matthew 16

In Matthew chapter 16, Jesus offers us profound lessons about the true nature of discipleship, the value of life, and the Kingdom of God. He challenges His followers, including us, to understand that the path to abundant life is not found in seeking the things of this world, but in surrendering to Him, denying self, and committing to the principles of His Kingdom.

When Jesus rebukes Peter, He teaches us that we must be careful not to be influenced by human thoughts, but by what comes from God. The way we see the world, situations, and even the Christian life must be aligned with God's will, and not with human expectations, which are often distorted.

Jesus' invitation to "take up the cross" is a call to sacrifice, pain, and self-denial. But paradoxically, it is in this path of sacrifice that we find true life—a life that is not governed by self or temporal things, but by the will of God. The Kingdom of God is not something that comes only in the future; it is already at work among us, and

The decisions we make now, as followers of Christ, have an eternal impact.

The challenge of reflecting on what we truly value in life is central to this chapter. Jesus invites us to evaluate what we are seeking: riches, success, or what really matters: our soul and our eternity. He warns us that we cannot gain the world and lose our soul — the value of our life lies in our relationship with God and our faithfulness to His calling.

Finally, the promise that Jesus will return in glory to reward each person according to their works reminds us that our actions have eternal value. Nothing we do in the name of Christ will be lost. The Kingdom of God is already present among us, and every step we take in obedience to Him brings us closer to the fullness of that Kingdom.

Therefore, Matthew 16 invites us to reflect on our priorities, to renounce our selfishness, and to seek true life in Christ, remembering that the cross we follow today is the key to eternal life. May we live with our eyes fixed on the Kingdom of God, confident that our choices and actions have eternal consequences and that, in the end, we will be rewarded for our faithfulness.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 17 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

In Matthew 16, Jesus challenges His disciples, and us, to reflect on the true nature of discipleship. Following Jesus does not mean seeking the temporal pleasures of this world, but renouncing selfishness, our own plans, and seeking God's will, even when it involves suffering or sacrifice.

Jesus' central question about the value of the soul confronts us with the reality of our choices: what are we prioritizing in our lives? Worldly achievements or eternity with God?

Jesus' promise of reward reminds us that the value of life is not in temporal riches and success, but in faithfulness to His calling and living for His Kingdom. And finally, the vision of God's Kingdom already in action inspires us to continue steadfast, confident that our actions in Christ have an eternal impact.

True life, the life that Christ offers, is found when we surrender our wills to His Lordship and follow Him, even through hardships.

1. "After six days Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John the brother of James, and led them up a high mountain by themselves."

Jesus chooses three disciples—Peter, James, and John—for a special moment of revelation. These three disciples were among those closest to Jesus. The fact that He took them up a mountain “alone” suggests that this would be a unique event where they would witness something extraordinary. Jesus, who often spent time with large crowds, now chooses this small group for a more intimate moment.

2. "There before them He was transfigured: His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became white as light."

The transfiguration of Jesus is a moment of great divine revelation. "Transfigured" means that Jesus' appearance has been transformed, revealing His divine nature. His face shines like the sun, and His clothes become white as light, indicating His heavenly glory. Jesus, who until that moment had appeared as a man, now reveals His true divine identity, a foretaste of His future glorification.

3. "And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elijah, talking with him."

Moses and Elijah, two great figures from the Old Testament, appear alongside Jesus. Moses represents the Law (because he received the Tablets of the Law from God) and Elijah the prophets (because of his great prophetic work). His presence symbolizes that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets—He did not come to abolish, but to fulfill everything that was predicted in the Scriptures.

4. "Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, we will make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.'"

Peter, surprised and amazed by the scene, offers to build three tents, one for each of them. His proposal to make tents may reflect a desire to preserve that moment and make that place sacred. But in doing so, Peter does not fully understand the significance of what is happening. He sees Jesus as equal to Moses and Elijah, but in reality, Jesus is superior to both, as He Himself will show.

5. "While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice came from the cloud, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to what he says!'"

Here God the Father intervenes directly, manifesting His presence through a bright cloud—a common manifestation of God's presence (as in Exodus 16:10 and 1 Kings 8:10–11). The voice coming from the cloud is clear: Jesus is God's beloved Son, and God commands everyone to listen to what He has to say. This is a confirmation that Jesus is the promised Messiah, and everyone should heed His word. God highlights the importance of Jesus, calling everyone to follow Him.

6. "When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown, terrified."

The disciples' reaction is one of great fear and reverence. The manifestation of God's voice and the glorious presence of Jesus cause them to be filled with reverent fear. This moment makes them realize even more who Jesus really is, and the divine nature and authority that He possesses.

7. "But Jesus came and touched them and said, 'Get up, do not be afraid.'"

Jesus, with His compassion, goes to the disciples, touching them and offering words of comfort and encouragement. He reassures them, asking them to stand up and not be afraid. Jesus does not want them to remain terrified, but to understand the true nature of this event: a revelation of His glory, but also a moment of teaching and transformation.

8. "And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man any more, save Jesus only."

When the disciples look again, all they see is Jesus. Moses and Elijah have disappeared. This moment teaches that after the revelation of Jesus' glory, He is the only one who remains. He is the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, and now, in the New Testament, He is the only way of salvation. The focus is completely on Jesus.

9. "As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, 'Tell no one what you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.'"

Jesus instructs His disciples to keep what they had witnessed secret, at least until He was resurrected. This is because the full understanding of Jesus' mission would only come after His death and resurrection. The revelation of His glory was not yet the appropriate time to share it widely.

10. "Then the disciples asked Him, 'Why then do the teachers of the Law say that Elijah must first come?'"

The disciples, still trying to understand what they had experienced, asked a question about the prophecy that Elijah would return before the Messiah, as taught in Jewish tradition. They were trying to understand the relationship between Jesus' transfiguration and messianic expectations.

11. "And Jesus answered, 'Elijah indeed does come and restore all things.'"

In this answer, Jesus confirms the prophecy that Elijah would come before the Messiah, as taught in Jewish tradition (Malachi 4:5). However, Jesus reveals that Elijah had already

coming in the person of John the Baptist. John did not appear with the same external signs as the prophet Elijah, but he fulfilled the role of "forerunner" of the Messiah, preparing the way for the coming of Jesus.

12. "But I tell you, Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him but treated him as they pleased. In the same way, the Son of Man will also suffer at their hands."

Here Jesus points out that the religious leaders did not recognize John the Baptist as the promised Elijah, and instead of accepting him, they rejected and treated him badly. This foreshadows what would happen to Himself: He would be rejected and suffer at the hands of the religious leaders. The rejection of John the Baptist, and later of Jesus, shows how people and their leaders often misunderstand God's plan.

13. "Then the disciples understood that he spake unto them of John the Baptist."

The disciples now clearly understood that Jesus was speaking of John the Baptist as the promised "Elijah." This revelation helped them better understand John's role as the forerunner of Christ, preparing the people for the coming of the Messiah.

14. "When they came to the crowd, a man came to Jesus, knelt before him and said, 'Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic and suffers terribly; he often falls into the fire or into the water.'"

This verse introduces us to a father who asks for healing for his son. The word "lunatic" was used to describe someone who suffered from mental problems or seizures, associating these symptoms with the phases of the moon (hence the term "lunatic"). The father describes the severity of the condition

of your child, who is in danger, falling into fire or water, and desperately needs Jesus' help.

15. "I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not cure him."

The man had already taken his son to Jesus' disciples, but they were unable to heal him. This detail reveals that, even with the power that Jesus had given the disciples to heal, at that moment they were unable to exercise that power effectively. This will be explained later.

16. "Jesus answered, 'O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here.'"

Jesus' response reveals His frustration with the lack of faith of the disciples and the generation in general. They had witnessed miracles, but they still struggled to fully understand and trust in God's power. The expression "an unbelieving and perverse generation" refers to the fact that the people, despite having clear signs from God, still doubted His work. Jesus, however, did not give up on helping and instructed that the boy be brought to Him.

17. "Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of the boy; and the boy was healed from that moment."

Jesus authoritatively casts out the demon that was tormenting the boy. This instant healing demonstrates Jesus' authority over evil and reveals His divine power. By casting out the demon, Jesus not only physically heals the boy, but also addresses the spiritual cause of his affliction. The instant and complete healing is a testament to Jesus' sovereignty.

18. "Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and asked, 'Why couldn't we drive it out?'"

The disciples were confused and probably frustrated, since they had been unable to heal the boy. They wanted to understand why their faith and authority had not been enough in this case, since in other situations they had been successful.

19. "He replied, 'Because of your unbelief. Truly, I say to you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.'"

Jesus explains that the reason the disciples were unable to cast out the demon was because of their "little faith." He uses the metaphor of the mustard seed, which is one of the smallest seeds, to show that with even a small amount of faith, great things can be accomplished. The "mountain" is a metaphor for seemingly impossible obstacles. With genuine faith, nothing is impossible for those who trust in God.

20. "But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting."

Jesus reveals that in some cases, the fight against evil requires a deeper level of spiritual dedication, such as prayer and fasting. These practices help to strengthen faith and discern what is necessary to deal with difficult situations. Prayer and fasting are spiritual tools that allow us to face difficulties with greater depth of trust in God.

21. "While they were gathered together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men.'"

Jesus begins to prepare His disciples for His imminent death by announcing that He will be betrayed and handed over to men, that is, arrested and tried. He is preparing them for what is coming so that they will not be taken by surprise. The revelation of Jesus' suffering and death is an essential part of His ministry, for His death is the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation.

22. "They will kill him, but on the third day he will be raised to life again." And they were very sad.

Jesus clearly predicts His death and resurrection. He anticipates the suffering that is to come, but He also offers hope by declaring that He will rise again on the third day. Despite the promise of resurrection, the disciples are saddened because they do not fully understand the meaning of what He is saying. They cannot yet perceive God's plan in its entirety, and the thought of Jesus' death deeply distresses them.

23. "When they arrived in Capernaum, the temple tax collectors came to Peter and asked, 'Doesn't your teacher pay the temple tax?'"

Arriving in Capernaum, the temple tax collectors questioned Peter about paying a mandatory tax, which was intended to support the temple in Jerusalem. The tax was not mandatory for all Jews, but it was a religious and symbolic charge for the maintenance of the temple.

24. "Yes, pay," he replied. When Peter entered the house, Jesus asked him first, "Simon, what do you think? From whom do the kings of the earth collect tribute or custom? From their own children or from strangers?"

Peter, probably not fully understanding, answers in the affirmative, saying that Jesus would pay the tax. When Peter enters the house, Jesus already knows what has happened and asks him a question: If kings collect taxes, do they collect them from their own sons or from foreign subjects? The question is a way for Jesus to introduce the principle that, as the Son of God, He should not be required to pay taxes.

25. "Peter answered, 'From strangers.' Jesus said to him, 'Then the children are exempt.'"

Peter responds correctly, saying that kings collect taxes from their subjects, not from their children. Jesus then explains that since He is the Son of the King (God), He is exempt from the temple tax, for He is the Son of God, not subject to the obligation of others. This reveals His divine authority and position.

26. "But so as not to offend them, go to the sea, cast a hook, and take the first fish you catch. When you open its mouth, you will find a stater. Take it and give it to them for me and for you."

Although Jesus is exempt from paying the tax, He chooses to pay it to avoid causing scandal or controversy. He instructs Peter to catch a fish, and inside it will be the money needed to pay the tax for both of them. This simple miracle shows divine provision in amazing ways, as well as Jesus' willingness to fulfill obligations in order to maintain peace and testimony.

27. "But so as not to offend them, go to the sea, cast a hook, and take the first fish you catch. When you open its mouth, you will find a stater. Take it and give it to them for me and for you."

In this verse, Jesus instructs Peter to perform an amazing miracle to resolve the issue of the temple tax. Although Jesus has the right to be exempt from this tax as the Son of God, He chooses to pay the tax so as not to cause unnecessary scandal or controversy between the Jews and the religious authorities.

Peter's instruction to fish for a fish and find a stater (a coin worth about enough to pay taxes for two people) in its mouth is a demonstration of Jesus' power, but it is also a lesson in humility and wisdom. Jesus could certainly have done something more direct to obtain the money, but he chooses to use a method that, while unusual, resolves the issue peacefully and without conflict. Jesus' action here teaches us that sometimes it is wiser to take action that avoids unnecessary controversy, even when we are right.

The stater found in the fish also symbolizes God's provision. Jesus uses a simple miracle to provide what is needed in a way that is both surprising and faith-inspiring, showing that when we trust Him, He will supply our needs, often in ways we do not expect or understand.

Final Reflection on Matthew 17:

Matthew chapter 17 is a rich teaching on the authority and power of Jesus, with three main episodes that offer us profound lessons.

- 1. The Transfiguration (verses 1-9):** In this event, Jesus reveals Himself in His divine glory before Peter, James and John. They witness something extraordinary: the transformation of Jesus, with His face shining like

the sun and His garments white as light. Moses and Elijah appear, confirming that Jesus is the fulfillment of the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah). The voice of God from heaven says, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; listen to him." This moment is not only a revelation of the deity of Christ, but also a confirmation of His mission and authority. The reflection here is that as followers of Jesus, we must listen to Him, trust His word, and understand that He is the fulfillment of all God's promises.

2. The Miracle of the Healing of the Demon-Possessed Boy (verses 14-21): The healing of this demon-possessed boy, which the disciples were unable to accomplish, reveals the importance of true faith. Jesus emphasizes that lack of faith is the reason why the disciples failed. He uses the metaphor of faith being the size of a mustard seed to teach us that with true faith, even the greatest challenges can be overcome. The lesson here is that we should not rely on our own strength or abilities, but on God's strength, and that faith, no matter how small, is enough to accomplish great things.

3. The Temple Tax (verses 24-27): Jesus, although the Son of God and exempt from paying the temple tax, chooses to pay it to avoid causing a scandal among the Jews. This episode teaches us about humility and wisdom. Jesus shows us that sometimes our actions must be directed toward the well-being of others, even sacrificing our own rights to maintain peace and harmony. He also reminds us that God will provide for our needs in surprising ways, as He did with the coin found in the fish.

Conclusion: Matthew chapter 17 invites us to reflect on Jesus' authority as the Son of God and how we should trust Him, listen to His voice, and apply His wisdom to our lives. It teaches us about the importance of genuine faith, God's power to heal and solve problems, and the need to act with humility even when we have the right not to. How

As disciples, we are called to follow His example, seeking to live in obedience, faith, and wisdom. May we trust in His provision, even when we don't understand the "how" or "why," knowing that God always has a greater purpose.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 18 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

In this chapter, Jesus teaches us about true humility and the value of "little ones" in the Kingdom of God. He shows us that true greatness is not found in power or status, but in the willingness to be humble and serve others with a pure heart, just like a child. Furthermore, He warns us about the burden of causing others to stumble in their faith, and the need to take drastic measures against sin in our lives. The parable also reminds us of God's care for the humble and how He values them. Therefore, we should live with a simple heart, seeking to please God, and always caring for the most vulnerable and humble around us..

Matthew 18:1

"At that moment the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?'"

Explanation:

The disciples were concerned about their position in the Kingdom of Heaven. This question reflects a human concern with status and power. In the context of that time, society valued social status, and even Jesus' followers were interested in who would be the "greatest" among them. This question shows how personal ambitions can influence even those who are seeking the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 18:2

"Jesus called a child and placed him in their midst"

Explanation:

To answer the disciples' question, Jesus uses a child as an example. In that culture, children were seen as the least important and most important people in society. Jesus then completely inverts the human logic of status and power. He chooses a child—someone seen as insignificant—to illustrate true greatness in the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 18:3

"And he said, 'I tell you the truth, unless you become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.'"

Explanation:

Jesus makes a very powerful statement: to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, we must become like children. What Jesus is saying is that we must have genuine humility, a simple trust in God, and a pure heart, without the worries and pride that often characterize adults. Children do not care about status or power, but are receptive, dependent, and trusting.

Matthew 18:4

"Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Explanation:

Jesus teaches that true greatness in the Kingdom of God lies in humility. He who becomes humble, recognizing his total dependence on God, is the one who is truly great in the eyes of God. Humility is seen as an essential virtue for those who wish to be great in the Kingdom of Heaven. Jesus reveals that God's greatness is measured differently than human greatness.

Matthew 18:5

"And whoever receives one such child in my name receives me."

Explanation:

Jesus goes on to explain that the way we treat the "little ones," the humblest and simplest people, is a demonstration of how we treat Him. Welcoming a child in the name of Jesus is, in fact, an act of welcoming Jesus Himself. Here, Jesus teaches that we should treat everyone with love and respect, especially those who are seen as less important or vulnerable in society.

Matthew 18:6

"But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a large millstone were hung around his neck and he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Explanation:

Jesus speaks sternly about those who cause stumbling or scandal to the "little ones"—those who are humble and depend on God. He warns that for someone who leads others away from the faith, it would be better to face a terrible death than to suffer God's judgment. This is a strong statement to show how God values the sincere and pure faith of the simple and humble.

Matthew 18:7

"Woe to the world because of scandals! For it is inevitable that scandals will come, but woe to that man through whom they come!"

Explanation:

Jesus acknowledges that in the world there will be temptations and scandals, but He emphasizes that there is great responsibility on those who cause these stumbling blocks. The "woe" is a lament over the corruption and evil that affects the humanity, but also a warning to those who are instruments of scandal and distract others from the faith.

Matthew 18:8

"If your hand or your foot causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life crippled or lame than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire."

Explanation:

Jesus uses strong language to warn us about the cost of sin. He teaches us that we must be willing to remove anything from our lives that causes us to stumble and turn away from God, even if it involves painful loss. The comparison of "cutting off a hand or a foot" is a metaphor, indicating that we must abandon anything that hinders us from following God. Eternal fire is a reference to the final judgment.

Matthew 18:9

"And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it from you. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell fire."

Explanation:

Here Jesus uses a similar metaphor to the previous one, now speaking of the "eyes." He is emphasizing that we must be radically diligent in avoiding sin, to the point of making any necessary sacrifice. Hellfire

again it is a metaphor for eternal judgment and the fate of those who persist in sin without repentance.

Matthew 18:10

"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones: for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels always see the face of my Father which is in heaven."

Explanation:

Jesus concludes this teaching by telling His disciples that we should not despise the "little ones," that is, those who are humble and simple in faith. He assures them that the angels of these little ones are always before God, interceding for them. This is a reminder that God sees and cares for the humble, those who have simple and true faith, and that they are precious in the eyes of God.

Matthew 18:11

"For the Son of Man came to save that which was lost."

Explanation:

This verse reveals Jesus' mission on earth. He came to save those who were lost—those who were far from God, those who were sinners, those who did not know the way of salvation. Jesus is the Savior, and His primary mission was to rescue those who were far from God, offering forgiveness and reconciliation. This verse can be seen as a summary of the purpose of His entire redemptive work.

Matthew 18:12

"What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them is lost, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go and look for the one that is lost?"

Explanation:

Here, Jesus uses the parable of the lost sheep to illustrate the importance of seeking out those who have strayed from God. Even though most are safe, the shepherd is concerned about the lost sheep, which demonstrates the value God places on each person. The parable points to God's constant care, love, and pursuit of sinners, not wanting any to be lost.

Matthew 18:13

"And if he finds it, truly I tell you, he rejoices more about it than about the ninety-nine that did not go astray."

Explanation:

When the shepherd finds the lost sheep, he rejoices more for it than for those who are not lost. This symbolizes God's great joy when a sinner repents and returns to His way. The salvation of one lost person brings more joy in heaven than the continuance of the righteous who are already in the security of faith. Jesus emphasizes that every life matters deeply to God.

Matthew 18:14

"Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

Explanation:

This verse makes it clear that God's desire is that no one should perish. God does not want any "little one" (here referring to all who have simple, childlike faith) to fall away from His love. This reflects God's heart, which is always redemptive, seeking the salvation of all. The idea is that God desires everyone to be saved and that no one should be left behind.

Matthew 18:15

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother."

Explanation:

Here, Jesus gives practical guidance on how to deal with conflict and sin within the Christian community. If someone sins against you, the first step is not to talk to others, but to go directly to that person in private and try to resolve the issue privately. The goal is to restore the relationship, and if the person repents, you gain a brother back without the situation becoming public or causing further division.

Matthew 18:16

"But if he will not listen to you, take with you one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every matter may be established."

Explanation:

If the first attempt at reconciliation fails, Jesus teaches that two or three witnesses should be brought before the person so that the sin can be addressed in a more formal and fair manner. The presence of witnesses serves to ensure that everything is handled impartially and that the truth is established according to Scripture (Deuteronomy 19:15). This also provides a second chance for the person to repent and return to the right path.

Matthew 18:17

"But if he will not hear them, tell it to the church; and if he will not hear the church, let him be to you as an heathen man and a tax collector."

Explanation:

If the person refuses to listen, even in the presence of witnesses, then the matter should be taken to the church, the community. If there is still no repentance, the person should be treated as a "Gentile" or "tax collector" (words used to describe those who were outside the community of faith). This means that while the person should still be loved and prayed for, he or she should be separated from the community until he or she repents.

Matthew 18:18

"Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

Explanation:

Jesus speaks of the spiritual authority given to the church. Whatever is decided on earth in the context of the church community (such as discipline and restoration) will have spiritual implications in heaven. The church has the authority to make decisions that reflect God's will, and these decisions carry weight both on earth and in heaven. This verse also highlights the seriousness of discipline and forgiveness in the Christian life.

Matthew 18:19

"Again I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven."

Explanation:

Here Jesus teaches about the power of prayer in agreement. When two or more Christians unite in prayer, God hears them and answers them according to His will. This shows that unity and agreement among believers are powerful in the Kingdom of God. The Lord is pleased to see His

people praying and asking together, and He promises to hear and act in response.

Matthew 18:20

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Explanation:

This verse assures us that even when the gathering is small (two or three), Jesus' presence is there. This reinforces the idea that the Church does not depend on large crowds or grand events to experience Christ's presence. Any genuine gathering in His name is enough for Him to be there, sharing with His people.

Matthew 18:21

"Then Peter came to him and asked, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?'"

Explanation:

Peter asks a question about forgiveness, thinking that the number seven would be enough. In Jewish culture, forgiving three times was considered generous enough. Peter then suggested increasing the number to seven, thinking that he was being too understanding. But Jesus goes further and teaches about unlimited forgiveness.

Matthew 18:22

"Jesus answered him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but, up to seventy times seven.'"

Explanation:

Jesus responds by saying that forgiveness has no limits, suggesting "seventy times seven", that is, a continuous and unconditional forgiveness. The number "seventy times seven" symbolizes a forgiveness that does not run out. Jesus teaches that we should always forgive, without putting a number or limit on forgiveness, reflecting God's infinite mercy.

Matthew 18:23

"Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants."

Explanation:

Here, Jesus begins to tell the parable of the "unmerciful servant." He shows us how the Kingdom of God is governed according to principles of justice and mercy. The king, representing God, wants to do justice by settling accounts with his servants, that is, the people who owe him. The idea of settling accounts suggests a time of accountability, where each person will receive according to their actions.

Matthew 18:24

"When he had begun to do this, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents."

Explanation:

The servant owed a huge debt, ten thousand talents, which was an impossible amount to pay at the time. A talent was a very large unit of currency, so this debt was astronomical, impossible for an ordinary servant to pay off. This symbolizes the immense debt of sin that we all owe before God—something that we cannot pay off on our own.

Matthew 18:25

"And since he had nothing to pay, his master ordered him to be sold, along with his wife and children and all that he had, and the debt to be paid."

Explanation:

Since the servant could not pay the debt, the only legal option at the time was to sell himself, his family, and his possessions in an attempt to pay off the debt. This situation reflects the gravity of human sin, which places us in an impossible debt to pay. Without mercy, the consequences would be severe, such as separation and condemnation.

Matthew 18:26

"Then the servant fell down and worshiped him, saying, 'Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.'"

Explanation:

In this moment of despair, the servant humbles himself before the king, asking for patience and promising to pay everything. This symbolizes the attitude of a repentant sinner before God, recognizing his inability to pay the debt and appealing to God's mercy. The scene is an example of how, before God, we must humble ourselves and ask for His mercy.

Matthew 18:27

"And the lord of that bondman, moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt."

Explanation:

The king, moved with compassion, forgives the servant's enormous debt. This illustrates God's great mercy toward us. Like the king, God offers us free forgiveness.

and complete, not because of our actions, but because of His infinite mercy. God's forgiveness is immense, canceling our entire debt of sin, something we ourselves could not pay.

Matthew 18:28

"But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and began to choke him, saying, 'Pay me what you owe!'"

Explanation:

After being forgiven a huge debt, the servant finds a fellow servant who owes him a comparatively small amount (one hundred denarii). However, he acts ruthlessly, demanding and attacking his fellow servant, without showing the same mercy he received. This reflects our tendency to be harsh with others, even when we have received God's forgiveness so generously.

Matthew 18:29

"Then his fellow servant fell at his feet and begged him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you back.'"

Explanation:

The servant's fellow servant makes the same request that he had made to the king. He begs for patience, promising to pay the debt. This is a repetition of the previous scene, where someone in debt asks for mercy, expecting a generous attitude from the creditor.

Matthew 18:30

"But he would not do it, but went and threw him in prison until he should pay the debt."

Explanation:

Despite his colleague's pleas, the servant refuses to show mercy and sends the man to prison. This attitude is a reflection of the hardness of the human heart, especially when we do not understand the greatness of the forgiveness we receive from God. The servant, who had been forgiven something immense, cannot forgive a much smaller debt.

Matthew 18:31

"When his companions saw what had happened, they were very sad and went and told their master everything that had happened."

Explanation:

The other servants, upon seeing the first servant's cruel behavior, were saddened and outraged. They realized the injustice and went to tell the king. This reflects how unforgiveness and lack of mercy affect the community. The servant's behavior not only dishonors the king, but also creates division and discontent among the people.

Matthew 18:32

"Then his master called him in and said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you that huge debt because you begged me to;'"

Explanation:

The king, upon learning of the servant's behavior, rebukes him harshly, calling him a "wicked servant." He reminds him that he had forgiven a huge debt, and the servant had not done the same. This rebuke symbolizes the way God judges us when we do not extend forgiveness to others, even though He has forgiven us for something much greater.

Matthew 18:33

"Shouldn't you have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had compassion on you?"

Explanation:

The king questions the servant's lack of compassion, reminding him that he too should have shown mercy. This verse is a direct appeal to us to be merciful, as God is to us. The forgiveness that God offers us requires that we extend the same forgiveness to others. God's mercy should not be seen as something that we can receive only for ourselves, but something that must be

shared.

Matthew 18:34

"And in anger the lord handed him over to the torturers until he should pay all that was owed."

Explanation:

The king, in his anger, hands the servant over to the torturers, symbolizing the severe consequences of unforgiveness. The message here is clear: when we fail to forgive others, we place ourselves in a position of estrangement from God, with serious spiritual consequences. The "torturer" may represent the emotional and spiritual prison of living in bitterness and resentment, which separates us from the peace of God.

Matthew 18:35

"So also my heavenly Father will do to you, if you do not from your hearts forgive each one his brother their trespasses."

Explanation:

Jesus concludes the parable by stating that if we do not forgive others from our hearts, the heavenly Father will do the same to us. In other words, God's forgiveness is

conditional on our willingness to forgive others. This teaches that forgiveness is not just an outward action, but an attitude of the heart. When we truly forgive, we reflect the forgiveness God has given us.

Final Reflection on Matthew 18:

Matthew chapter 18 offers us profound teachings on humility, forgiveness, and the importance of relationships within the Christian community. Jesus begins by showing us the importance of being childlike, humble, and dependent on God, reminding us that in the Kingdom of God, greatness is measured by the ability to serve and submit to God's will with purity and faith. He also warns us about the seriousness of scandalizing the little ones and causing division, which calls us to the responsibility of living in love and unity.

The parable of the "unforgiving servant" is a central point in the chapter, where Jesus reveals the depth of God's forgiveness and how we are called to extend that forgiveness to others. Forgiveness should not be a mere formality, but something that springs from a transformed and compassionate heart, reflecting the grace we have received from God. The lesson here is clear: unforgiveness not only damages human relationships, but also affects our own walk with God. If God has forgiven us so much, why not forgive others?

Furthermore, the chapter also teaches us about restoring relationships. When there is offense or division between brothers, Jesus guides us to seek reconciliation peacefully, with wisdom and prudence, always with the aim of restoring love and unity.

In short, Matthew 18 calls us to live as true disciples of Christ, living in humility, practicing forgiveness, seeking the restoration of broken relationships, and caring for the unity of the Church. The forgiveness and mercy we receive from God should be the basis of our

our actions toward others. When we live by these principles, we show the world God's transforming love, and our lives become a reflection of His goodness and grace.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 19 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

This passage from Matthew 19 teaches us the importance of understanding marriage as a divine and sacred institution. Jesus reminds us that from the beginning, God created man and woman to be indissolubly united. He emphasizes that marriage should not be seen as something fragile or transitory, but as a covenant that reflects God's love and commitment to His people. Divorce, while permitted in specific cases such as infidelity, is not part of God's original plan for the marital relationship. This challenges us to look at our own marriages and relationships more seriously, seeking to live in fidelity, love, and forgiveness, as God has taught us.

Verse 1: *"When Jesus had finished giving these instructions, he left Galilee and went to the region of Judea east of the Jordan."*

Here, the evangelist introduces us to a new phase of Jesus' ministry. After teaching his disciples and the crowd in Galilee, Jesus heads to Judea, a region that will be the scene of important moments in his journey to the cross. He continues his mission of preaching and teaching.

Verse 2: *"Large crowds followed him, and he healed them there."*

Jesus always attracts large crowds. He not only taught, but also performed miracles, healing the sick and freeing the oppressed. His actions, such as healings and miracles,

confirmed the divine authority of their words and revealed God's love for people.

Verse 3: *"Some Pharisees came to test him. They asked, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason?'"*

The Pharisees, who had often tried to catch Jesus in contradiction, now sought to test him with a question about divorce. The practice of divorce was a controversial topic at the time, with differing interpretations of the Law of Moses. They tried to get Jesus to either align with one school of thought or contradict himself.

Verse 4: *"Jesus answered, 'Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator made them male and female?'"*

Jesus, rather than aligning himself with one school of thought on divorce, appeals to God's Word from the beginning. He reminds us that at creation, God made man and woman to be united in marriage, establishing God's intention for the marital relationship from the beginning.

Verse 5: *"And he said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.'"*

Jesus quotes Genesis 2:24, which speaks of marriage as a deep and indivisible union. He emphasizes that marriage is more than a social or contractual covenant; it is a spiritual and emotional union that reflects God's work in creation. Husband and wife become "one flesh," that is, they have an intimate and inseparable connection.

Verse 6: *"So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."*

Jesus reaffirms that marriage is a divine work, and the union that God establishes should not be dissolved. He teaches that the marriage bond is sacred, and that no one has the right to separate it, since it is God who unites spouses. Divorce, therefore, was not part of God's original plan for marriage.

Verse 7: *"Why then did Moses command a man to give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?"*

Here the Pharisees question Jesus about the practice of divorce permitted by Moses, mentioned in Deuteronomy 24:1-4. They want to know why Moses allowed this practice if marriage was supposed to be a permanent union.

Verse 8: *"Jesus replied, 'Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But from the beginning it was not so.'"*

Jesus explains that although Moses permitted divorce because of the hardness of the people's hearts, this was not God's original will. Human sin and hardness of heart led to the permission of divorce, but this does not reflect God's ideal for marriage, which is the eternal union of a man and a woman.

Verse 9: *"I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another commits adultery."*

Here, Jesus is clear about the exception for divorce: it is only permitted in cases of marital infidelity (adultery). If someone divorces without this reason, and marries someone else, he commits adultery. Jesus emphasizes the seriousness and

sanctity of marriage, which should be preserved whenever possible.

Verse 10: *"The disciples said to him, 'If this is the situation between a man and his wife, it is better not to marry.'"*

The disciples, surprised by the severity of Jesus' teaching on marriage and divorce, express their concern. They realize that marriage is a serious responsibility, and if staying in marriage requires such a commitment, perhaps it would be better not to marry. This reveals that Jesus' teaching on the sanctity of marriage is not easy to accept, but it is an important truth for the disciples to understand.

Verse 11:

"Jesus answered, 'Not everyone can accept this word, but only those to whom it has been given.'"

- Jesus is responding to the reaction of the disciples who found the teaching on marriage and divorce difficult to accept. He recognizes that not everyone will have the ability to understand or follow this rule. Only those to whom God gives understanding will be able to accept Jesus' teaching on the sanctity of marriage. The Lord is reminding us that in order to understand God's teachings, we must open our hearts to God's leading.
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Verse 12:

"For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are those who made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Whoever is able to accept it, let him accept it."

- Jesus refers to eunuchs—people who, for various reasons, are unable or unwilling to marry. He speaks of three types of eunuchs: those who were born that way (due to a physical condition), those who were made eunuchs by others (usually through imposition or mutilation), and those who become eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven (those who, by a special calling from God, choose to abstain from marriage in order to serve God more fully). Jesus emphasizes that this choice of celibacy is something that can only be accepted by those whom God calls to it.
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Verse 13:

"Then some children were brought to Jesus so that he could place his hands on them and pray. But the disciples rebuked them."

- Some people brought children to Jesus, seeking God's blessing on them. However, the disciples, probably thinking that the children were not worthy of attention or were a nuisance, rebuked those who brought the children.
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Verse 14:

"But Jesus said, 'Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.'"

- Jesus, upon noticing the disciples' attitude, corrects them. He affirms that children are welcome in His Kingdom and that they have a special place in His vision of God. Jesus uses this situation to teach that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who approach God with the purity and humility of a child. He was,

thus revealing that entry into the Kingdom of God requires a simple and trusting faith, like that of children.

Verse 15:

"And when he had laid his hands on them, he went his way."

- After correcting the disciples, Jesus blessed the children by laying his hands on them. This gesture of laying on of hands represented the transmission of God's blessing and grace. Then, He continued on His way, setting an example of how we should treat children — with love, care, and acceptance.
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Verse 16:

"And behold, one came to him and asked, 'Teacher, what good thing must I do to have eternal life?'"

- Now a man approaches Jesus with an important question: he wants to know how he can secure eternal life. This is a central question for many, and this man is looking for a clear answer. He begins by acknowledging Jesus as "Teacher," which shows a certain respect, but he also has an important question about salvation.
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Verse 17:

"'Why do you ask me about what is good?' Jesus answered. 'There is only one who is good. If you want to enter life, keep the commandments.'"

- Jesus answers in a profound and provocative way: He asks the man why he calls Him “good,” since only God is truly good. By this, Jesus is pointing out that absolute goodness is a characteristic unique to God. He then answers the man’s question by saying that in order to have eternal life, it is necessary to keep the commandments. Salvation is not based on external actions or good intentions, but on obedience to God.
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Verse 18:

“Which ones?” he asked. Jesus replied, ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness,’

- The man, wanting more details, asks which commandments he must obey. Jesus then mentions some of the essential commandments of the Law of Moses, which deal with morality and ethics in relationships with others: do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, and do not bear false witness. These laws aim to ensure fair and honest behavior in human coexistence.
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Verse 19:

“Honor your father and your mother, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

- Jesus continues by citing fundamental commandments that are related to love for one's neighbor and family honor. He refers to the commandment to honor one's parents (which is one of the Ten Commandments) and to the commandment to love your neighbor as yourself, which is central to the teachings of Jesus. These commandments reflect love for others and the relationship of respect and care between people.

Verse 20:

"All this I have obeyed," said the young man. "What do I lack?"

- The man responds that he has already obeyed all these commandments, suggesting that he lives a life in accordance with the Law. However, he feels that something is missing, which demonstrates his inner restlessness. He seeks something deeper, an answer that will lead him to the full assurance that he has attained eternal life.

Verse 21:

"Jesus answered, 'If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.'"

- Jesus, knowing the heart of man, gives him an answer that goes beyond the simple observance of the Law. He challenges him to detach himself from his material possessions and to give to the poor, as a sign that his trust should be in God, not in riches. Jesus is calling man to become "perfect" in the sense of having a total dedication to God, seeking the Kingdom of God above all else.

Verse 22:

"The young man was saddened by this word and went away, because he had great riches."

- Upon hearing Jesus' answer, the man becomes sad because he is not willing to give up his material possessions. He would rather follow his riches than Jesus' call.

for a life of detachment and total trust in God. This teaches us that, often, attachment to material goods can prevent us from following Jesus fully.

Verse 23:

"Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Truly I tell you, it will be hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.'"

- Jesus begins to speak of a reality that is difficult to accept: the rich have difficulty entering the Kingdom of God. This does not mean that it is impossible, but that riches can often generate an attachment that distances the heart from the things of God. Trust in riches can replace trust in God, making it more difficult for the rich to follow the path of salvation. Jesus warns that attachment to material goods can be an obstacle to the Kingdom of Heaven.
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Verse 24:

"And again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

- Jesus uses an exaggerated and provocative image to illustrate the difficulty of a rich man entering the Kingdom of Heaven. The image of a camel passing through the eye of a needle conveys the idea of something almost impossible. The "camel" was the largest animal in the region, and the "needle" referred to the small eye of a needle. Jesus is saying that for those who are very attached to their riches, it is very difficult to let go of them in order to follow Jesus and trust completely in God.
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Verse 25:

"When the disciples heard this, they were greatly amazed and asked, 'Who then can be saved?'"

- The disciples were perplexed by what Jesus said. To them, wealth was often seen as a blessing from God, and the rich were considered blessed and close to God. When Jesus said that it is difficult for a rich person to be saved, the disciples wondered: If even the rich have difficulty achieving salvation, then who can be saved?
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Verse 26:

"Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'"

- Jesus explains that, in fact, human beings cannot achieve salvation by their own strength, especially when they are trapped by attachment to riches or other worldly factors. But with God, all things are possible. Salvation does not depend on our ability or wealth, but on the power of God, who is capable of transforming any heart, no matter how difficult the situation. God can change circumstances and remove attachment to riches, offering salvation to everyone, even the rich.
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Verse 27:

"Then Peter answered and said to him, 'See, we have left everything and followed you; what then will become of us?'"

- Peter, always so direct, asks Jesus about the disciples' reward. They left their families, their jobs, and their possessions to follow Jesus. Now, Peter wants to know what the reward will be for this

sacrifice. Peter's doubt reflects his concern that by giving up the world and its possessions, the disciples may have lost something important, and he looks to a promise from Jesus to comfort this doubt.

Verse 28:

"Jesus answered them, 'Truly I tell you, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.'"

- Jesus responds to Peter by saying that the disciples will be greatly rewarded. He promises that when He returns in His glory, the disciples will have a special place at His side, ruling over the twelve tribes of Israel. This is a promise of honor and authority for those who have followed Him in faith and dedication. Jesus reaffirms the eternal reward that awaits those who have left everything to follow Him.
-

Verse 29:

"And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold and will inherit eternal life."

- Jesus expands on the promise, saying that all who give up what is most precious to follow Him, such as family and material possessions, will receive an abundant reward. It will not be a loss, but a multiplication of blessings, both in this life and in eternity. He promises that by making sacrifices for the love of Him, disciples will have a much greater reward, both spiritually and materially (depending on God's will). The greatest prize, of course, will be eternal life.

Verse 30:

"But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first."

- Jesus ends this teaching with a phrase that goes against human logic. He is saying that in the economy of the Kingdom of God, the criteria for greatness are different. Those who are considered first in this world—the rich, powerful, and successful—can be last in the Kingdom of God if they do not live according to the principles of humility and service. On the other hand, the last, the humble, those who serve others, can be exalted and rewarded by God. This is a call to humility and service in the Kingdom of God

Final Reflection on Matthew 19:

- Matthew chapter 19 brings profound teachings about what it means to follow Jesus and live according to the principles of the Kingdom of God. Jesus challenges us to rethink our priorities, values, and the way we deal with wealth, relationships, and even marriage.
- First, the issue of divorce, which Jesus addresses clearly, teaches us about the importance of fidelity and persevering in commitments. Marriage, for Jesus, is not just a social contract, but a sacred covenant. This view of commitment goes beyond human legislation and points out

- for the sanctity of union, reflecting the loving relationship between Christ and the Church.
- When the disciples question who can be saved, Jesus responds by showing that for man it is impossible, but for God, all things are possible. This reminds us that our salvation does not depend on our efforts or merits, but on the grace and power of God, who can transform even the hardest of hearts.
 - The promise to the disciples that those who sacrifice for Christ will be greatly rewarded shows us that the life of faith requires selflessness. However, Jesus also teaches us that the Kingdom of God does not follow human criteria of success. The final lesson of the chapter—"the last shall be first"—reminds us that true greatness in the Kingdom of God lies in service, in putting others before ourselves, in living humbly, and in seeking God's honor, not our own.
 - Chapter 19 is an invitation to a life of commitment to eternal values, to renounce what holds us back and prevents us from fully following Christ, and to live with a perspective of faith that values the Kingdom of God. God above the things of this world.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 20 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

In Matthew chapter 20, Jesus shares important teachings about the Kingdom of God, highlighting the importance of humility, service, and grace. He tells the parable of the workers in the vineyard, where He reveals that God's generosity is not based on human merits, but on God's goodness. The chapter also addresses the disciples' expectations about the Kingdom and the sacrifice Jesus would make for humanity, as well as His compassion in healing the blind. This chapter challenges our concepts of reward, greatness, and how we should live in service to others.

Verse 1:

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard."

Here, Jesus begins the parable by explaining that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man who owns a vineyard (a grapevine). He decides to hire workers to take care of his vineyard. The fact that he leaves "early in the morning" suggests that he starts early in the day to make sure the work gets done.

Verse 2:

"And when he had agreed with the laborers for a day's wages, he sent them into his vineyard."

The owner makes an agreement with the workers, agreeing to pay a "daily wage" (the salary that

would receive for a day's work). The agreed amount was one denarius, which was the normal wage of a worker at the time. The agreement is important because it shows that the owner is fair and honest in his dealings with his employees.

Verse 3:

"And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the marketplace."

Here, the owner of the vineyard goes out again, now around the "third hour", which would be around 9 o'clock in the morning. He sees other workers who were standing in the square, doing nothing. They had no work because no one had hired them.

Verse 4:

"And he said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you."

The owner of the vineyard, seeing that these workers were unemployed, offers them work. He does not make a prior agreement about the amount, but promises to pay what is fair. This teaches us about the generosity of the owner of the vineyard. He is not obligated to hire more workers, but chooses to do so with a kind and just heart.

Verse 5:

"They went. Going out again about the sixth and ninth hour, he did the same."

The vineyard owner continues to leave at different times of the day (noon and 3pm), hiring more workers. This shows that he is always attentive to the

needs of those who are idle and wants to give everyone the opportunity to work.

Verse 6:

"And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing idle, and said unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle?"

Here, the owner of the vineyard goes to the square once more, towards the end of the day (around 5:00 p.m., or the eleventh hour), and finds even more workers without work. He asks why they were there all day doing nothing. Their answer shows that they were willing to work, but no one had hired them.

Verse 7:

"They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.'"

The workers explain that they had not been hired, and the owner of the vineyard then invites them to work on his plantation, just as he did with the others. The invitation is made with kindness, without demanding anything in return, simply offering the chance to be useful.

Verse 8:

"When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last and working toward the first.'"

Now, at the end of the day, the owner orders the foreman (the supervisor) to call the workers and start paying their wages. Interestingly, he starts paying the last ones hired, that is, those who worked

less time. This will create a surprising situation, as we will see in the next verses.

Verse 9:

"Those who had been hired at the eleventh hour came and each received a denarius."

The workers who started work at the end of the day (at the eleventh hour) each receive the same wage as the first workers hired: one denarius. Even though they worked for only one hour, they receive the same amount as those who worked the whole day.

Verse 10:

"When the first came, they thought they would receive more; but they each received a denarius."

Now, the workers who started early in the day, seeing that the last ones received the same salary, get excited, thinking that they would receive more. But, to their surprise, the salary is the same for everyone, regardless of the time worked.

What does this parable teach?

1. **God's generosity:** The owner of the vineyard is generous, not because he needs to give more, but because he chooses to be good. He chooses to pay the same amount to everyone, regardless of how long they worked, which teaches us about God's grace. He offers salvation to everyone freely, no matter how much someone has "worked" or how long they have lived without knowing Him.

2. Equality in the Kingdom of God: The central message of the parable is that in the Kingdom of God there is no place for human comparison. To God, everyone is equally loved, and He offers His grace to all. Salvation is not based on our merits, but on His mercy. Even those who arrive at the last moment, if they accept the invitation, receive the same reward.

3. The human attitude: The first workers complain, thinking it unfair to receive the same wages as those who worked less. This reminds us of the human tendency to think we deserve more than others, but God calls us to celebrate his generosity, not to complain.

4. God sees differently: The Kingdom of God is not like the human reward system. In the Kingdom of God, the focus is not on time or effort, but on God's goodness in offering salvation to all, equally. He does not follow the logic of the world, but the logic of grace.

Verse 11:

"When they received it, they murmured against the owner of the vineyard."

Workers who started early in the day, upon realizing that the last ones hired received the same pay, begin to complain. They expected that because they had worked longer and received the same amount of pay, they were being treated unfairly. This grumbling is an expression of discontent, a natural reaction when people compare what they are paid with what others are paid.

Verse 12:

"Saying, 'These last labored one hour, and you have made them equal to us, who have borne the burden and heat of the day!'"

Here the workers complain that the last ones hired only worked one hour, while they toiled all day in the hot sun. They expected a greater reward because they were putting in more effort. Their focus is on what they think they deserve, not on the kindness of the owner of the vineyard. This is a reflection of a human view of justice, where reward is given according to effort, not by grace.

Verse 13:

"But he answered and said to one of them, Friend, I do thee no wrong: didst not thou agree with me for a penny?"

The owner of the vineyard responds to one of the workers, calling him "friend," which indicates a tone of respect and also of correction. He reminds him that the agreed wage was precisely one denarius, and he kept his word. There was no injustice; the worker is receiving exactly what was agreed. This shows us that God's justice is not always as we expect. He is faithful to what He promises.

Verse 14:

"Take what is yours and go; but I want to give to this last one as much as to you."

The owner of the vineyard then offers a solution. He tells the dissatisfied worker that he can take what is his and leave, since the agreement has been fulfilled. However, he makes it clear that the decision to pay the last workers the same as the first is his own choice. This is an expression of God's sovereignty and His freedom to act as He sees fit, especially when it comes to His grace.

Verse 15:

"Or is it evil of me to do what I want with what is mine? Or are your eyes evil, because I am good?"

The owner questions the worker, challenging the idea that his generosity is unfair. He asks if he doesn't have the right to do whatever he wants with what is his. He criticizes the worker's perspective, which is seeing kindness as something wrong. This criticism is a lesson for us: often, when we see God's generosity, we tend to see it as unfair, because we think that rewards should be proportional to the effort and time dedicated.

Verse 16:

"So the last will be first, and the first will be last."

Jesus ends this part of the parable with an important principle of the Kingdom of God: "the last will be first, and the first will be last." This means that in the Kingdom of God, the logic of reward is not the same as in the world. God's criterion is not human effort, but His grace. What seems unfair to human beings is actually a reflection of God's goodness.

Verse 17:

"Now Jesus went up to Jerusalem, and took with him the twelve disciples, and said to them on the way:"

Now the scene changes. Jesus begins to make his way to Jerusalem, and He calls the twelve disciples together to explain what is about to happen. He does this to prepare them for the crucifixion that is coming. Jesus' focus now is to prepare them spiritually for the great event of His death and resurrection.

Verse 18:

"Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death."

Jesus reveals to His disciples what will happen in Jerusalem. He will be handed over to the religious leaders (chief priests and scribes), and they will condemn Him to death. Jesus is speaking about His death directly so that His disciples can understand what is coming. He does not hide from this reality, but prepares His followers for the difficult time.

Verse 19:

"And they will deliver him to the Gentiles to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified: and the third day he will be raised again."

Jesus further details the sufferings He will face: He will be mocked (ridiculed), flogged (bastinado), and finally crucified. However, He also promises that on the third day He will rise again. Here He is stating the cruel and painful death He will face, but He is also revealing the ultimate victory over death, which would be His resurrection.

Verse 20:

"Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came with her sons and worshiped him, and asked a favor of him."

At this moment, the mother of James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approaches Jesus, bringing her sons with her. She prostrates herself before Jesus, a gesture of humility and respect, and asks Him for something. Her attitude demonstrates a

genuine devotion, but his request reveals a still limited understanding of the Kingdom of God.

Verse 21:

"And he said to her, What wilt thou? She said unto him, Command that these two sons of mine may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom."

The mother of James and John, in her request, shows her desire to see her sons in positions of honor in the Kingdom of Jesus. She asks that one of her sons sit on Jesus' right and the other on his left, positions of great authority. Her request reflects the idea of human power, of occupying a prominent position.

Verse 22:

"But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink the cup that I am about to drink?"

Jesus responds to this request with a profound question. He tells them that they do not know what they are asking for, because the position at His side is not something that can simply be achieved. To achieve it, one must go through the "cup" that He is about to drink, that is, through the suffering and death that He will face. The "cup" symbolizes the suffering that Jesus would have to experience before reaching the glory of the resurrection.

Verse 24:

"And when the ten heard it, they were indignant against the two brothers."

When the other ten disciples heard James and John's request, they were angry. They felt wronged because they believed that the two brothers' request to occupy the

places of honor on Jesus' right and left was selfish and disrespectful. Their indignation reveals that, despite walking with Jesus, they still had a selfish view of the Kingdom of God and desired positions of prestige.

Verse 25:

"But Jesus called them to him and said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them."

Jesus, sensing the tension and indignation among the disciples, gathers them together to teach them an important lesson about leadership and greatness. He compares the Gentile (non-Jewish) authorities to the way the Kingdom of God operates. In the kingdoms of the world, rulers dominate and exercise authority over others, asserting power and control. Jesus is pointing out that in the Kingdom of God, leadership should not be exercised this way.

Verse 26:

"It shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your minister."

Here, Jesus establishes a fundamental principle for His followers: true greatness in the Kingdom of God is not in exercising power, but in serving others. Jesus inverts the human logic of power. In the world, those who have power rule, but in the Kingdom of God, those who want to be great must be servants of all. True leadership is marked by humility and service, not by domination over others.

Verse 27:

"And whoever wants to be first among you must be your servant."

Jesus further reinforces the idea of service. He states that if someone wants to be first, he must be willing to serve everyone. In the Kingdom of God, the order is reversed: leadership is not achieved through competition or the pursuit of status, but through personal sacrifice for the sake of others.

Verse 28:

"As the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many."

Jesus uses His own example as a model of service. He states that, even though He was the Son of God, He did not come into the world to be served, but to serve. His mission was to serve humanity in the ultimate way: giving His own life to save many. This is the greatest example of humility and service that we can have. Jesus not only taught about service, but demonstrated it in a radical way by dying on the cross for us.

Verse 29:

"And as they were leaving Jericho, a great multitude followed him."

After this important lesson on service and humility, Jesus and His disciples leave Jericho, and a large crowd begins to follow them. The crowds are increasingly attracted to Jesus, both by His message of salvation and by the miracles He performs.

Verse 30:

"And behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy on us."

Two blind men who were by the roadside, upon hearing that Jesus was passing by, began to cry out for help. They called Jesus "Son of David," recognizing Him as the promised Messiah. The expression "Son of David" is a messianic reference, recognizing that Jesus is the one who would come to save the people of Israel.

Verse 31:

"And the multitude rebuked them, that they should be silent: but they cried out all the more, saying, Lord, thou Son of David, have mercy on us."

The crowd, seeing the blind men asking for help, tried to stop them, perhaps because they considered them insignificant or undesirable. But instead of being silent, the blind men cried out even louder. Their persistence is remarkable. They did not allow themselves to be intimidated by the crowd, but trusted in Jesus and persisted in their plea for mercy. This teaches us about the importance of perseverance in faith and the courage to seek Jesus, even when others try to discourage us.

Verse 32:

"And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I should do for you?"

Jesus, upon hearing the cry of the blind men, stopped and called them. He did not ignore their request, but treated them with attention and compassion. The question "What do you want Me to do for you?" is important, because it shows that Jesus wanted to hear directly from the blind men what they wanted. This teaches us that even

Knowing our needs, God gives us the opportunity to express them and demonstrate our faith.

Verse 33:

"They said to him, 'Lord, let our eyes be opened.'"

The blind men ask for their eyes to be opened. Their request is simple, yet full of faith. They do not ask for riches or power, but simply for their ability to see to be restored. Their request reveals a deep understanding that Jesus is the only One who can heal them.

Verse 34:

"And Jesus, moved with compassion, touched their eyes: and immediately they received sight, and followed him."

Moved with compassion, Jesus touched the eyes of the blind men, and immediately they could see. This miracle not only demonstrates Jesus' power to heal physically, but also His compassion for those who suffer. The fact that the blind men followed Jesus after He healed them shows that when they were touched by Him, their faith was strengthened and they became His followers.

In Matthew chapter 20, Jesus teaches profound lessons about the true greatness and meaning of service, and shows the price He will pay for our salvation. We see the parable of the workers in the vineyard, where Jesus shows us that the Kingdom of God does not operate according to human standards of merit and reward. God's grace is not based on how much we do or how much we deserve, but on His immeasurable generosity and love.

The response of the disciples, who expected some kind of earthly reward and status in the Kingdom, challenges us to reflect on our own expectations and ambitions. True greatness in the Kingdom of God is not found in the pursuit of power or honor, but in the willingness to serve others, just as Jesus did. He teaches us that the more humble and willing we are to serve, the closer we come to His image.

Furthermore, by healing the blind men by the wayside, Jesus demonstrates His boundless compassion for everyone, without exception. Even those whom society despised, Jesus sees and responds to their cries with care and grace. This scene reminds us that we are often blind to what really matters: serving others and seeking the Kingdom of God.

The final reflection of this chapter invites us to reevaluate: How are we seeking the Kingdom of God? Are we more concerned with positions of prominence or with our willingness to serve others? How are we responding to Jesus' invitation to follow Him, even in times of difficulty and challenge? In the end, Jesus shows us that true Kingdom life is one that reflects His heart of compassion, service, and generosity.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 21 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 21 is a pivotal chapter in the Gospel, marking the beginning of the last week of Jesus' life before His crucifixion. It begins with Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, fulfilling messianic prophecy and being acclaimed as King. However, He soon proceeds to cleanse the temple, demonstrating His zeal for the sanctity of God's house. The chapter also includes parables that reveal Jesus' rejection by the religious leaders and teaches about the true meaning of faith and obedience. Throughout this chapter, Jesus demonstrates His divine authority and confronts religious hypocrisy, challenging the people and leaders to reflect on their response to Him and the message of God's Kingdom.

Verse 1: *"When they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,"*

- **Explanation:** Jesus is approaching Jerusalem, the city that would be the center of His redemptive mission, where He would be crucified. He and His disciples arrive at Bethphage, a small village near Jerusalem, located on the Mount of Olives. From here, Jesus gives His disciples precise instructions to accomplish something important, which marks the fulfillment of an ancient prophecy.

Verse 2: *"saying to them, 'Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there, and a colt with her; untie them and bring them to me.'"*

- **Explanation:** Jesus makes a specific request to the disciples: they should go to a nearby village, where they would find a donkey with her colt tied to it. This is a prophetic act, for Jesus knew exactly where they would be. The fact that He asked them to bring a simple animal (not a horse, which would have been a symbol of royalty at the time) reflects His humility.
-

Verse 3: *"And if anyone tells you anything, say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them immediately."*

- **Explanation:** Jesus instructs the disciples to respond, if anyone questions what they are doing, that the Lord (Himself) needs the animals. This shows that although Jesus is humble and acts with simplicity, He has authority and control over all things. He already knew that the answer would be positive.
-

Verse 4: *"All this took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet:*

- **Explanation:** Matthew explains that what was happening was not just a coincidence, but the fulfillment of a prophecy. Jesus is following in God's footsteps to accomplish His mission. The prophecy he refers to is from Zechariah 9:9, which predicted that the Messiah would come humble, riding on a donkey.
-

Verse 5: *"Tell the daughter of Zion, 'See, your King comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'"*

- **Explanation:** This quote from Zechariah 9:9 reveals that the Messiah would not be a warlike ruler, as many expected, but a gentle and peaceful King. Jesus, by riding on a donkey, is fulfilling this prophecy and showing that His Kingdom is not based on military power, but on peace and humility.
-

Verse 6: *"And the disciples went and did as Jesus had commanded them;"*

- **Explanation:** The disciples readily obey Jesus' command. This shows their faith and willingness to carry out Jesus' plans, even though they did not fully understand what He was doing.
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Verse 7: *"They brought the donkey and the colt, put their clothes on them, and He sat on them."*

- **Explanation:** The disciples bring the animals and, to make Jesus a kind of "improvised throne", they place their own clothes on the back of the donkey. This gesture of placing the clothes on the animal is a way of honoring Jesus, a kind of symbolic welcoming of the King.
-

Verse 8: *"And most of the multitude spread their garments on the road; others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road."*

- **Explanation:**The crowd, upon recognizing Jesus as the Messiah, makes a gesture of reverence and respect. Extending the garments and branches is a sign of welcome and honor, a gesture worthy of a king. The use of branches, especially palm branches, was also associated with victories and celebrations of a king.
-

Verse 9: *"And the multitudes that went before and that followed cried out, saying, 'Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!'"*

- **Explanation:**The crowd acclaims Jesus as the Son of David, a messianic reference, recognizing Him as the rightful heir to the throne of Israel. "Hosanna" is an expression of praise and adoration, meaning "save us" or "help us." This acclamation is part of the recognition of Jesus as the Messiah, although many still expected a military king.
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Verse 10: *"And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was moved, saying, 'Who is this?'"*

- **Explanation:**Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem is a significant event, and the entire city is stirred by His entrance. People wonder who He is, for they do not yet fully understand His mission. Jesus' triumphal entry marks the beginning of the last week of His earthly life, leading up to His crucifixion.
-

Verse 11: *"And the crowds said, 'This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.'"*

- **Explanation:**The crowds recognize Jesus as a prophet, which was already a great honor, but not

fully understand who He is. Many still saw Jesus as a preacher from Nazareth, not knowing that He was the Son of God and the promised Messiah. This recognition as a prophet, although correct in part, does not reveal the fullness of His identity.

Verse 12: *"And Jesus entered the temple of God and drove out all those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves."*

- **Explanation:**After the crowds cheered, Jesus went to the temple, the center of Jewish worship. He saw that the temple, a sacred place, was being desecrated by merchants who were exchanging money and selling animals for sacrifice. In an act of zeal for the sanctity of God's house, Jesus drove out these merchants and overturned their tables. This symbolized the purification of the temple and also a criticism of those who were using religion for personal gain instead of sincerely worshipping God.
-

Verse 13: *"And he said to them, 'It is written: My house will be called a house of prayer, but you consider it a den of thieves.'"*

- **Explanation:**Jesus quotes Isaiah 56:7, which says that God's temple should be a place of prayer for all nations. But He also mentions that instead of being a house of prayer, the temple was turned into a "den of thieves." This reveals the gravity of the situation: God's house, which should be a place of reverence and worship, was being used to deceive people and for illicit profits.
-

Verse 14: *"And the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them."*

- **Explanation:** After the cleansing of the temple, Jesus reveals the true purpose of His coming: to heal and bring deliverance. The temple, at its core, was meant to be a place where people found spiritual and physical healing, and that is what Jesus does here. He heals the blind and the lame, restoring dignity and health to those who were suffering.
-

Verse 15: *"But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things he did and the children crying out in the temple, 'Hosanna to the Son of David,' they were indignant."*

- **Explanation:** When the religious leaders saw Jesus' miraculous healings and heard the children shouting "Hosanna to the Son of David," they felt challenged and uncomfortable. They did not understand that Jesus was fulfilling the prophecies about the Messiah, and their indignation showed how spiritually blind they were. The children's acclaim angered these leaders because they recognized something in Jesus that they refused to see.
-

Verse 16: *"And they said to him, 'Do you hear what these are saying?' And Jesus said to them, 'Yes; have you never read: Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings you have perfected praise?'"*

- **Explanation:** The religious leaders question Jesus, outraged by the children's worship. He responds with a quote from Psalm 8:2, reminding them that God often reveals himself in unexpected ways. Children, untainted by pride and self-sufficiency of the leaders, they are able to recognize who Jesus really is: the Messiah, worthy of worship.

Jesus reveals that God is pleased with sincere praise, even from children.

Verse 17: *"And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there."*

- **Explanation:** After the confrontation with the religious leaders, Jesus retreats to Bethany, where he spends the night. This time away can be interpreted as a way for Jesus to rest and prepare for the upcoming events, as well as to avoid further confrontations before the appointed time.
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Verse 18: *"And when it was day, he was hungry."*

- **Explanation:** Jesus, as a human being, also experienced physical needs, such as hunger. This highlights His humanity. He is fully divine and fully human, experiencing the same things as anyone else.
-

Verse 19: *"And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, 'May no one eat fruit from you again ever again'; and his disciples heard it."*

- **Explanation:** Jesus sees a fig tree that, although it appears to have fruit, is full of leaves. This symbolizes hypocrisy: a tree that appears to be fruitful, but in reality, offers nothing good. Jesus curses the fig tree, representing His criticism of the religious leaders of Israel, who, despite appearing to be spiritual (like the fig tree full of leaves), were not producing fruits of righteousness and faith.
-

Verse 20: *"And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, 'How did the fig tree wither so quickly?'"*

- **Explanation:** The disciples were amazed at how quickly the fig tree withered, for they were witnessing a miracle of judgment. They were beginning to understand that Jesus' actions were not just about miracles of healing, but also about a profound message of judgment for those who did not produce fruits of righteousness.
-

Verse 21: *"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which was done to the fig tree, but even if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, it shall be done."*

- **Explanation:** Jesus uses the withered fig tree as a lesson for His disciples. He teaches that with true faith, nothing is impossible. Faith is not just a passive belief, but an active and powerful one, capable of accomplishing great things, even moving mountains. Jesus wants His disciples to understand that with faith, they have the power to accomplish God's will on earth.
-

Verse 22: *"And whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."*

- **Explanation:** Jesus concludes this lesson by saying that prayer, when prayed with true faith, has tremendous power. It is not just asking, but asking with complete confidence in God's power to answer. Faith is essential for our prayers to be effective.
-

Verse 23: *"And when he was entered into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him, saying,*

'By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave you this authority?'

- **Explanation:** Upon returning to the temple, Jesus is confronted by the religious leaders, who question His authority. They do not understand that Jesus' authority comes directly from God, and His acting with authority is a threat to the established religious system.
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Verse 24: *"And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing; and if ye answer me, I also will tell you by what authority I do these things."*

- **Explanation:** When the religious leaders questioned Jesus about His authority to do what He did, He challenged them to answer a question before giving an explanation. Jesus used this approach to show that they were unwilling to hear or accept the truth. His wisdom in responding in this way put the religious leaders in a difficult position, since they could not simply ignore His question without exposing their lack of understanding or integrity.
-

Verse 25: *"The baptism of John, from where was it? From heaven or from men?" And they discussed it among themselves, saying, 'If we say, 'From heaven,' he will say, 'Why then did you not believe him?'"*

- **Explanation:** Jesus asks about the origin of John's baptism, challenging the religious leaders to take a clear stand. If they were to acknowledge that John's baptism came from God (heaven), they would have to admit that John was a prophet and that they should have accepted him. This puts them in an awkward position, because by not believing John, they would have to admit that they were rejecting something that came from God.

Verse 26: *"But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the crowd, for they all hold John to be a prophet."*

- **Explanation:** The religious leaders were aware that if they said that John's baptism came from men, they would go against public opinion, which considered John a prophet. They feared the people's reaction, because in that case they might be rejected or criticized. This response reveals the cowardly and political character of these leaders, who preferred to please the people rather than do the right thing.

Verse 27: *"And they answered and said to Jesus, 'We do not know.' And He also said to them, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.'"*

- **Explanation:** Faced with their lack of courage and evasive response, the religious leaders refuse to take a firm stand, saying they do not know. Jesus then responds in kind, refusing to explain His authority. He uses this response to show that they were not ready to understand or accept the truth, and therefore did not deserve a clear answer.

Verse 28: *"But what do you think? A man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go work today in my vineyard.'"*

- **Explanation:** Jesus begins a parable to teach an important lesson. The story of a man with two sons is a metaphor for people's response to God's will. The man asks the first son to work in the vineyard, which represents God's work in the world. This parable challenges religious leaders to

reflect on their own actions in relation to God's will.

Verse 29: *"And he answered and said, 'I will not;' but afterwards he repented, and went."*

- **Explanation:** The first son initially refuses his father's request, but later repents and goes to work in the vineyard. This illustrates someone who initially rejects God's will, but later repents and obeys. The story reflects how people can reject God's call, but through repentance, they can turn back and fulfill His will.
-

Verse 30: *"And he came to the second, and said the same thing unto him. And he answered and said, I go, sir; and he went not."*

- **Explanation:** The second son, unlike the first, promises to go and work in the vineyard, but he does not. This part of the parable illustrates those who, apparently, agree with God's will and make promises of obedience, but their actions do not match their words. This attitude represents hypocrisy, where words are not followed by actions.
-

Verse 31: *"Which of the two did his father's will?"*

- **Explanation:** Jesus asks the crucial question, "Which of the two did the will of his father?" He wants religious leaders and people to think about who truly obeys God. It is not what we say, but what we do that reveals our obedience. Jesus' answer is implicit in the parable: it is the first son, who repented and went, even though he initially rejected his father's request.

Verse 32: *"They said, 'The first.' Jesus said to them, 'Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are going into the kingdom of God before you.'*

- **Explanation:** The religious leaders recognize that the first son, who initially refused but later repented and obeyed, did the will of the father. Jesus then makes a startling statement: publicans (tax collectors) and harlots (prostitutes) who repent of their sins are closer to the kingdom of God than the religious leaders. This challenges the religious leaders' expectations of righteousness, since they believed that their religious appearance made them closer to God. Jesus shows that the

Genuine repentance and life change are more valuable than superficial religiosity.

Verse 33: *"For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and the harlots believed him; but you, after you have seen him, do not repent and believe him."*

- **Explanation:** Jesus explains that John the Baptist came preaching righteousness and repentance, but the religious leaders refused to believe him. On the other hand, people who were considered sinners, such as tax collectors and harlots, recognized John's message and repented. The difference between the religious leaders and those who repented is that the former were so caught up in their own righteousness and pride that they did not recognize the truth in John and did not repent, while the latter were humble and accepted God's message.

Verse 34: *"Hear another parable: There was a man who owned a vineyard, and he planted a hedge around it,*

he dug a winepress in it and built a tower, and rented it out to farmers, and went away for many days."

- **Explanation:** Jesus begins a new parable, which describes a vineyard owner (God), who did everything necessary for the vineyard to flourish. (representing the people of Israel) would produce good fruit. He leases the vineyard to tenants (the religious leaders), and then goes away for a time, representing God's period of waiting for the obedience of the leaders and the people.
-

Verse 35: *"And when the time of harvest drew near, he sent his servants to the tenants, that they might receive the fruits."*

- **Explanation:** When the time for harvest comes, the owner of the vineyard sends his servants (God's prophets) to gather the fruits (the people's obedience and righteousness). This symbolizes the time when God sends prophets and messengers to call the people to repentance and obedience.
-

Verse 36: *"He sent other servants, more than the first, and they treated them in the same way."*

- **Explanation:** The owner of the vineyard, who represents God, sends more servants (representing more prophets) to seek the fruits of the vineyard (the people's response and obedience). However, the tenants (the religious leaders) treat these servants the same way they treated the previous ones, that is, they despise and mistreat them. This symbolizes the continual rejection of God's prophets throughout history. When the people do not listen to God's word, they end up despising His messengers.
-

Verse 37: *"And finally he sent his son to them, saying, 'Respect my son.'"*

- **Explanation:** The owner of the vineyard, in his patience and hope, sends his son, who symbolizes Jesus Christ. God sends His beloved Son, hoping that people Respect Him and listen to His message. Jesus, when telling this parable, is referring to Himself and announcing His coming, demonstrating that God, in His mercy, offers another chance to the people, sending the best and last message.
-

Verse 38: *"But when the tenants saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and we will have his inheritance.'"*

- **Explanation:** The tenants, upon seeing the son, plot to kill him, thinking that by doing so they can take the inheritance of the owner of the vineyard (representing God's authority and blessing). This is a metaphor for the rejection and crucifixion of Jesus, when the religious leaders and authorities tried to kill the Son of God, believing that by doing so they could rid themselves of His authority over them.
-

Verse 39: *"And they seized him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him."*

- **Explanation:** The act of casting the son out of the vineyard and killing him is a reference to the crucifixion of Jesus. He was rejected and taken outside the city, where he was crucified. The parable points to the suffering and imminent death of Jesus, something that was already being planned by the religious leaders. They rejected the offer of salvation that God gave them through His Son.
-

Verse 40: *"When the lord of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?"*

- **Explanation:** Jesus asks the religious leaders and the crowd a question: What will the owner of the vineyard do with these tenants who killed his son? This question is intended to provoke reflection on the consequences of rejecting God and His messengers. The answer to this question, which will be given below, is a lesson in divine justice and judgment.
-

Verse 41: *"They said to him, 'The owner of the vineyard will put those cursed men to a miserable death, and will lease the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him the fruits in due season.'"*

- **Explanation:** The response of the religious leaders and the crowd is that the owner of the vineyard should punish the evil-doing tenants, and that he will hand over the vineyard to other tenants who will actually care for it and bring forth the fruit. This response reflects divine justice: those who reject God and His messengers face the consequences, while others (those willing to obey) receive God's blessings.
-

Verse 42: *"Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; the Lord has done it, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"*

- **Explanation:** Jesus quotes a verse from the Old Testament (Psalm 118:22-23) and applies it to Himself. He is the stone rejected by the religious leaders, but God chose Him as the chief cornerstone, that is, the fundamental basis of His work of salvation. Jesus is the stone that many rejected, but which is actually the key to the salvation of all. The reference to the cornerstone also indicates that without Jesus, the building of faith cannot stand firm.

Verse 43: *"Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruits."*

- **Explanation:** Jesus prophesies that the kingdom of God will be taken from the religious leaders who rejected God's message and will be given to others who will produce fruits of repentance and righteousness. This refers to the fact that the gospel would be taken to the Gentiles (non-Jews) and that the responsibility of being God's chosen people would fall to those who accepted the message of Christ.

Verse 44: *"And whoever falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and on whomever it falls, it will crush him."*

- **Explanation:** Jesus warns that by rejecting Himself, people run the risk of being destroyed. Whoever rejects the "rock" (Jesus) will be broken to pieces, that is, will suffer the consequences of their rejection. The rock that can be a foundation for salvation also becomes a stumbling block for those who despise it. This refers to the final judgment for those who do not accept Christ.

Verse 45: *"And when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them."*

- **Explanation:** The religious leaders finally realize that Jesus was speaking against them. They recognize that Jesus' parables accuse them of being like the wicked tenants who rejected the Son and abused God's authority. Yet, instead of repenting, they continue in their hardness of heart.
-

Verse 46: *"And they sought to arrest him, but they feared the multitude, because they considered him a prophet."*

- **Explanation:** Even though they understood that Jesus was accusing them, the religious leaders did not dare to arrest Him, because they feared the crowd's reaction. They knew that Jesus was considered a prophet by the people, and this popularity limited his actions. This shows the fear and hypocrisy of the religious leaders, who did not act according to the truth, but according to their political conveniences.
- **Final Reflection on Matthew Chapter 21:**
- Matthew 21 is one of the high points of Jesus' ministry, filled with powerful teachings and profound revelations about the Kingdom of God. It begins with Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem, where the people applaud Him, but as we will see in the following chapters, many of those who acclaim Him will soon reject Him. Jesus' entry into Jerusalem fulfills a prophecy and signals His messianic authority, but it also heralds the beginning of His passion.
- The episode of the purification of the temple is a harsh rebuke to corruption and lack of reverence in the place intended for worshiping God. Jesus acts with authority, reminding us that the temple is the house of God and must be respected. He teaches us that true worship is not limited to external rituals, but must involve a sincere and obedient heart.
- The parable of the wicked tenants highlights the religious leaders' persistent rejection of the Son of God, showing that those who refuse to obey God's will will lose the privilege of being part of His Kingdom. The rejection of Jesus by the leaders and the people is a serious warning about the danger of hardness of heart and lack of repentance. However, the parable is also an invitation to reflect on how we should live our faith and fulfill the mission that God has entrusted to us.

- Finally, the “cornerstone” quote reminds us that despite the rejection of many, Jesus is the foundation of our faith and salvation. Those who accept Him as Lord and Savior, building their lives on Him, will find eternal security and hope. However, those who reject Him will face the consequences of their choices.
- This chapter challenges us to examine our own lives and how we respond to the message of Christ. Are we offering God true worship? Are we living according to the values of His Kingdom? Are we willing to accept Jesus as the cornerstone of our lives, or are we trying to build our own “vineyard” apart from Him?
- The invitation is clear: repent, accept Jesus and live according to His will, for only then will we experience true peace and the full fruit of the Kingdom of God.
-

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 22 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 22 presents a series of parables and teachings from Jesus that address themes such as the Kingdom of Heaven, love for God and neighbor, and the divine authority of Christ. In this chapter, Jesus answers challenging questions from the religious leaders, revealing His divine wisdom and making it clear that true fulfillment of the Law is found in love for God and neighbor. In addition, He affirms His identity as the Messiah, the Son of God, and challenges His listeners to reflect on their response to the invitation of the Kingdom. This chapter is essential for understanding the nature of the Kingdom of God and the depth of the relationship we should cultivate with God and with others.

Verse 1

"Jesus answered and spoke to them again in parables, saying:"

- Jesus continues to teach through parables, stories that reveal deep spiritual truths. Parables are a way to teach His listeners about the Kingdom of God, especially those who are willing to listen and understand. He chooses to use a new parable to convey an important message about rejecting God's invitation.
-

Verse 2

"The kingdom of heaven is like a king who made a marriage for his son."

- Here Jesus begins to tell the parable of the wedding feast. The king represents God, and the son is Jesus. The wedding is a symbol of the relationship between God and His people, with the celebration representing the joy and fellowship experienced in union with the Lord. The invitation to the wedding is a metaphor for God's invitation to His Kingdom.
-

Verse 3

"And he sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding, but they were not willing to come."

- The king sends his servants to invite the people to the celebration, but they refuse. Here, the "servants" represent the prophets sent by God throughout history, and the "guests" are the Jews, who were God's chosen people, but many rejected God's invitation to salvation. This symbolizes the rejection of God's invitation by those who were initially called.
-

Verse 4

"He sent other servants, saying, Tell those who are invited, 'Behold, I have prepared my dinner; the oxen and the fatlings are killed, and everything is ready; come to the wedding.'"

- The king sends new servants with a more detailed invitation, explaining that the banquet is ready and the food has already been prepared. This shows the patience and persistence of God, who, through new messengers (such as Jesus and the apostles), try to invite people into the Kingdom. God's invitation is generous and abundant, offering a banquet of salvation and eternal life.
-

Verse 5

"But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise;"

- The response of those invited is one of indifference. They ignore the invitation, preferring to follow their own interests – their fields and businesses. This symbolizes those who put their earthly and material concerns ahead of God's calling. Jesus warns against distraction and the lack of priority for the things of the Kingdom of God, which are eternal.
-

Verse 6

"And the rest took his servants, mistreated them, and killed them."

- Rejection of the invitation goes beyond simple indifference. Some guests become violent, mistreating and killing the servants. This represents the persecution and death of the prophets God sent throughout history, including the apostles, who suffered for preaching the message of Christ. Resistance to the Kingdom of God often leads to hostility toward the messengers.
-

Verse 7

"But the king, incensed, sent his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city."

- The king takes violent action against those who rejected his invitation and killed his servants. This represents divine judgment on those who reject the invitation of salvation and persecute God's messengers. The "burnt city" may be a reference to the destruction of Jerusalem that occurred in 70 AD.

when the Roman army destroyed the city as a consequence of the rejection of the Messiah.

Verse 8

"Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.'"

- The king acknowledges that the first guests were not worthy to partake of the banquet, for they rejected the invitation. This implies that the opportunity of the Kingdom of God was given to the Jews, but many rejected it. Now the message of salvation is extended to others, symbolizing that the Gentiles (non-Jews) are invited to participate.
-

Verse 9

"Go therefore to the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding feast."

- The king orders his servants to go to the crossroads and invite everyone they find to the banquet. This symbolizes God's inclusion of all—Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, good and bad—in His invitation to enter His kingdom. The gospel is for everyone, without exception, and the call is universal.
-

Verse 10

"And those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both good and bad: and the wedding hall was filled with guests."

- The servants carry out the king's order, inviting everyone they find, and the wedding hall fills up.

The message is clear: God's invitation to His Kingdom is open to everyone, regardless of their background, social status, or morality. God's Kingdom is for those who respond to His call, not for those who feel they deserve it on their own merits.

Verse 11

"And the king came in to see the guests, and saw there a man which was not clothed in wedding garments;"

- The king enters to see his guests and notices that a man is not wearing the appropriate attire for the banquet. In the culture of the time, the host would provide special garments for the guests as a symbol of honor and dignity for the event. In this context, the wedding garment symbolizes purity and preparation for the Kingdom of God. The fact that the man is not dressed properly indicates that he was not prepared or did not care to conform to what the King wanted.

I was waiting.

Verse 12

"And he said unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having wedding garments? And he was speechless."

- The king questions the man about his lack of proper clothing, which shows that lack of preparation is a flaw that cannot be ignored. The man is speechless, unable to respond. This represents those who, when called to the Kingdom of God, do not prepare themselves adequately or dress in the virtues required to live according to God's standards. The man's silence can also symbolize the guilt of those who approach God without being truly committed to Him.

Verse 13

"Then the king said to the servants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

- The king, indignant, orders the man to be thrown out, bound, and placed in outer darkness, a place of suffering. The "weeping and gnashing of teeth" is a metaphor used in several passages in Matthew to describe the eternal suffering of those who reject the Kingdom of God or do not prepare themselves for it. The king is righteous in his reaction, for the man had the opportunity to prepare himself, but he chose not to. disregard the demands of the banquet.

Verse 14

"For many are called, but few are chosen."

- This phrase from Jesus summarizes the main message of the parable: although the invitation to the Kingdom of God is open to everyone (many are called), not everyone accepts the invitation seriously and prepares themselves adequately for it. Those who truly respond to God's call, living according to His teachings and dressing in Christian virtues (like the wedding garment), are the "chosen ones." This verse warns of the importance of being prepared and committed to God.

Verse 15

"Then the Pharisees went out and plotted against him, to trap him in his words."

- After Jesus told this parable, the Pharisees, who were religious leaders at the time, felt offended and began to plot a way to catch Him in error. They were unwilling to accept the spiritual truths that Jesus was teaching and looked for an opportunity to incriminate Him, something that was repeated many times throughout Jesus' ministry.
-

Verse 16

"And they sent their disciples to him with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that you are true, and teach the way of God in truth; and you care for no man, for you do not regard the person of men."

- In an attempt to trap Jesus, the Pharisees send their disciples with the help of the Herodians, a political group that supported King Herod. They try to flatter Jesus, saying that He teaches the truth and does not care about people's opinions. This initial flattery is an attempt to disguise their malicious intent, as they want to put Jesus in a difficult situation.
-

Verse 17

"Tell us therefore, what thinkest thou? Is it lawful to pay taxes unto Caesar, or not?"

- They ask a question about paying tribute to Caesar, the Roman emperor, trying to create a dilemma. If Jesus says it is lawful to pay, He will look bad with the Jews, who do not want to be dominated by Rome. If He says it is not lawful, He will be inciting rebellion against Rome. It is a tricky question, because both sides would have grounds for accusing Him.
-

Verse 18

"But Jesus, knowing their malice, said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?"

- Jesus sees through their malicious intent and, rather than falling into their trap, calls them "hypocrites" because they were feigning genuine interest. Jesus knew that they were not really seeking the truth, but simply wanted to find a way to compromise His authority.
-

Verse 19

"Show me the tribute coin." And they brought him a denarius.

- Jesus asks for a coin, a denarius, which was used to pay taxes to Caesar. This serves to illustrate the point He will make next. The coin with Caesar's image is a representation of Rome's rule, and Jesus will use this as the basis for His answer.
-

Verse 20

"And he asked them, Whose is this image and superscription?"

- Jesus asks a simple question about the image and inscription on the coin, which was that of Caesar. They knew the coin had the image of the Roman emperor on it, and Jesus uses this to make an important point.
-

Verse 21

"They said to him, 'Caesar's.' Then he said to them, 'Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.'"

- Jesus' answer is clear and wise. He teaches that even though the Jews were under Roman rule, they should fulfill their civil obligations, such as paying taxes. But they should also give to God what belongs to Him, such as worship and obedience. Jesus makes an important distinction between civil and spiritual responsibilities.
-

Verse 22

"When they heard this, they were amazed, and left him and went their way."

- Jesus' response leaves them speechless and amazed. They expected Jesus to fall into their trap, but He wisely responded in a way that not only disarmed them but also made them think. Not knowing how to react, Jesus' opponents retreated.
-

Verse 24

"Saying: Teacher, Moses said: If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother."

- The Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection, tried to trick Jesus with a question about the Law of Moses. They cited a law from the Torah (Deuteronomy 25:5-6) that if a man died without leaving any children, his brother was to marry the widow to ensure the continuation of the lineage. They used this law to present a hypothetical situation that sought to cast doubt on the doctrine of the resurrection.
-

Verse 25

"Now there were seven brothers among us; and the first took a wife, and died, and having no children, he left his wife to his brother."

- They continue with the fictional story, mentioning that there were seven brothers, and the first died without leaving any children, causing the woman to be married to the second brother, according to the Law of Moses.
-

Verse 26

"In the same way, the second and the third, until the seventh."

- They continue the story, saying that the seven brothers married the same woman, according to the law, but they all died without leaving children. This exaggerated account was intended to make Jesus face an impossible situation to resolve, trying to question the logic of the resurrection.
-
-

Verse 27

"Finally, after everyone, the woman also died."

- Now they conclude the story by saying that in the end the woman also died. The purpose of the question was to create a dilemma: in the resurrection, which brother's wife would the woman be, since they all married her?

Verse 28

"In the resurrection therefore, whose wife will she be of them? For they all took her."

- They ask Jesus, trying to show that the idea of resurrection is absurd, since it involves such a complicated scenario. Their question suggests that if

The woman was the wife of seven men, who would be the real husband in the resurrection?

Verse 29

"But Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

- Jesus responds firmly, telling them that they are wrong. Their error lies in not understanding the Scriptures correctly, nor in understanding the power of God. They think of the resurrection in a limited way, as if it were a continuation of earthly life, but it is much more glorious and transformative than they imagine.
-

Verse 30

"For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven."

- Jesus explains that in the resurrection, human relationships such as marriage will no longer exist, because people will be transformed and will be in a glorious spiritual condition, like the angels, who do not marry. This means that life in the resurrection is completely different from earthly life, and earthly concerns such as marriage are no longer necessary.
-

Verse 31

"But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read what was spoken by God, when he spake unto you, saying,

- Now Jesus turns to God's Word, reminding the Sadducees that Scripture speaks of the resurrection. He challenges their misunderstanding of what Scripture actually teaches about life after death.
-

Verse 32

"I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living."

- Jesus quotes the passage from Exodus 3:6, where God reveals himself to Moses as the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Jesus' point is that if God calls himself the God of the patriarchs who have died, it implies that they are still alive in some way, for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living. This quote is a clear reference to the resurrection, affirming that the dead in Christ live.
-

Verse 33

"And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine."

- Jesus' answer is so profound and clear that the crowd is amazed. They realize that Jesus has a deep understanding of the Scriptures, something the religious leaders did not have.
-

Verse 34

"But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they held a council;"

- Now the Pharisees, who were rivals of the Sadducees, realize that Jesus has defeated the Sadducees in their attempt to challenge him. They gather together to find

a way to catch Jesus in a trap, perhaps trying to create a new kind of trap.

Verse 35

"And one of them, an expert in the law, asked him, tempting him, saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"

- One of the Pharisees, who was an expert in the law, tries to trap Jesus with a question. He asks what is the greatest commandment in the law. This seems like a simple question, but his intention is to put Jesus in a difficult situation, since there were many commandments and conflicting commandments in the Law of Moses.
-

Verse 36

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"

- The question again is about which commandment is the most important, which reveals that they are trying to get Jesus to choose one commandment and thus compromise himself in relation to the others.
-

Verse 36

"Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"

- A Pharisee, an expert in the Law, asks Jesus which commandment is the most important. This was a common question among the rabbis of the time, and they had various interpretations of which commandment was the most important. The purpose of this question was to test Jesus, trying to get an answer that might be considered wrong or unpopular.
-

Verse 37

"And Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.'"

- Jesus responds with the **Shema**, a central Jewish prayer found in Deuteronomy 6:5, which says we are to love God with all our being. It highlights three fundamental aspects of loving God:
 - the **Heart**: Refers to inner emotions, desires and motivations.
 - the **Soul**: Represents the complete being, including our essence and will.
 - the **Understanding**: It refers to the mind, our thinking and understanding. Loving God is not just a matter of emotions, but also of intelligence and reason.
 - Jesus emphasizes that love for God is total and encompasses all areas of life. This is the most important commandment, as it is the basis of everything we do.
-

Verse 38

"This is the first and great commandment."

- Jesus confirms that the first and most important commandment is to love God with all our being. He places this above all else, for it is the foundation of our spiritual life and our relationship with God.
-

Verse 39

"And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

- The second commandment, which is like the first, is **love your neighbor as yourself**. This commandment comes from Leviticus 19:18 and is just as important as the first. It teaches us that love for God and love for our neighbor are interconnected. We cannot truly love God without demonstrating that love in the way we treat others.
-

Verse 40

"On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."

- Jesus states that all other commandments and teachings in the Bible depend on these two principles: to love God and to love our neighbor. These commandments are the key to understanding and fulfilling the entire Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets. Therefore, the entire Bible can be summed up in these two commandments: our relationship with God and with others.
-

Verse 41

"While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

- Now Jesus asks the Pharisees a question. They were trying to catch Jesus in error, and since He had wisely answered their question, He now challenges them with a question of His own.
-

Verse 42

"What do you think of Christ? Whose son is he?"

- Jesus asks the Pharisees about the identity of the Christ. He challenges them to think about who the Messiah is, asking whose son He might be. This question is

central, because, for the Pharisees, the Messiah would be a descendant of David, but Jesus is about to reveal something deeper about his identity.

Verse 43

"They said to him, 'Son of David.'"

- The Pharisees responded according to Jewish tradition: the Messiah would be a descendant of David. This was the expectation of the Jewish people. They expected a political leader who would restore the kingdom of Israel, as David had done in the past.
-

Verse 44

"And Jesus said unto them, How then doth David in the spirit call him Lord, saying,

- Now Jesus quotes a verse from Psalm 110:1 where David refers to the Messiah as "Lord." Jesus asks how David could call the Messiah "Lord" if he were merely his descendant. Jesus' answer implies that the Messiah is not only a descendant of David in the physical sense, but is also **Si**rof David. This points to the divinity of Christ, that is, the Messiah would be both human and divine.
-

Verse 45

"The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'"

- Jesus quotes Psalm 110:1, where David says, "The Lord said to my Lord." This verse depicts a conversation between God (the Father) and the Messiah (the Son). Jesus states that David recognized that the Messiah would be much more than

a mere human descendant, but one who would have divine authority, sitting at the right hand of God.

Verse 46

"If David calls him Lord, how is he his son? And no one was able to answer him a word, nor did they dare to ask him any more questions from that day on."

- The Pharisees were unable to answer Jesus' question because it revealed the true identity of the Messiah. Jesus was challenging their limited understanding of the Christ. They knew that according to Scripture the Messiah would be of the lineage of David, but the idea that He would also be David's Lord left them confused and at a loss for answers. In the face of Jesus' wisdom, they dared not ask any more questions.
- Matthew 22 is a chapter filled with profound and challenging teachings, where Jesus addresses topics such as love for God and neighbor, the identity of the Messiah, and divine wisdom amid challenges and questions. He reveals that the greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and the second is to love your neighbor as yourself. These two commandments are the foundation of all the Law and the Prophets, summing up the essence of our relationship with God and others.
- Furthermore, the chapter shows how Jesus confronts the traps and deceptive questions of the religious leaders, responding with wisdom that leaves his opponents speechless. His answer about the lineage and identity of the Messiah, showing that He is not only the Son of David but also David's Lord, reveals His deity and eternal authority.

- The final reflection of this chapter leads us to consider the depth of our love for God and our neighbor. Jesus does not call us simply to follow rules, but to live a true and transformative relationship with Him and with the people around us. He challenges us to go beyond human expectations and to recognize His divine authority, as the Messiah, the eternal Lord. We are therefore called to live with a practical and genuine love, grounded in our understanding of the love and authority of Christ, who is Lord of all things.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 23 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 23 is a chapter in which Jesus harshly confronts the religious leaders of the time, the Pharisees and scribes, for their hypocrisy and lack of true spirituality. He denounces the way in which these leaders are only concerned with the outward appearance of their religiosity, while neglecting the deeper and more essential aspects of faith, such as justice, mercy, and faithfulness to God. Jesus also laments the hardness of the hearts of the people of Jerusalem and the rejection of the prophets throughout history. This chapter challenges us to reflect on the sincerity of our faith and the importance of living according to the principles of the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 23:1

"Then Jesus spoke to the crowds and to his disciples:"

Jesus addresses both the crowd and the disciples, pointing out that His words are for everyone. He wants to teach an important lesson about how faith should be lived and practiced.

Matthew 23:2-3

"The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat. Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do. But do not imitate their works, for they say and do not do."

Jesus recognizes the position of authority of the Pharisees and teachers of the Law. They were responsible for teaching the Law of Moses, and so Jesus says that people should listen to what they say, because when they speak of the Law, they are transmitting the truth. However, Jesus warns that we should not imitate their attitudes, because they speak but do not practice what they preach. This is a warning against hypocrisy.

Matthew 23:4

"They tie up heavy burdens and lay them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are unwilling to move them with one of their fingers."

Jesus points out the attitude of religious leaders who burdened the people with rules and burdensome obligations, while they themselves did not practice even a little of what they demanded of others. It is a criticism of the way these leaders imposed rules without making an effort to help people follow them.

Matthew 23:5

"They do all their works to be seen by men. For they make their phylacteries broad and their fringes long,"

Here Jesus speaks of the vanity of these religious leaders, who made their actions public in order to be admired by others. The "phylacteries" were small leather boxes containing passages from the Torah, used as a symbol of piety. They wore large boxes to appear more devout. The "long fringes" were fringes on their garments that also symbolized piety, but these leaders wore them excessively to show their "holiness."

Matthew 23:6

"And they love the place of honor at feasts and the best seats in the synagogues,"

Jesus denounces the love of social status and the desire to be recognized. Religious leaders sought the most prominent places, both at meals and in prayer meetings, seeking honor and recognition from others.

Matthew 23:7

"And the greetings in the marketplaces, and being called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.'"

Here Jesus criticizes their constant search for public recognition. They liked to be called "rabbi" (teacher), which signified great respect and status. Jesus reveals that they were more concerned with what others thought of them than with true humility before God.

Matthew 23:8

"But do not be called 'Rabbi,' for you have one Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brothers."

Jesus teaches that the title of "rabbi" is not important, for all are equal before God. The only true Teacher is Christ, and all believers are brothers and sisters, united in Christ. True status comes from humility and relationship with Christ, not from titles or human recognition.

Matthew 23:9

"And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, and he is in heaven."

Jesus points out that just as we should not seek human titles and honors, we should also not give anyone the title of "spiritual father" in the sense of supremacy. Only God, the heavenly Father, occupies this position. He emphasizes that our

relationship with God is direct and does not depend on intermediaries who seek supremacy over us

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Matthew 23:10

"Neither be ye called Rabbi: for one is your Rabbi, even Christ."

Jesus reaffirms that although people may have earthly teachers or masters, the true Master is Christ. He is the source of divine teaching and the ultimate authority over our lives. The point is that Christians should focus on following Christ, who is the only spiritual authority, and not seek positions of prestige or dominion over others.

Matthew 23:11

"The greatest among you will be your servant."

Jesus inverts the human logic of greatness. In the world, the great are those who command, who have power and recognition. But in the Kingdom of God, true greatness lies in serving others. The greatest is the one who makes himself available to others, who seeks to help and care for others, as Christ did for us. Jesus teaches that leadership in the Kingdom of God is characterized by humility and service.

Matthew 23:12

"Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."

In this verse, Jesus speaks about the spiritual law of humility. Those who seek to exalt themselves, who place themselves in prominent positions to be admired by others, will be

humbled. However, those who humble themselves, who do not seek their own glory, but who serve with a pure heart, will be exalted by God. This principle teaches that in the Kingdom of God, true honor comes from God and not from human approval.

Matthew 23:13

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces; you neither go in nor allow those who are entering to go in."

Jesus makes a strong indictment of the religious leaders of the day, saying that they were closing the Kingdom of Heaven to people. They were not living according to God's teachings and therefore could not experience the Kingdom. Furthermore, by distorting the Scriptures and true faith, they were preventing others from coming closer to God. Here, Jesus highlights the responsibility of spiritual leaders to guide people to the truth, rather than blocking them.

Matthew 23:14

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widows' houses and for a pretense make long prayers; therefore you will receive greater condemnation."

This verse is a criticism of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and scribes. They pretended to be pious, praying at length, but in practice they were corrupt and unjust. They exploited widows, who were vulnerable in society, by taking possession of their property. Although they presented themselves as religious, their actions showed exactly the opposite: dishonesty and exploitation of those most in need. Jesus says that for this they will be severely judged.

Matthew 23:15

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel through sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he has become one, you make him twofold more a child of hell than yourselves."

Here Jesus speaks of the Pharisees' overzealousness in trying to convert others to Judaism. They would travel great distances to make a "proselyte" (a convert), but instead of bringing them into a genuine relationship with God, they ended up leading them further astray. Instead of becoming closer to God, the new converts were being taught to follow the wrong practices of the Pharisees, and this resulted in further error and further alienation from God. Jesus uses strong language, saying that these new converts would be "children of hell."

Matthew 23:16

"Woe to you, blind guides! Who say, 'If anyone swears by the temple, it is nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.'"

Here Jesus criticizes the false logic of the religious leaders. They taught that an oath made by the temple was worthless, but an oath made by the gold of the temple was binding. This distorted view showed that they were more concerned with material value (gold) than with the true worship of God (the temple). They did not understand that God's holiness is not found in material things, but in His presence and power.

Matthew 23:17

"You fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold or the temple that sanctifies the gold?"

Jesus challenges this materialistic view, pointing out that the temple is what sanctifies the gold, and not the other way around. The value of the temple, as a place of worship to God, is infinitely greater than any material value. Jesus criticizes the Pharisees' lack of spiritual perspective, who were more concerned with what is visible and material than with what is truly important in the eyes of God.

Matthew 23:18

"And you say, 'If anyone swears by the altar, it is nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift that is on it, he is bound by his oath.'"

Jesus continues to show the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who valued what was superficial (the offering) more than the altar, which represented dedication to God. An offering without a pure heart has no value before God. Again, He is teaching that we should focus on what is true and spiritual, and not on external rituals or formalities.

Matthew 23:19

"You blind men! Which is greater, the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift?"

Jesus reaffirms that the altar, as a symbol of God's presence, is more important than the offering. True holiness is not found in external things, but in devotion to the Lord. The altar is where the offering is presented to God and therefore is what sanctifies the offering. The lesson is that spiritual things are more valuable than empty rituals.

Matthew 23:20

"Therefore whoever swears by the altar, swears by it and by everything on it."

Jesus teaches that oaths made by the altar are actually oaths before God. When someone makes an oath in the name of something sacred, such as the altar, they are making the oath before the authority of God, which is the true and highest value. This shows the importance of being careful about what we say and what we do.
we commit in the name of God.

Matthew 23:21

"And whoever swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it."

Similarly, when someone swears by the temple, he is swearing by the presence of God, for it is in the temple that God dwells. Jesus emphasizes that the temple and all that it represents (the divine presence) are more important than materialistic oaths.

Matthew 23:22

"And whoever swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it."

Jesus teaches that when one swears by heaven, one is swearing by the throne of God. Heaven is the place of His sovereign authority, and everything we do or say must be in harmony with God's authority. Again, He points out the importance of acknowledging God in everything we do.

Matthew 23:23

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. But these you ought to have done without neglecting the others."

Jesus criticizes the Pharisees for focusing on the small details of the Law, such as tithing herbs, but ignoring the larger, more important principles: justice, mercy, and faithfulness. True worship of God is not just about performing external rituals, but about living according to the principles of His Kingdom, which include treating others with justice, love, and faithfulness.

Matthew 23:23

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. But these you ought to have done without neglecting the others."

Jesus again denounces the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and scribes. They were very concerned with fulfilling the minutiae of the Law, such as tithing herbs (mint, dill, cumin), but they were neglecting the deeper and more essential principles of the Law: **justice, mercy and faithfulness**. Jesus is not condemning tithing per se, but the fact that the Pharisees clung to petty external rules while ignoring the aspects of character and relationship with God that really matter. The message is that religious practice must be accompanied by an internal transformation that is reflected in actions of justice, compassion, and loyalty to God.

Matthew 23:24

"You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel!"

Jesus uses a powerful metaphor to describe the Pharisees. They were concerned about avoiding small impurities, such as a gnat (which could be accidentally swallowed), but at the same time they neglected something much larger and more important, such as a camel (the largest animal in Palestine at the time). He is saying that these religious leaders were focused on the small things without realizing the big mistake they were making in much more essential matters. Here, Jesus criticizes the tendency to focus on the minutiae while ignoring the larger principles of morality and truth.

Matthew 23:25

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but inside they are full of extortion and excess."

Jesus uses another metaphor, saying that the Pharisees were concerned with only cleaning the outside of things (like plates and cups), but inside they were full of corruption and impurity. This illustrates their hypocrisy: they appeared flawless on the outside, but their hearts were full of evil. Jesus is emphasizing that true purity and holiness must come from the inside out, not just from outward appearances.

Matthew 23:26

"Blind Pharisee! First cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, so that the outside may become clean also."

Jesus teaches that true cleansing begins from within, with the transformation of the heart and mind. Only when the inner self is purified through genuine change of character and mind will the external actions (what people see) be truly pure. Jesus teaches that external behavior should be a reflection of what is in the heart.

heart, and not an attempt to deceive others with an appearance of kindness.

Matthew 23:27

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness."

Here Jesus uses the metaphor of whitewashed tombs to illustrate the deceptive appearance of the Pharisees. They appeared to be good and holy on the outside, but on the inside they were corrupt and unclean. A whitewashed tomb was painted to look beautiful, but when opened, it was full of death and decay. Jesus is saying that they appear righteous and godly on the outside, but on the inside they are full of evil and uncleanness. He condemns the hypocrisy of pretending to be something they are not.

Matthew 23:28

"So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness."

Jesus concludes this metaphor by saying that, like the whitewashed tombs, the Pharisees appeared righteous and godly to others, but their hearts were filled with deceit and evil. He condemns the difference between what they appear to be and what they really are inside. True righteousness is not about appearances, but about genuine character and sincere obedience to God.

Matthew 23:29

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous."

Jesus goes on to accuse the Pharisees of being hypocrites because, although they honored and decorated the tombs of the prophets, they did not follow the examples that these prophets left. They prided themselves on honoring the righteous, but in reality, they rejected the message and teachings of the prophets. This was yet another attempt to maintain a good image, while their actions did not correspond to the values that they claimed to defend.

Matthew 23:30

"And you say, 'If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.'"

Here Jesus denounces false humility and the "we would not be like them" mentality. The Pharisees thought they were better than the ancient religious leaders and prophets, saying that if they had lived in that time, they would not have rejected and killed the prophets as their fathers had done. However, Jesus is pointing out that by rejecting God's prophets in their own time, they were repeating the mistake of their fathers.

Matthew 23:31

"Therefore you testify against yourselves, that you are the sons of those who murdered the prophets."

Jesus reveals that by claiming that they would not be complicit in the mistakes of the past, the Pharisees were actually condemning themselves, because their attitudes and actions were the same as those of their fathers, who killed the prophets. They were making the same wrong choices, and this made them guilty in the same way.

Matthew 23:32

"Fill up therefore the measure of your fathers!"

Jesus tells the Pharisees that by continuing their hypocritical and unjust attitudes, they are only completing the cycle of wrongs that their fathers began. He challenges them to acknowledge the responsibility for their choices, because they are taking injustice to a greater level, going beyond what the Pharisees of old had done.

Matthew 23:33

"You serpents, you generation of vipers! How can you escape the damnation of hell?"

Jesus uses very strong language to describe the Pharisees, calling them "serpents" and "a brood of vipers." He is saying that by their attitudes and actions they were being like the serpent who deceives and destroys, just like the devil. He asks how they can escape divine judgment, given the path of sin they are walking in.

Matthew 23:34

"Therefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: some of them ye shall kill, and some ye shall crucify; and some ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city."

Jesus prophesies that even though God will send more messengers (prophets, wise men, and scribes) to call the people to repentance, the religious leaders will reject, persecute, and even kill them, just as they did with the prophets of old. Jesus knows that the Pharisees and other religious leaders will not accept the truth that God will send them.

Matthew 23:35

"That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zechariah the son of Baruchiah, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."

Jesus is saying that the blame for all the murders of prophets and righteous people, from the time of Abel (the first martyr in the Bible) to the last, will fall on the religious leaders of that time. They will be responsible for rejecting God's messengers, and this will bring upon them the condemnation for all the evil that has been committed throughout history.

Matthew 23:36

"Truly I tell you, all these things will happen to this generation."

Jesus declares that all this judgment will come upon the present generation because they were rejecting God's message, just as past generations had done. They were about to face the consequences of their choices and attitudes.

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Matthew 23:37

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing!"

Jesus expresses deep sorrow and laments the hardness of Jerusalem's heart, which has repeatedly rejected the prophets sent by God. He compares his willingness to protect and care for the people to a hen protecting her chicks, but the people of Jerusalem refuse to be protected and cared for. Jesus' lamentation is a reflection of both love and pain over God's rejection.

Matthew 23:38

"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

Jesus prophesies the destruction of Jerusalem, saying that the "house" (representing the temple and the city) will be left desolate. This will be fulfilled when Jerusalem is destroyed, the temple is desecrated, and the people suffer the consequences of their rejection of God.

Matthew 23:39

"For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'"

Jesus states that the city of Jerusalem will not see him again until the people in the future recognize and proclaim his Messiahship, saying, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." This will be fulfilled when the majority of the people of Israel recognize Jesus as the Messiah at the end of time. Jesus anticipates the time of repentance and worship that will occur in the future.

This passage is a powerful call to repentance and a denunciation of empty and hypocritical religious practices, and at the same time, a profound lament by Jesus over the rejection of His people.

Final reflection on Matthew 23:

In chapter 23 of Matthew, Jesus makes one of his most scathing speeches against the religious leaders of Israel: the Pharisees and scribes. He accuses them of hypocrisy, because although they appear righteous on the outside, their attitudes and hearts are corrupt.

far from God. They care about appearances and the minor details of religion, such as tithing herbs, but neglect justice, mercy, and faithfulness, which are the true pillars of Christian character.

The metaphor of “whitewashed tombs” and “glasses that are clean on the outside” reveals that God cares not only about what we show to others, but also about who we really are on the inside. True faith is not about external conformity, but about the transformation of the heart, which is reflected in our actions, our relationships with others, and our commitment to justice and truth.

Jesus also deeply laments the hardness of the hearts of the people and leaders who, throughout history, have rejected the prophets sent by God. He expresses genuine love and a desire to gather people together, as a hen gathers her chicks, but is rejected. This rejection would result in the desertion of his city and the destruction of Jerusalem.

In the end, the chapter invites us to deeply introspect about our own religious attitudes. Are we, like the Pharisees, concerned with appearances but failing to live the deepest principles of the Christian faith? Or are we allowing God’s love to transform our hearts and our actions? The message is clear: God desires sincerity, justice, mercy, and faithfulness in our daily walk with Him.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 24 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 24 is one of the most prophetic and intense chapters in the Gospel of Matthew. In it, Jesus speaks about the signs of the end times and what will happen before His second coming. In answering the disciples' questions about the end of the world and the destruction of Jerusalem, Jesus describes a series of events that will include wars, natural disasters, persecutions, and religious deceptions. He also warns His followers to be vigilant and prepared, because the timing of His return will be unexpected. The chapter invites us to live in constant expectation of Christ's coming and to persevere in the midst of difficulties.

Verse 1:

"And as Jesus was going out of the temple, his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple." Here, Jesus' disciples are in awe of the grandeur of the temple in Jerusalem. They point out to Jesus the impressive building, which was the center of worship for the Jews and a symbol of their national and spiritual identity.

Verse 2:

"But he said to them, 'Do you not see all these things? Truly I tell you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down.'"

Jesus responds in a surprising way by prophesying the destruction of the temple. He predicts that the temple, as magnificent as it is, will be completely destroyed. This prophecy was fulfilled about 40 years later, in 70 AD, when the Roman army destroyed Jerusalem and the temple.

Verse 3:

"And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

The disciples, curious and concerned about Jesus' prophecy about the destruction of the temple, ask privately about the exact time of these events and about the signs that will precede his second coming and the end of the world.

Verse 4:

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you:"

Jesus begins his answer with a warning. He tells his disciples to be careful, because many false prophets and leaders will try to deceive them. Jesus' first concern is to protect his followers from spiritual deception.

Verse 5:

"For many will come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and will deceive many."

Jesus warns that false messiahs will arise, claiming to be the Christ, and that many will be deceived. This is a warning to the disciples to be on the lookout for false leaders who would arise, especially in times of crisis and despair.

Verse 6:

"And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled. For all these things must happen, but the end is not yet."

Jesus also warns of wars and conflicts that would occur, but He encourages the disciples not to be alarmed, as these events are inevitable but do not yet indicate the end.

immediate. This is part of the "birth pangs", signs that precede the end, but are not the end itself.

Verse 7:

"For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places." Jesus describes more signs of the times: global conflicts, natural disasters, and crises such as famines and plagues. These calamities are signs of increasing disorder and suffering in the world, warning of a time of great tribulation.

Verse 8:

"But all these things are the beginning of sorrows." Here, Jesus reinforces that these events are just the beginning of a period of suffering and hardship, described as "birth pangs." The end of the world has not yet arrived, but these signs indicate that it is approaching.

Verse 9:

"Then they will deliver you up to be afflicted and will kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for my name's sake."

Jesus warns that his followers will be persecuted, handed over to the authorities and even killed because of their faith in him. They will be hated by the nations, which indicates widespread persecution against Christians.

Verse 10:

"At that time many will be offended, and will betray one another and will hate one another."

In difficult times of persecution and trial, many will lose faith, betray one another, and love between people will be lost.

people will decrease. This is a warning of how suffering can divide people and generate apostasy (abandonment of faith).

Verse 11:

"And many false prophets will arise and will deceive many." Jesus continues His warning about the danger of spiritual deception. Many false prophets will arise, and their impact will be great, leading many people into error and away from the true faith.

Verse 12:

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." Iniquity (sin) will increase so much that the love of many for God and neighbor will weaken. Evil will become so common that compassion and genuine love will diminish, creating an atmosphere of selfishness and indifference.

Verse 13:

"But he who endures to the end will be saved." Despite all the challenges and tribulations, Jesus encourages the disciples to persevere. The promise of salvation is linked to persistence in faith and obedience to God, even in the midst of difficulties.

Verse 14:

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come." Jesus says that before the end, the gospel will be proclaimed throughout the world. This is an important sign: all nations will have the opportunity to hear the message of salvation. Only after the gospel has been preached to all will the end come.

Verse 15:

"When you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place; let the reader understand;"

Jesus refers to Daniel's prophecy about the "abomination of desolation," an event that desecrates the holy place (the temple). This event is an important milestone in the calendar of the last days and serves as a clear sign that the time of the end is near.

Verse 16:

"Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains;" Faced with this sign of the "abomination of desolation," Jesus warns the inhabitants of Judea to flee to the mountains. The urgency is great, and they must escape to preserve their lives.

Verse 17:

"And let him who is on the housetop not come down to take anything out of his house;"

Jesus emphasizes the need for a quick and urgent escape. Those on the roof should not even go down to get their belongings, as the danger will be imminent.

Verse 18:

"And let him who is in the field not turn back to get his clothes."

Likewise, those in the camp should not return to retrieve their belongings. The message is clear: survival is the priority, and there is no time to waste.

Verse 19:

"But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!"

Jesus expresses concern for pregnant and breastfeeding women, as they will face extra difficulties during this flight due to their physical condition and vulnerability.

Verse 20:

"And pray that your flight will not be in winter or on the Sabbath day;"

He also encourages the disciples to pray that their escape will not take place in winter, when weather conditions would make things more difficult, or on the Sabbath, when religious restrictions might limit their actions.

Verse 21:

"For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be."

Jesus describes the coming period as the worst time of trouble the world has ever experienced. It will be a time of unprecedented suffering, surpassing any other calamity humanity has ever known.

Verse 22:

"And except those days should be shortened, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

The severity of this tribulation will be so intense that if God did not shorten the period, no one would survive. However, for the sake of the elect, God will shorten these days of suffering, showing His mercy.

Verse 23:

"So if anyone says to you, 'Look, here is the Christ!' or 'there!' do not believe it."

During this time of great distress, many will try to deceive people by claiming that the Christ is in a certain place. Jesus warns not to believe these claims, for they will be lies.

Verse 24:

"For false Christs and false prophets will arise and show great signs and wonders, so as to deceive, if possible, even the elect."

False prophets and false Christs will not only appear, but they will perform astonishing signs and wonders to deceive even God's elect, if possible. This highlights the gravity of the deception that will be present in these days.

Verse 25:

"Behold, I have told you before."

Jesus concludes this section by reminding the disciples that He had already warned them in advance about these events. His intention is to prepare the disciples for the difficult times so that they will not be caught off guard.

Verse 26:

"Therefore if they say to you, 'Look, he is in the desert,' do not go out; but if he is in the secret chambers, do not believe it."

Jesus continues to warn about false signs of his return. He warns his disciples not to be deceived by those who claim that the Christ is in a specific place, such as the desert or in hidden places. His return will be unmistakable and evident to all.

Verse 27:

"For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man."

The second coming of Jesus will be as visible as lightning flashing across the sky. It will not be something hidden or limited to a specific location, but a public, global, and undeniable event.

Verse 28:

"For wherever the carcass is, there the eagles will be gathered together." This verse is a metaphor, suggesting that where there are clear signs of destruction and death, God's judgments will be evident. Just as birds of prey gather where there is a body, the signs of the end will be inevitable and noticeable.

Verse 29:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give her light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."

Here Jesus describes cosmic catastrophes that will occur after the period of great tribulation. The darkening of the sun and moon, and the falling of the stars are signs that indicate unprecedented celestial disorder, highlighting the gravity of what is to come.

Verse 30:

"Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven. Then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." After these cosmic signs, Jesus himself will appear. All the nations of the earth will mourn, for they will see the Son of Man returning in power and glory. His return will be a moment of great impact and universal recognition.

Verse 31:

"And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

God's angels will be tasked with gathering God's elect from all parts of the world. The sound of the trumpet will be the signal for this great gathering, demonstrating the final restoration of the faithful.

Verse 32:

"Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch has already become tender and puts out leaves, you know that summer is near."

Jesus uses a simple parable: just as the sprouting of fig leaves indicates that summer is near, the signs He mentioned indicate that His coming is also very near. It is a call to be alert and watch for the signs around us.

Verse 33:

"So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

Just as the fig tree warns us of the arrival of summer, the signs described by Jesus are clear evidence that the end is near, and Jesus is about to return.

Verse 34:

"Truly I tell you, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened."

This statement has been subject to various interpretations. One of the most common is that Jesus is referring to the generation that

will witness the signs of the end, that is, those who will experience the final events will see their conclusion.

Verse 35:

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."

Here Jesus asserts the authority and durability of His words. Even if the physical world passes away, His promises and prophecies will remain true and unshakable throughout eternity.

Verse 36:

"But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, but my Father only."

Although many signs indicate that the end is near, the exact day and hour of Jesus' return remain a mystery, known only to God the Father. This teaches us to always be prepared, because we do not know exactly when He will return.

Verse 37:

"And as the days of Noah were, so will also the coming of the Son of Man be."

Jesus compares His second coming to the days of Noah. People in Noah's day went about their lives as normal, ignoring the warnings, until the flood came suddenly. In the same way, many will be heedless when Jesus returns.

Verse 38:

"For as in the days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,"

People in Noah's day were involved in their

daily activities, without realizing that judgment was about to happen. This reflects the lack of attention and spiritual preparation that many will have in the final days.

Verse 39:

"And they knew not until the flood came and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Just as the flood took people by surprise, so too will the return of Jesus take many by surprise. Those who are not spiritually prepared will be caught unexpectedly by divine judgment.

Verse 40:

"Then two shall be in the field; one shall be taken, and the other left."

Here Jesus describes a scenario of separation. Two people are performing the same task, but one will be taken and the other will be left. This points to the distinction that will be made on the day of judgment, where some will be ready for Christ's return and others will not.

Verse 41:

"Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and the other left."

As in the previous verse, Jesus emphasizes that the separation will occur under normal, everyday circumstances. This means that Christ's return will be sudden and will involve an individual choice, not based on social status or physical proximity, but on spiritual readiness.

Verse 42:

"Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming."

Jesus calls us to be vigilant. Since no one knows the hour

exact date of His return, we must always be alert and prepared. This warning encourages us to live righteously and faithfully every day, without postponing our devotion or repentance.

Verse 43:

"But know this: If the goodman of the house had known at what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into."

Jesus compares His coming to the unexpected arrival of a thief. Just as a householder would be vigilant if he knew when the thief was coming, we too must remain vigilant, knowing that Christ's return will be unexpected.

Verse 44:

"Therefore you also must be ready, because the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect."

Jesus emphasizes the need to be ready at any moment. His coming will come at an unexpected time, taking many by surprise. Therefore, we must live each day with the expectation of His imminent return.

Verse 45:

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master has made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?"

Jesus is rhetorically asking who is the faithful and wise servant, the one who is responsible for others and acts correctly in his or her leadership role. Here, He is speaking directly to spiritual leaders, but also in general to all who have responsibilities.

Verse 46:

"Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

Blessed is the servant who is found working faithfully when his Lord returns. This verse emphasizes the blessing that will come upon those who remain steadfast in their responsibilities and faith until the end.

Verse 47:

"Truly I tell you, he will make him ruler over all his possessions."

The faithful servant will be rewarded with greater responsibility and blessings. This symbolizes that those who are faithful to God in this life will receive an eternal reward and greater responsibilities in God's kingdom.

Verse 48:

"But if that evil servant says to himself, 'My master is delaying his coming,'"

Here Jesus warns us about the danger of neglect. The wicked servant thinks his master is delaying his return, and so he indulges in irresponsible behavior. This reflects those who, thinking that Christ's return is far away, become lax in their faith and commitment.

Verse 49:

"And he began to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,"

This servant, not believing that his master will return soon, gives himself over to sin and mistreats others. He abuses his authority and lives immorally, showing a lack of fear and respect for the consequences.

Verse 50:

"The master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him, and

at the time when he does not know,"

The Lord's return will be unexpected for this unfaithful servant. Jesus warns that those who are living recklessly and disobediently will be caught off guard when the Lord returns.

Verse 51:

"And he shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The fate of the unfaithful servant will be tragic. He will be separated and cast out, where there will be suffering and pain, a place described as one of weeping and gnashing of teeth, symbolizing the final judgment and eternal separation from God.

Matthew 24 invites us to reflect deeply on the transience of this world and the certainty of the return of Jesus Christ. Jesus warns us about the challenges we will face, such as wars, famine, persecution and false prophets, but he also encourages us to persevere to the end, assuring us that those who are faithful will be saved.

This chapter also highlights the importance of vigilance. Jesus compares His coming to a thief who arrives unexpectedly, which calls us to always be spiritually prepared. The main message is clear: we do not know the day or the hour of Christ's return, and this motivates us to live each day with purpose, seeking holiness and closeness to God.

Furthermore, Matthew 24 emphasizes the need for discernment in times of trouble. We are called to distinguish between truth and falsehood, to maintain faith in the midst of confusion, and to trust in God's promises even in times of uncertainty.

Finally, this chapter challenges us to remain hopeful. Jesus will come again to establish His Kingdom and judge humanity, and for those who wait for Him, this will be a

day of redemption and eternal joy. The message of Matthew 24 reminds us that despite the difficulties we may face, we have a sure promise: the Lord will return and bring with him justice, peace and final restoration.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 25 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 25 presents three parables that teach important lessons about preparing for Christ's return, being responsible with the resources God has given us, and practicing love and service to others. Through the parable of the ten virgins, the talents, and the final judgment, Jesus challenges us to live faithfully, vigilantly, and generously, reflecting God's character in our daily actions. This chapter reminds us that our choices and attitudes have

eternal consequences and that true faith is expressed in love and service to others.

Matthew 25:1

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom." Jesus begins by telling a parable to illustrate the importance of being ready for the Kingdom of God. The "ten virgins" represent the believers who are waiting for the return of Christ (the "bridegroom"). The lamps symbolize faith and spiritual preparation for the coming of Jesus. A wedding, in the Jewish cultural context, was a grand celebration that could begin at any time, requiring that the participants always be ready.

Matthew 25:2

"Five of them were wise, and five were foolish." Jesus distinguishes two groups of virgins: five were "wise" (prudent), that is, they were prepared, and five were "foolish" (imprudent), who did not prepare themselves adequately. Here, Jesus is warning us about the

need to be wise in our spiritual preparation for His return.

Matthew 25:3

"The foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them."

The foolish virgins had lamps, but they did not bring any extra oil. This means they were unprepared for the long wait. In the spiritual life, oil symbolizes the life of faith, the presence of the Holy Spirit, and perseverance. The foolish virgins represent those who have a superficial or temporary faith, without the support to face the trials of life.

Matthew 25:4

"But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

The wise virgins, on the other hand, took extra oil, showing that they were prepared for the bridegroom's delay. This reflects the attitude of believers who maintain a solid and steadfast faith, prepared for any circumstance that may arise before Jesus' return.

Matthew 25:5

"While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept."

The bridegroom was late in coming, and all the virgins eventually fell asleep. This indicates that in the anticipation of Christ's return, both prepared and unprepared believers may be tempted to relax or become distracted. Sleep here is not a rebuke, but a picture of the reality that life goes on as we await Jesus' return.

Matthew 25:6

"But at midnight there was a cry made, 'Here comes the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'"

In the middle of the night, the bridegroom finally arrived. The "cry" represents the unexpected announcement of Christ's return. Midnight symbolizes the unexpected hour, reinforcing that no one knows when Jesus will return. This call alerts everyone to be ready, for the time has come.

Matthew 25:7

"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps."

When the bridegroom arrives, all the virgins rise to light their lamps. This is the moment of truth: now there is no more time to prepare. Those who were ready can go forward, while those who are unprepared face difficulties.

Matthew 25:8

"And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out."

The foolish virgins realize that their lamps are going out and ask the wise virgins for help. This shows that spiritual preparation cannot be "borrowed" from others. Each person is responsible for his or her own spiritual life and relationship with God. No one can "give" faith or perseverance to another person.

Matthew 25:9

"But the wise answered, saying, Lest not there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves."

The wise virgins respond that they cannot share their oil, as it could harm them too. This teaches that spiritual preparation is personal and non-transferable. Their response is not one of selfishness, but of reality: each person must have their own faith and be ready.

Matthew 25:10

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut."

While the foolish virgins go out to try to buy oil, the bridegroom arrives. Those who were ready enter the feast, and the door is closed. This represents the final separation in God's judgment: those who are ready will participate in the Kingdom, while those who are unprepared will be left outside.

Matthew 25:11

"Afterwards the other virgins came also, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us."

The foolish virgins return, but it is too late. They cry out to the bridegroom to let them in. This symbolizes the sad reality that on Judgment Day, many will realize too late that they were not prepared to meet Jesus.

Matthew 25:12

"But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not."

The groom solemnly replies: "I do not know you." These

These words show that it is not enough to just appear religious; the relationship with Christ must be authentic. Recognition by Jesus comes from a life of real commitment to Him.

Matthew 25:13

"Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour."

Jesus concludes the parable with a warning: "Keep watch." The final lesson is that we must always be ready, for we do not know when He will return. Watchfulness here involves a life of constant faith, prayer, obedience, and seeking God's presence daily.

This parable teaches us the need to be spiritually ready for Christ's return. It emphasizes that faith is not something temporary or superficial, but needs to be nurtured and maintained throughout life, with perseverance and vigilance.

Matthew 25:14

"For this is also like a man going into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods."

In this parable, the "man" represents Jesus, who, upon ascending to heaven, entrusted his followers (the servants) with responsibility to take care of what He has given them. These "goods" are spiritual gifts, talents, abilities, and responsibilities that each of us receives.

Matthew 25:15

"To one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his ability, and immediately he went his way."

The talents here are an amount of money, but they represent the opportunities and capabilities that God gives us. Each servant received an amount according to his ability. This shows us that God knows our capabilities and gives us responsibilities according to them.

Matthew 25:16

"And he that had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made other five talents."

The servant who was given five talents worked diligently, multiplying what was entrusted to him. This symbolizes a believer who uses his gifts, talents, and opportunities to expand the Kingdom of God, being spiritually productive.

Matthew 25:17

"In the same way, he who had received two gained two more."

Likewise, the servant who received two talents was also faithful and worked to multiply what was entrusted to him. This shows that what is important is not the number of talents, but the commitment and diligence in using them.

Matthew 25:18

"But he that had received one went and digged in the earth, and hid his lord's money."

The servant who received only one talent did not use it. He buried it, symbolizing someone who, out of fear or laziness, does nothing with the opportunities God gives him. This

represents those who fail to live up to the potential God has entrusted to them.

Matthew 25:19

"And after a long time the lord of those servants came, and settled accounts with them."

After a long period of time, the master returned and asked his servants to give an accounting. This represents the return of Christ and the final judgment, when everyone will have to answer for how they used the gifts and responsibilities they were given.

Matthew 25:20

"Then he who had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; behold, I have gained five talents more along with them.'"

The faithful servant who received five talents presented his work to his master, showing that he had doubled what had been entrusted to him. This is a picture of a person who faithfully dedicated himself to serving God with everything he received.

Matthew 25:21

"And his lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

The master commends the servant for his faithfulness. He rewards him by giving him greater responsibilities and allowing him to share in his master's joy. This reflects the reward Jesus will give to faithful believers in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Matthew 25:22

"And he also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained beside them two talents more."

The servant with two talents also presented his work, having doubled what he received. This shows that even if we have received less than others, the important thing is to be faithful and productive with what we have.

Matthew 25:23

"His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things; enter into the joy of your lord.'"

The master gives the servant with two talents the same reward he gave to the first. God does not measure our faithfulness by what we receive, but by our diligence and obedience in using what He has entrusted to us.

Matthew 25:24

"But he also which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter seed."

The servant who received one talent began with an excuse. He accused his master of being a hard man, trying to justify his inaction. This symbolizes those who, out of fear or lack of trust in God, do not fulfill their duties.

Matthew 25:25

"And I was afraid, and hid your talent in the earth; here is what is yours."

This servant admits that he buried his talent out of fear. Instead of doing something productive, he did nothing. This represents those who, out of fear of failure or neglect, do not use the gifts God has given them.

Matthew 25:26

"But his lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant! knewest thou that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not scattered seed?"

The master responds by calling him "wicked and negligent." He points out that if the servant truly believed he was being harsh, he should have done more to protect and multiply the talent. God accepts no excuses for our neglect.

Matthew 25:27

"Then you should have put my money in the hands of the bankers, and when I came I would have received my money back with interest."

The master suggests that at the very least the servant could have put the money in the bank, where it would have yielded some profit. This shows that God expects us to do something, however small, with the opportunities He gives us.

Matthew 25:28

"Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents." As punishment, the master takes the talent from the negligent servant and gives it to the one who already had ten talents. This symbolizes that those who are not faithful with what they receive will lose even what they have, while the faithful will be even more blessed.

This parable teaches us about the importance of being faithful with the responsibilities and gifts that God entrusts to us. We have all received something from God, and He expects us to make good use of these blessings. Faithfulness, regardless of the amount, will be rewarded, but neglect will lead to loss.

Matthew 25:29

"For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away."

Jesus is stating a spiritual principle: those who are faithful with what God has given them will receive even more, while those who are not will lose even what little they have. This refers both to the gifts and talents we use for the Kingdom of God and to the spiritual blessings we receive.

Matthew 25:30

"Therefore cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

The "unprofitable servant" is cast into "outer darkness," which symbolizes final judgment and separation from God. "Weeping and gnashing of teeth" describes the pain and regret of those who have not been faithful with their God-given opportunities. It is a sobering warning about the consequences of spiritual neglect.

Matthew 25:31

"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his

glory."

Here Jesus describes the glorious return of the Son of Man (Himself). At the end of time, He will return with power and authority, accompanied by angels, and will sit as Judge over all mankind. This is the time of final judgment.

Matthew 25:32

"And before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." In this scene, Jesus, as the great Judge, separates people from all nations. Just as a shepherd separates sheep from goats, Jesus will distinguish those who are His (the "sheep") from those who are not (the "goats"). This separation represents the judgment between the righteous and the unrighteous.

Matthew 25:33

"And he will put the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." The "sheep" are placed on Jesus' right, symbolizing favor and approval. The "goats" are placed on Jesus' left, indicating rejection and judgment. This separation reflects the eternal destiny of the righteous and the wicked.

Matthew 25:34

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'"

Jesus the King welcomes the righteous, calling them "the blessed of my Father." They are invited to inherit the Kingdom of God, which has been prepared for them since the creation of the world. This reveals God's eternal plan to bless His followers with eternal life.

Matthew 25:35

"For I was hungry, and you gave me food; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you welcomed me;"

Jesus explains why the righteous are being rewarded. They have shown compassion and care for those in need, feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, and welcoming strangers. These actions reflect true love for others.

Matthew 25:36

"I was naked, and you clothed me; I was sick, and you visited me; I was in prison, and you came to me."

In addition to providing for physical needs, such as clothing, the righteous also cared for the sick and visited those in prison. This shows the importance of practical acts of mercy and kindness. These actions demonstrate God's heart for the marginalized and suffering.

Matthew 25:37

"Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you? or thirsty and give you something to drink?'"

The righteous, humble people are surprised by Jesus' praise. They do not remember having done these good works directly for Him. This shows their sincerity, for they were not seeking recognition.

Matthew 25:38

"And when did we see you a stranger, and invite you in? or naked, and clothe you?"

They keep asking, not understanding how they could have served Jesus himself by doing these actions. This highlights the idea that good works done for others are often done without expectation of reward.

Matthew 25:39

"And when did we see you sick, or in prison, and come to visit you?" The righteous once again ask how they could have helped Jesus personally, since all these actions were done for people in need, and not directly for Him.

Matthew 25:40

"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I tell you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brothers, you did it to Me.'"

Jesus reveals that by caring for those in need, they were actually serving Him. What we do for the "least of these"—those who are marginalized, poor, and in need—is seen as being done directly to Jesus. This shows that God deeply values our compassion and service to others.

Matthew 25:41

"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"

Now Jesus addresses the "goats," those on His left. He condemns them to eternal separation from God, destined for the devil and his angels. This reflects the fate of those who reject God and fail to show compassion.

Matthew 25:42

"For I was hungry, and you gave me no food; I was thirsty, and you gave me no drink;"

Jesus accuses the unrighteous of neglect. They saw those in need but did not offer help. This reflects the lack of compassion and love that characterizes those who do not follow God's ways.

Matthew 25:43

"I was a stranger, and you did not welcome me; naked, and you did not clothe me; sick, and in prison, and you did not visit me."

Jesus continues the list of accusations. The wicked did not welcome strangers, clothe the needy, or visit the sick and prisoners. This highlights that failure to act on behalf of those in need is seen as a serious failure.

Matthew 25:44

"Then they also will answer him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to you?"

Just like the righteous, the wicked are also surprised, but for a different reason. They do not believe that they have directly ignored Jesus. However, the truth is that they have failed to recognize Jesus in those in need.

Matthew 25:45

"Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly I tell you, inasmuch as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me.'"

Jesus responds that by neglecting the "little ones," they were actually rejecting Him. This shows that our

treatment of others reflects our relationship with God.

Matthew 25:46

"And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Jesus concludes with the ultimate fate of each group. The wicked will face eternal torment, while the righteous will receive eternal life. This is a clear warning about the consequences of our actions and lack of love for our neighbor.

Matthew 25 presents us with three powerful lessons that call us to reflect on how we live our faith and the impact our actions have on the Kingdom of God. The parable of the ten virgins, the parable of the talents, and the final judgment highlight the importance of being prepared, being faithful with what is entrusted to us, and practicing love and compassion toward others.

- 1. Preparation and surveillance**((parable of the ten virgins):
Vigilance is an invitation to spiritual readiness. We cannot postpone or neglect our relationship with God, for the coming of Christ will be sudden and, like the wise virgins, we need to keep our lamp lit, fed by faith, prayer and good works.
- 2. Loyalty and responsibility**(Parable of the Talents: God has entrusted us with gifts, talents, and opportunities. The parable challenges us to be faithful with what we have been given, not seeking only our own satisfaction, but multiplying what God has given us for His purpose. Faithfulness in the little things is rewarded with greater blessings.
- 3. Practice of love and service**((Judgment of the Nations): The true test of our faith is how we treat others, especially those in need. Jesus teaches us that serving others—feeding the hungry, giving to others,

giving drink to the thirsty, welcoming strangers—is, in fact, serving Him. The final judgment reminds us that our actions reflect our faith and our relationship with Christ.

In short, Matthew 25 calls us to live with responsibility, readiness, and compassion. We cannot wait to act, because the time to serve and be faithful to God is now. Our lives are an opportunity to reflect the love of Christ, both in our daily actions and in the way we care for others. May we be faithful, watchful, and full of love, knowing that in doing so, we are building an eternal legacy in the Kingdom of God.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 26 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 26 is a pivotal chapter in the Gospel, marking the transition between Jesus' public ministry and His final moments before His crucifixion. In it, we are taken through some of the most intense and emotional moments in Jesus' life, including Judas' betrayal, Peter's denial, and His prayer in Gethsemane. This chapter also highlights the institution of the Lord's Supper, where Jesus reveals the deeper meaning of His death and prepares His disciples for what is to come. Amidst pain, betrayal, and suffering, Matthew 26 reveals Jesus' determination to fulfill the Father's will and sacrifice Himself for the salvation of humanity.

Verse 1:

"When Jesus had finished saying all these words, he said to his disciples..."

This verse transitions from the instructions and teachings Jesus gave in the previous chapters, now focusing on the moment of His passion. Jesus had already warned His disciples about His impending death, and now He begins to prepare His followers for what is about to happen.

Verse 2:

"You know that in two days it will be the Passover, and the Son of Man will be handed over to be crucified."

Jesus makes a clear and direct statement about his death. Passover was a Jewish celebration that commemorated the liberation of the people of Israel from Egypt, and Jesus knew that he himself would soon be the sacrifice for the salvation of humanity. The reference to the "Son of Man" is a way for Jesus to refer to himself in a messianic way.

Verse 3:

"Then the chief priests and the elders of the people assembled in the courtyard of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas..."

Here we see that as Jesus was preparing for his death, the religious leaders of the day were also gathering to plot against him. Caiaphas was the high priest and had great influence over the Jews of the day. He represented the religious leadership that was opposing Jesus.

Verse 4:

"They plotted to seize Jesus by force and kill him."

The religious leaders' plan was clear: to capture Jesus and kill him. They wanted to eliminate him because they saw him as a threat to their power and authority. They were so obsessed with their traditions and interests that they could not accept Jesus' message.

Verse 5:

"But not during the feast, they said, so that there would be no commotion among the people."

Although they wanted to act quickly, these leaders were afraid of provoking a riot among the people during the Passover festival, which drew many Jews to Jerusalem. Concern about popular reaction prevented them from acting immediately.

Verse 6:

"Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper..." The narrative now shifts to a significant event in Bethany, where Jesus was staying at Simon's house. Bethany was a town near Jerusalem, and here we see

Jesus in a more intimate environment, far from the conspiracies of religious leaders.

Verse 7:

"A woman came to him, bringing an alabaster jar of very expensive perfume, which she poured on Jesus' head as he was reclining at the table." A woman, who is not immediately identified, brings a bottle of expensive perfume and pours it over Jesus' head. This was a gesture of great reverence and love, for the perfume used was of great value, symbolizing recognition of Jesus' dignity as the Messiah.

Verse 8:

"The disciples were indignant when they saw this and asked, 'Why this waste?'"

The disciples were upset by the woman's gesture, because they considered it a waste to spend so much money on a perfume that could be sold and the proceeds donated to the poor. They did not understand the spiritual significance of the gesture.

Verse 9:

"This perfume could be sold for a large sum and given to the poor."

The disciples justified their indignation with a concern for the poor, a point that, although valid, reveals their lack of understanding of the symbolic act and the moment of honor that was being offered to Jesus.

Verse 10:

"When Jesus heard this, he said to them, 'Why do you trouble her? She has done a good deed for me.'"

Jesus responds to the criticism by defending the woman's gesture. He praises her for her action, showing that, although helping the poor is important, what she did for Him had an eternal and symbolic value. Jesus recognizes the importance of that gesture of worship.

Verse 11:

"You will always have the poor with you, but you will not always have me."

Jesus reminds His disciples that the opportunity to honor Him physically will not be permanent, but that helping the poor can be done at any time. He is pointing to the uniqueness of His mission and the brevity of His physical presence among them.

Verse 12:

"When she poured this perfume on my body, she did it to prepare for my burial."

Jesus interprets the woman's gesture as a symbolic preparation for His death. The perfume used on Jesus' body anticipates His burial, because in ancient times, perfumes and oils were used to embalm someone's body after death.

Verse 13:

"Truly I tell you, wherever this gospel is proclaimed throughout the world, what she has done will also be told, in memory of her."

Jesus promises that the woman's action will be remembered whenever the gospel is preached, as an example of devotion and love for Him. The woman's gesture is immortalized as a way of honoring Christ.

Verse 14:

"Then one of the Twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went to the chief priests..."

While Jesus is being honored by the woman, Judas, one of the disciples, makes a treacherous decision. He goes to the religious leaders to negotiate the surrender of Jesus. Judas, who had been resenting many things, now decides to betray his master.

Verse 15:

"And he said, 'What will you give me if I deliver him over to you?' They offered him thirty pieces of silver."

Judas negotiates the betrayal for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave at the time. This amount reflects the total devaluation of Jesus by Judas, who was willing to hand Him over for a small sum.

Verse 16:

"From that time on Judas was looking for an opportunity to betray him."

Judas' decision is final, and he begins to look for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to the religious leaders, which will culminate in the betrayal that leads to Jesus' crucifixion.

Verse 17:

"On the first day of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and asked, 'Where do you want us to prepare for you the Passover meal?'"

Here, the disciples ask Jesus where they should prepare the Passover meal. Passover was an important feast for the Jews, and they wanted to know where they could celebrate the event with Jesus.

Verse 18:

"He replied, 'Go into the city to a man and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is near. I will celebrate the Passover at your house with my disciples."'" Jesus instructs His disciples to go to a specific man in the city to prepare for the Passover. He makes a point of saying that His time is near, referring to His imminent death. The Passover, in this context, would be a preparation for the greater event, which is His death.

Verse 19:

"The disciples did as Jesus had commanded them and prepared the Passover."

The disciples follow Jesus' instructions and prepare the Passover meal, obeying the Master's will. This moment is full of meaning, as it sets the stage for what will happen the following night, when Jesus will institute the Supper.

Verse 20:

"When evening came, he was reclining at the table with the Twelve."

The Passover meal takes place in the evening, and Jesus sits at the table with His disciples. The fact that He is "reclining" at the table is an indication of the style of eating at that time, where people would lie on their sides to eat.

Verse 21:

"While they were eating, Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me.'"

During the meal, Jesus reveals to the disciples that one of them will betray Him. This statement causes great anguish among the disciples, and they begin to question who the traitor might be.

Verse 22:

"They were very sad and began to ask him one by one, 'Is it I, Lord?'"

Each disciple, surprised and distressed, begins to ask Jesus if he is the traitor. This moment of uncertainty and sadness shows the discomfort and pain that the betrayal of a friend would cause, especially at such a solemn moment.

Verse 23:

"Jesus answered, 'The one who dips his hand with me into the bowl will be the one who betrays me.'"

Jesus reveals that the traitor would be the one who shared the meal with Him. This gesture of sharing the table was a sign of friendship and intimacy, which makes the betrayal even more painful.

Verse 24:

* "The Son of Man goes just as it is written about him; but woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man!"

Verse 25:

*"Then Judas, who had betrayed him, asked, 'Rabbi, is it I?'
Jesus answered, 'You said so.'"*

Judas, who knew that Jesus had mentioned the betrayal, asks Him directly, perhaps trying to hide his guilt or confirming His intentions. Jesus answers directly and emphatically, showing that He knew exactly who would betray Him. Jesus' answer is clear: "You said so," acknowledging that Judas would be the betrayer.

Verse 26:

"While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to the disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.'"

This verse marks the moment of the institution of the Lord's Supper. Jesus takes the bread, says a prayer of thanksgiving and distributes it, saying that the bread symbolizes His body. This action becomes an important practice in the Church, representing the body of Christ given for us on the cross. The Lord's Supper is a continual reminder of Jesus' sacrifice.

Verse 27:

"Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and offered it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you.'"

Jesus then takes the cup of wine and offers it to the disciples, saying that the wine represents His blood, which would soon be shed for the remission of sins. The wine symbolizes the blood of Jesus, which is the foundation of the New Covenant, sealed by His sacrifice.

Verse 28:

"This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins." Jesus explains the meaning of the wine: His blood will be shed to establish a new covenant between God and humanity. The blood of Christ, shed on the cross, is the means by which our sins can be forgiven. Jesus' death brings reconciliation between man and God.

Verse 29:

"I tell you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."

Jesus expresses that after His death, He will no longer drink wine until the time of complete restoration in the Kingdom of God. This reminds us that as we await Christ's return, our relationship with Him should be one of anticipation and faith, awaiting the fullness of the Kingdom.

Verse 30:

"When they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."

After the Supper, Jesus and the disciples sing a hymn, probably the Hallel, a set of psalms used at Jewish festivals, and then go out to the Mount of Olives. This moment marks an important transition, as Jesus now prepares to face His arrest and crucifixion.

Verse 31:

"Then Jesus said to them, 'All of you will be offended because of me this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered.'"

Jesus makes a prophecy about what will happen that night: all His disciples will turn away from Him, in fulfillment of an Old Testament passage (Zechariah 13:7). He refers to Himself as the shepherd who will be struck, which will cause the disciples to be scattered.

Verse 32:

"But after I have risen, I will go ahead of you into Galilee."

Despite predicting the disciples' dispersion, Jesus also gives them hope by saying that after His resurrection He will meet them in Galilee. This shows the love and mercy of Jesus, who knew of the disciples' weakness, but also assured them that they would not be abandoned.

Verse 33:

"But Peter answered, 'Even if all shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended.'" Peter, with his impulsive and courageous nature, states that he will not abandon Jesus, no matter what happens. He tries to show himself to be more faithful than the other disciples, not yet realizing how challenging it would be to remain steadfast at that moment.

Verse 34:

"Jesus said to him, 'I tell you the truth, this very night, before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.'"

Jesus wisely prophesies that Peter, despite his words of loyalty, will deny Jesus three times before the rooster crows. This is a humbling moment for Peter, who, despite his courage, did not know what he was about to face.

Verse 35:

"Peter answered, 'Even if I have to die with you, I will not deny you.' And all the other disciples said the same."

Peter reaffirms his loyalty, saying that he would be willing to die for Jesus, and the other disciples agree with him. However, this statement, while sincere, underestimates the difficulty of what is about to happen.

Verse 36:

"Then Jesus went with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.'"

Jesus takes the disciples to the Garden of Gethsemane, a place of great significance. He instructs them to wait while He goes to pray. This is a moment of great tension for Jesus, because He knew what He was about to face.

Verse 37:

"And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and distressed."

Jesus, even more distressed, takes Peter, James, and John with Him to a more intimate place. He shares with them His sadness and anguish, revealing the weight of the cross He was about to carry.

Verse 38:

"Then he said to them, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and keep watch with me.'"

Jesus expresses the depth of His grief, saying that His soul was "sore sorrowful, even unto death." He asks His disciples to keep watch and to join Him in prayer. Jesus is experiencing great emotional and spiritual agony before the moment of His crucifixion.

Verse 39:

"Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, 'My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.'" Jesus prays to the Father, asking that, if possible, He would take away from Him the suffering He was about to face (the "cup" symbolizes suffering and death). However, He submits to the will of God, demonstrating total obedience. This is a moment of great surrender and trust in the divine will.

Verse 40:

"When he returned to his disciples, he found them sleeping. 'Couldn't you keep watch with me for one hour?' he asked Peter."

Jesus returns and finds the disciples sleeping, despite His request for them to keep watch. He rebukes Peter,

highlighting the lack of vigilance and prayer of the disciples, at such a crucial moment.

Verse 41:

"Watch and pray, that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Jesus teaches an important lesson: the need to watch and pray to resist temptation. Although the desire to be faithful is in our hearts, our human nature, with its weaknesses, can cause us to succumb. Prayer is vital to strengthening our spirit against temptation.

Verse 42:

"Jesus went away a second time and prayed, 'My Father, if this cup cannot be taken away from me unless I drink it, your will be done.'"

Jesus again prays for God's will to be done, even though he knows that suffering is inevitable. His prayer reflects total submission to the Father's will, even in the face of great pain.

Verse 43:

"When he returned, he found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy."

The pain and sadness the disciples felt kept them awake, even when Jesus needed support. This reflects the human struggle between the spirit and the flesh, and the difficulty of fully understanding what was happening.

Verse 44:

"And he left them, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same words."

Jesus prays once more, repeating the request for submission to

will of God. The repetition shows the weight of His spiritual struggle and the intensity of the moment

Verse 45:

"Then he came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and taking your rest? Behold, the hour is coming, and the Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of sinners.'"

Jesus finally wakes them up, telling them that the moment of His betrayal has come. He is about to be handed over to sinners, and His disciples are still unprepared for what is coming.

Verse 46:

"Get up, let's go! Behold, the traitor is approaching." Jesus calls the disciples to action, for Judas, the traitor, is already approaching with his soldiers. He is ready to face His destiny, and the moment of betrayal is approaching.

Verse 47:

"While he was still speaking, Judas, one of the Twelve, arrived, and with him a large crowd armed with swords and clubs, sent by the chief priests and the elders of the people."

Judas arrives with a large group of armed men, sent by the religious leaders to arrest Jesus. Judas' betrayal is consummated with an act of false friendship, symbolized by the kiss.

Verse 48:

"Now the traitor had given them a sign, saying, 'The one I kiss is the man; arrest him.'"

Judas had agreed on a sign with the soldiers: he would indicate them with a kiss. This kiss, normally a gesture of

affection, becomes the symbol of Judas' betrayal, who uses friendship to betray Jesus.

Verse 49:

"Then Judas came to Jesus and said, 'Greetings, Rabbi!' And he kissed him."

Judas fulfills the signal he agreed with the soldiers, greeting Jesus respectfully, but with the intention of betraying him. The kiss is a striking contrast to the true loyalty Jesus expected from his disciples.

Verse 50:

"Jesus said to him, 'Friend, why have you come?' Then the men came and seized Jesus and arrested him." Jesus calls Judas his "friend," a sign of compassion even in the face of betrayal. He does not curse him, but questions the reason for his betrayal. This reveals the great mercy of Jesus, who even knowing of the act of betrayal, still offers a word of reflection.

Verse 51:

"And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck the servant of the high priest, and cut off his ear."

When the soldiers come to arrest Jesus, one of the disciples (who we later learn is Peter) reacts impulsively, drawing his sword and cutting off the ear of the high priest's servant. This act shows Jesus' attempt to defend himself, but it also demonstrates the disciples' immaturity and lack of understanding of God's plan.

Verse 52:

"Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its place, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword.'"

Jesus responds to Peter's impulsive action clearly and firmly. He says that violence is not the solution and that those who seek to resolve things by force will face the consequences. Jesus is teaching us that His Kingdom is not based on violence or human force, but on obedience to the will of God.

Verse 53:

"Or do you think that I cannot ask my Father, and he will presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Jesus reveals His divine authority. He could easily call on angels to intervene to protect His lives, but He chooses to follow God's plan. This demonstrates Jesus' complete control over the situation, despite His apparent vulnerability.

Verse 54:

"How then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say this must happen?"

Jesus reminds us that in order for the prophecies to be fulfilled, He had to go through this. He knew that His death was necessary to fulfill God's will and bring salvation to humanity. He is not just being passive, but being faithful to the divine plan.

Verse 55:

"At that time Jesus said to the crowd, 'You have come out like a thief, with swords and clubs to arrest me? Day after day I was teaching in the temple, and you did not arrest me. But all this is happening so that the scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.'"

Jesus criticizes the way the religious leaders and soldiers acted, coming to Him as if He were a criminal, when in fact He was teaching publicly. He recognizes, however, that this is part of fulfilling the commandments.

Scriptures, showing that His suffering is predestined and necessary to the plan of salvation.

Verse 56:

"Then all the disciples left him and fled." When the situation became tense and Jesus was arrested, all the disciples abandoned Him. This fulfilled the prophecy He had mentioned earlier about the scattering of the sheep after the wounding of the shepherd (Matthew 26:31). The disciples' reaction reveals their fear and lack of courage in the face of the situation, even with Jesus' words and teachings.

Verse 57:

"Those who had arrested Jesus took him to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and elders had gathered."

Jesus is taken to the house of the high priest Caiaphas, where the religious leaders have gathered. This begins the trial against Jesus, which will be marked by false accusations and injustice. The decision to take him to Caiaphas reflects the religious leaders' desire to find a way to convict him, even if it means bending the law.

Verse 58:

"But Peter followed him at a distance, right into the courtyard of the high priest. And he went in and sat with the officers to see the end."

Peter, despite his initial courage, now follows Jesus from afar. He still has a desire to be close, but fear keeps him at a distance. He enters the courtyard, but in doing so, he begins to stray from the faithfulness he had promised. This is a reflection of what can happen when circumstances cause us to waver in our faith.

Verse 59:

"The chief priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus so that they could put him to death."

The religious leaders were desperate to find something that could legitimately accuse Jesus, but since there was no real evidence, they looked for false witnesses. Lies and injustice dominate the process, showing how the leaders were willing to go against the truth to maintain their position of power.

Verse 60:

"And they found none, though many false witnesses came forward; but at the end two came,"

Although many have tried to lie about Jesus, they have not been able to find a consistent accusation that would justify the condemnation. However, in the end, two men come forward with a false accusation that seems to be more convincing.

Verse 61:

"who said, 'This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild it in three days.'"

The accusation the two men brought was based on words of Jesus that, taken out of context, sounded like a threat to the temple in Jerusalem. Jesus had spoken of destroying the temple of His body and rebuilding it in three days, referring to His death and resurrection, but the accusers twisted His words to condemn Him.

Verse 62:

"And the high priest stood up and said to him, 'Have you no answer? What do these men testify against you?'" Caiaphas, faced with this accusation, demands that Jesus defend himself. He wants to hear an answer from Jesus, perhaps trying to

find an opportunity for further accusations. Jesus remains silent, for he knew that nothing he said would change the course of things.

Verse 63:

"But Jesus remained silent. Then the high priest answered and said to him, 'I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.'"

Caiaphas, in a formal and authoritative act, demands that Jesus declare himself to be the Christ, the Son of God, invoking the name of God to pressure him. He wants a clear answer from Jesus, perhaps to have a justification for his condemnation.

Verse 64:

"Jesus answered him, 'You have said it. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven.'"

Jesus answers affirmatively, confirming that He is the Christ, the Son of God, but He also makes a prophetic statement: He, the Son of Man, will be seated at the right hand of God in power, and will come again in glory. Jesus makes a clear reference to the fulfillment of Scripture, pointing to His second coming.

Verse 65:

"Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, 'He has spoken blasphemy! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy. What think you?'"

Caiaphas, upon hearing Jesus' statement, reacts with indignation. He tears his clothes, a traditional gesture of despair and condemnation, accusing Jesus of blasphemy for declaring Himself to be the Son of God. He considers this statement to be sufficient to condemn Him to death.

Verse 66:

"They answered and said, 'He is worthy of death.'"

The religious leaders, along with the council, condemn Jesus to death. Their decision is made despite there being no real proof of guilt, only accusations based on lies and distortions.

Verse 67:

"Then they spat in his face and struck him, and others struck him with their fists,"

Jesus is physically humiliated. They spit in His face and beat Him, demonstrating their anger and contempt for Him. This violence was an attempt to demoralize Jesus, but He, in His silence, accepts the insults in fulfillment of His mission.

Verse 68:

"saying, 'Prophecy to us, Christ! Who was it that struck you?'" As the abuse continues, they mock Jesus, challenging Him to prophesy about who was hurting Him. They ridicule His identity as Christ, showing how blinded they were by their hardness of heart and rejection of the truth.

Verse 69:

"Meanwhile, Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard; and a servant girl came to him, saying, 'You also were with Jesus the Galilean.'"

As Jesus is being tried, Peter watches from afar. A servant girl recognizes him and accuses him of being one of Jesus' followers, the Galilean. This is the beginning of Peter's denial.

Verse 70:

"But he denied it before them all, saying, 'I do not know what you mean."

is saying."

Peter, fearful of being arrested or judged, denies any connection with Jesus. He tries to distance himself from any association with the Master.

Verse 71:

"And as he went out to the gate, another maid saw him and said to those who were there, 'This man was also with Jesus of Nazareth.'"

Peter tries to get out of sight, but another maid recognizes him and tells the people around him that he was also with Jesus. This increases the pressure on Peter and he finds himself further and further away from the truth.

Verse 72:

"And again he denied with an oath, 'I do not know the man.'"

Now Peter denies it even more, swearing that he does not know Jesus. He resorts to oaths to try to convince others of his lie.

Verse 73:

"And after a little while those who stood there came and said to Peter, 'Surely you also are one of them, for your speech betrays you.'"

The people around them begin to notice that Peter has a Galilean accent, and so they know he was with Jesus. They insist that he is one of the disciples.

Verse 74:

"Then he began to curse and swear, 'I do not know the man!' And immediately the rooster crowed."

Peter despairs and, to deny it once again, begins to curse and swear that he does not know Jesus. At that moment,

the rooster crows, fulfilling Jesus' prophecy that Peter would deny Him three times before dawn.

Verse 75:

"And Peter remembered the word of Jesus, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me three times. And he went out, and wept bitterly."

Peter, upon hearing the rooster crow, remembers Jesus' words and deeply repents. He weeps bitterly over his weakness and denial, recognizing the error he had committed. This scene reflects Peter's sincere repentance, which, despite his failure, would later be restored by Jesus.

These verses show the betrayal of Judas, the abandonment of the disciples, and the denial of Peter, but they also highlight the fulfillment of Scripture and the suffering of Jesus, who accepted everything in obedience to the divine plan. Jesus was willing to face betrayal and suffering for our sake, so that through His death we could be reconciled to God.

Final Reflection on Matthew 26

Matthew 26 is a chapter filled with moving and life-changing moments. It takes us from the depths of Jesus' Last Supper with His disciples to His arrest and suffering, highlighting His unconditional obedience to the divine plan and the human failure surrounding Him. In this chapter, we see how Jesus, aware of His mission, voluntarily chooses the path of suffering, betrayal, and denial, all to fulfill the Scriptures and the will of the Father.

Judas' betrayal, Peter's denial, and the disciples' abandonment contrast with Jesus' faithfulness and courage. When faced with the possibility of suffering, He did not run away, but surrendered Himself fully to God's will. Amidst all the pain and rejection, He remained faithful to His mission of saving humanity. His attitude teaches us the importance of faithfulness to God, even in times of great challenge, and the need to recognize our weaknesses and seek genuine repentance, as we see in Peter.

Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane also speaks deeply to us about the humanity and divinity of Christ. In His agony, He asked the Father that, if it were possible, the cup of suffering might pass from Him, but in the end, He surrendered Himself to the will of God, showing that, even in the face of pain, we must seek the will of the Lord above all else.

This chapter challenges us to reflect on our own faithfulness to Christ. How do we respond in times of adversity? Are we willing to follow Jesus, even when it means sacrifice or facing hardship? The answers to these questions call us to imitate Christ's courage and to learn from the disciples' failures, which remind us of the need for vigilance, prayer, and trust in God.

Matthew 26 is a lesson in obedience, repentance, and hope. It teaches us that despite our failures and weaknesses, we can find forgiveness and restoration in Christ, who, through His death, paved the way for our reconciliation with God. He went through all of this out of love for us, and this should be the driving force that moves us to follow His example of faith and perseverance.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 27 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 27 is one of the most dramatic and crucial chapters in the Gospel, as it describes the final events of Jesus Christ's life on earth. It takes us through moments of intense pain and suffering, beginning with Judas' betrayal, through the unjust trial before Pilate, and up to the painful crucifixion. This chapter reveals the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation, where Jesus, the Son of God, gives himself up out of love for humanity, taking upon himself the sins of all. Amidst betrayal, mockery, and abandonment, Jesus' death on the cross is presented as the ultimate sacrifice for the reconciliation of all with God.

Verse 1

"When it was morning, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus: to put him to death."

- **Explanation:** After a long period of interrogation and trial, the religious authorities of Israel, including the priests and elders, decide that Jesus must die. This verse marks the beginning of the execution of the plan for the crucifixion of Jesus, thus fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament.
-

Verse 2

"They bound him, led him away, and handed him over to Pilate the governor."

- **Explanation:** After deciding that Jesus must be killed, they arrest him and hand him over to Pontius Pilate, the

Roman governor responsible for judging death penalty cases. This is important because although the religious leaders wanted to kill Jesus, they did not have the authority to execute anyone, so they had to rely on Roman power to do so.

Verse 3

"When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was remorseful and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders."

- **Explanation:** Judas, the disciple who had betrayed Jesus, sees that his actions have resulted in Jesus' condemnation and repents. He tries to reverse his betrayal by returning the money he had received for betraying Jesus, but it is too late to change the course of events.
-

Verse 4

"He said, 'I have sinned by shedding innocent blood.' But they answered, 'What is that to us? That is your business.'"

- **Explanation:** Judas acknowledges that he betrayed Jesus, calling him "innocent blood," an acknowledgment that Jesus did nothing to deserve death. However, the religious leaders do not care about Judas' repentance, they only care about completing the process they had begun.
-

Verse 5

"He threw the silver coins into the temple and went out and hanged himself."

- **Explanation:** Judas, overcome with guilt and despair, throws the money into the temple and commits suicide. His act of throwing the coins into the temple is a demonstration of his inner condemnation, and the suicide reflects the deep emotional anguish he felt over his betrayal.
-

Verse 6

"The chief priests took the coins and said, 'It is not lawful to put them into the temple treasury, since it is the price of blood.'"

- **Explanation:** The priests, although uninterested in Judas' repentance, are concerned about the use of the coins, as they consider the money "dirty" (because it comes from the betrayal and innocent blood of Jesus) and they cannot use it in the temple treasury.
-

Verse 7

"After they had taken counsel, they bought with the money the potter's field as a buryingplace for strangers."

- **Explanation:** The priests use Judas' money to buy a plot of land where foreigners who died in Jerusalem could be buried. This field became known as the "Field of Blood." This fulfills an Old Testament prophecy, which is cited in the next verse.
-

Verse 8

"Therefore that field has been called the Field of Blood to this day. Then was fulfilled what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet: 'And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of the one who was valued, whom some of the children of Israel valued,

and gave them to the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

- **Explanation:** The act of purchasing the field with the thirty pieces of silver is a direct fulfillment of Jeremiah's prophecy. The prophecy speaks of the price paid for Jesus' betrayal and how this money would be used to purchase a field, something that is fulfilled with the purchase of the Field of Blood.
-

Verse 9

"Then Jesus was brought before the governor, and the governor questioned him, saying, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' Jesus answered him, 'Do you say this on your own, or did others tell you about me?'"

- **Explanation:** Jesus is brought before Pilate, and the governor questions Him directly, asking if He is the "King of the Jews." This question is crucial, because if Jesus were considered a rival king to Rome, that could be grounds for His execution. Jesus, in His wisdom, answers in a way that challenges Pilate to reflect on what he is really asking.
-

Verse 10

"And Pilate asked him, 'Don't you hear how many accusations they are bringing against you?'"

- **Explanation:** Pilate is surprised by Jesus' silence in the face of the accusations made by the religious leaders. He expects a defense from Jesus, an answer that can explain the accusations being made against Him.
-

Verse 11

"But Jesus did not answer a word, so that the governor was greatly amazed."

- **Explanation:** Jesus remains silent, neither responding to the accusations nor defending himself. This silence impresses Pilate, because he expected Jesus to try to justify himself, but Jesus' attitude fulfills the Scriptures, showing that He was willing to submit to the Father's will.
-

Verse 12

"At the Feast of the Passover the governor used to release one prisoner, as the people desired."

- **Explanation:** It was a Roman tradition during Passover to allow the people to choose whether to release a prisoner, a way to please the Jews. Pilate tries to use this practice to free Jesus, hoping that the people will choose to release him.
-

Verse 13

"At that time they had a famous prisoner named Barabbas."

- **Explanation:** Barabbas was a known criminal, probably a thief or revolutionary, who had been arrested for his actions against the Roman government. Pilate offers the people a choice between Jesus and Barabbas, hoping that the people will choose Jesus since He was harmless and had committed no crime.
-

Verse 14

"Pilate asked, 'Whom do you want me to release to you: Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?'"

- **Explanation:** Pilate tries to manipulate the situation by explicitly asking which prisoner the people want released. He hopes that choosing Jesus will be obvious, since He was known for His miracles and His kindness.
-

Verse 15

"For Pilate knew that it was out of envy that they had handed Jesus over."

- **Explanation:** Pilate, understanding that the religious authorities were angry with Jesus because of his popularity and his messages, believes that the reason for Jesus' condemnation is not a crime, but rather envy and jealousy.
-

Verse 16

"While he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent him this message: 'Have nothing to do with that righteous man, because I had a dream today that troubled me about him.'"

- **Explanation:** Pilate's wife, influenced by a dream, tries to stop her husband from condemning Jesus, warning him that He is righteous and should not be harmed. This shows how even people outside the situation recognized Jesus' innocence.
-

Verse 17

"But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Barabbas and to kill Jesus."

- **Explanation:** The religious leaders manipulate the crowd, causing the people to choose Barabbas despite the obvious injustice against Jesus. This reflects the power of corrupt leadership to influence the masses.
-

Verse 18

"The governor asked them, 'Which of the two do you want me to release to you?' They shouted, 'Barabbas!'"

- **Explanation:** Pilate, expecting Jesus to be chosen, is surprised to see the people asking for the release of Barabbas, a criminal. The crowd, under pressure from the religious leaders, chooses to release the criminal and condemn Jesus.
-

Verse 19

"Pilate asked them, 'What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?' They all answered, 'Let him be crucified!'"

- **Explanation:** Pilate, still trying to prevent Jesus' crucifixion, asks what he should do with Him, but the crowd, incited by the religious leaders, shouts for His crucifixion.
-

Verse 20

"But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowd to ask for Barabbas and to kill Jesus."

- **Explanation:** The religious leaders, who were already determined to get rid of Jesus, manipulate the crowd into choosing Barabbas, a criminal, and demanding Jesus' crucifixion. They use their authority to lead the people to the wrong choice, promoting injustice.
-

Verse 21

"The governor asked, 'Which of the two do you want me to release to you?' They shouted, 'Barabbas!'"

- **Explanation:** Pilate, who expected the people to choose Jesus, is surprised by the choice of Barabbas. The crowd, influenced by the religious authorities, chooses to free the criminal instead of Jesus, whom he knew to be innocent.
-

Verse 22

"Pilate asked them, 'What then shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?' They all answered, 'Let him be crucified!'"

- **Explanation:** Pilate, still trying to avoid condemning Jesus, asks what he should do with Him, but the enraged crowd responds cruelly and decisively: "Let him be crucified!" This reflects the spiritual blindness and social pressure that were at play.
-

Verse 23

"Pilate asked, 'Why? What wrong has he done?' But they kept shouting, 'Crucify him!'"

- **Explanation:** Pilate, recognizing Jesus' innocence, tries to understand the reason for the demand for His

death. He asks what evil Jesus committed, but the crowd, having no rational justification, continues to shout for His crucifixion, revealing their blind hostility against Him.

Verse 24

"When Pilate saw that he was getting nowhere and that a riot was already brewing, he took water and washed his hands in front of the crowd, saying, 'I am innocent of this man's blood; the blame lies with you.'"

- **Explanation:** Pilate, feeling pressured by the crowd and fearing a riot, tries to absolve himself of responsibility for Jesus' death. He washes his hands in a symbolic gesture, publicly stating that the blame is not his, but that of the crowd and the religious authorities. However, he still makes the decision to hand Jesus over to be crucified.
-

Verse 25

"And all the people answered, 'His blood be on us and on our children!'"

- **Explanation:** The crowd, in response to Pilate, fiercely accepts responsibility for Jesus' death, saying that the blood of Jesus will be on them and their future generations. This statement is a reflection of their rejection of Jesus and their collective responsibility for the tragedy that was about to happen.
-

Verse 26

"Then he released Barabbas to them, and after he had Jesus flogged, he handed him over to be crucified."

- **Explanation:** Pilate, under pressure from the crowd, releases Barabbas, but as part of his decision, he orders Jesus to be flogged, a cruel procedure carried out before the crucifixion. This flogging was intended to further humiliate Jesus and weaken Him physically, preparing Him for execution. The choice of Barabbas and the suffering of Jesus are shocking elements of this story.
-

Verse 27

"Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the praetorium and gathered the whole army around him."

- **Explanation:** The Roman soldiers, charged with carrying out the order to crucifix Jesus, take him to the praetorium, where they confine him with the entire Roman guard. This demonstrates the military power that was being used to humiliate Jesus, showing how insignificant he seemed before the authorities of the Roman Empire.
-

Verse 28

"They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him."

- **Explanation:** The soldiers, in an act of mockery, strip Jesus naked and place a scarlet robe on Him, a type of cloak used to ridicule Him as if He were a king, in contrast to Jesus' true royalty. This is cruel irony, for He was the King of kings, yet He was being treated with contempt.
-

Verse 29

"And they plaited a crown of thorns, and put it on his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they knelt before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews!"

- **Explanation:** In yet another cruel mockery, the soldiers fashion a crown of thorns and place it on Jesus' head, taunting Him with the false salute "Hail, King of the Jews!" They are ridiculing Jesus, pretending to recognize Him as king, while mistreating Him physically and spiritually.
-

Verse 30

"They spat on him, and took the reed and struck him on the head."

- **Explanation:** The soldiers continue to mock Jesus, spitting on Him and striking His head with the reed they gave Him. Every action here is an act of humiliation, trying to discredit Jesus even further. This behavior is a reflection of the hatred and contempt that the authorities had for Him.
-

Verse 31

"After they had mocked him, they took the scarlet robe from him and put his own clothes on him, and led him away to crucify him."

- **Explanation:** After abusing Jesus, the soldiers remove His scarlet robe and dress Him again in His own clothes. This change of clothes represents the end of yet another phase of humiliation, and now He is ready to be taken to the place of crucifixion.
-

Verse 32

"As they were going out, they found a man from Cyrene, named Simon, and they forced him to carry Jesus' cross."

- **Explanation:** When Jesus is led to the crucifixion site, He is already weak from the scourging and humiliation. The soldiers force Simon of Cyrene to carry Jesus' cross for Him. Simon was probably in town for the Passover celebration, and his appearance here is an example of someone who is forced to help Jesus in His suffering. However, this help also symbolizes the weight we all must carry in our Christian walk.
-

Verse 33

"When they came to the place called Golgotha (which means Place of a Skull),"

- **Explanation:** Golgotha was the name of the place where Jesus was crucified. It got its name because of its shape, which resembled a skull. This name also symbolizes death, as it was the place where the condemned were executed. The name "Place of the Skull" refers to the fact that death was about to happen there.
-

Verse 34

"They gave him wine to drink mixed with bile, but when he had tasted it, he would not drink it."

- **Explanation:** The soldiers offered Jesus a mixture of wine and gall (or myrrh), which was a bitter and numbing drink used to ease pain. Jesus, however, refused this drink. He chose not to ease His pain, showing His complete willingness to suffer

for the sins of humanity fully and without interference. This also demonstrates Jesus' courage and love for humanity.

Verse 35

"After they have crucified him, they will divide up his clothes by casting lots to see what each will take."

- **Explanation:** After Jesus' crucifixion, the soldiers stripped off His clothes and divided them among themselves, as was customary at executions. They threw dice (cast lots) to decide who would get each piece. This act of dividing Jesus' clothes is a fulfillment of the prophecy in **Psalms 22:18**, which said that the soldiers divided the Messiah's clothes.
-

Verse 36

"They sat down and kept it there."

- **Explanation:** The soldiers sit near the cross of Jesus and watch the execution. The crucifixion was a public spectacle, and they were there to ensure that Jesus' death took place. Furthermore, this attitude of vigilance denotes the cruelty of the moment, since death was imminent, and the crowd was present to watch the suffering.
-

Verse 37

"And they placed above his head the charge against him: 'This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.'"

- **Explanation:** To mock Jesus even further, Pilate orders a sign to be placed on the cross accusing Jesus of being "The King of the Jews". This sign, written in three

languages (Hebrew, Latin, and Greek), was a way of publicly declaring the reason for the crucifixion. Ironically, the title given to Jesus on the cross was true: He was indeed the King of the Jews, but His kingdom was not of this world.

Verse 38

"Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on his right and one on his left."

- **Explanation:** Jesus is crucified between two criminals, one on His right and one on His left. This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 53:3, which said that the Messiah would be numbered among the transgressors. Jesus, the innocent one, is treated as a criminal, being placed between two thieves, reinforcing His suffering and humiliation.
-

Verse 39

"Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, 'You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!'"

- **Explanation:** Those passing by mocked Jesus, remembering His words about destroying the temple and rebuilding it in three days. They challenged Jesus to prove that He was the Son of God by asking Him to come down from the cross, as if He had the power to prevent suffering. This mockery reflected the people's unbelief and contempt for Jesus, even in His suffering.
-

Verse 40

"In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him."

- **Explanation:** Not only did passersby mock Jesus, but the religious leaders (priests, teachers of the law, and elders) also joined in the ridicule. They taunted Him, saying that if Jesus really was the Messiah, He should save Himself and prove His power. These religious leaders, who should have recognized Jesus as the Messiah, were blind to His identity and continued to despise Him.
-

Verse 41

"'He saved others,' they said, 'but he cannot save himself! He is the King of Israel! Let him come down from the cross, and we will believe in him.'"

- **Explanation:** The scoffers continue to challenge Jesus, saying that He saved others but could not save Himself. They question His authority and power, challenging Him to come down from the cross if He is truly the King of Israel. They fail to understand that by remaining on the cross, Jesus was fulfilling His mission to save humanity, rather than saving Himself.
-

Verse 42

"He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he pleases; for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

- **Explanation:** They mock once again, saying that Jesus trusted God, and that if God truly loved Him, He would have delivered Him from the cross. They twist Jesus' words and try to provoke God to act, not realizing that Jesus' purpose was precisely

fulfill God's will, giving Himself over to death for the salvation of the world.

Verse 43

"The same mockers also insulted him in the same way."

- **Explanation:** The mockers continue to insult Jesus, repeating the same challenge, without understanding that Jesus' sacrifice was the only way to liberate humanity. The hostility is total, and no one there recognizes the greatness of the act that was being performed before them.
-

Verse 44

"In the same way the robbers who were crucified with him were insulting him."

- **Explanation:** Even the criminals who were being crucified alongside Jesus also insulted Him. They, like the others, were blind to the truth of who He was. This highlights Jesus' loneliness in His suffering, as even those who were in a similar situation mocked Him.
-

Verse 45

"From the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over the whole land."

- **Explanation:** From noon until 3:00 p.m. (the "sixth hour" until the "ninth hour"), the earth was covered in darkness. This supernatural event is a sign of creation's mourning over the death of its Creator. The darkness represents God's judgment on sin and also

symbolize Jesus' separation from God, who experiences the darkness of humanity's sin in His sacrifice.

Verse 46

"About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'"

- **Explanation:** Jesus cries out to God in His deep suffering, quoting the words of the **Psalm 22:1**. This cry expresses Jesus' anguish as He feels separation from God due to the weight of humanity's sin that He is carrying. This moment is crucial because it shows Jesus' extreme suffering, not only physically, but also spiritually, as He is made sin for us. He is suffering the pain of separation from His Father so that we never have to go through it.
-

Verse 47

"When some of those standing there heard this, they said, 'This man is calling for Elijah.'"

- **Explanation:** Some of those present, upon hearing Jesus' cry, thought He was calling for Elijah, an important prophet in Jewish tradition. They did not understand that Jesus was quoting Psalm 22, but thought He was invoking Elijah's help.

This shows how spiritually blind people were to the meaning of the moment.

Verse 48

"And straightway one of them ran, and took a sponge, and filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reed, and gave him to drink."

- **Explanation:** One of the soldiers or bystanders, hearing Jesus' cry, runs over and offers Him a bitter drink (vinegar) using a sponge tied to a reed. This act was not done to relieve Jesus, but to try to prolong His agony, as vinegar (a bitter drink) could keep Jesus conscious and suffering longer.
-

Verse 49

"But the others said, 'Let him alone! Let us see if Elijah will come and save him.'"

- **Explanation:** Meanwhile, others mock Jesus, telling Him to leave Him alone and see if Elijah would really come to help Him. They continue to mock Jesus, not realizing that He is fulfilling the mission of rescuing humanity. They do not understand the greatness of what is happening and continue to despise Jesus, until the last moment of His life on the cross.
-

Verse 50

"Jesus, crying out again with a loud voice, gave up his spirit."

- **Explanation:** Jesus, in His last words, cries out loudly and then gives up His spirit. He does this voluntarily. He chooses when to die, not being forced to do so. His death is not the result of weakness, but of a conscious decision and His willingness to fulfill the will of God the Father for the salvation of humanity.

Verse 51

"And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook, and the rocks were split,"

- **Explanation:** The veil of the temple, which separated the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (where God's presence dwelt), is torn from top to bottom at the moment of Jesus' death. This symbolizes the end of the separation between God and man, caused by sin. Jesus' death opened the way for all to have direct access to God, without the need for a priest to intercede. In addition, the earth shakes and the rocks split, showing that creation recognizes the weight of this event.

Verse 52

"The tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised to life."

- **Explanation:** During this supernatural event, many tombs were opened and the bodies of saints (those who had died faithfully for the Lord) were raised to life. This was a powerful sign that Jesus' death had an impact not only on the spiritual world, but also on creation itself. The resurrection of some people demonstrated the power of Jesus' victory over death and sin.

Verse 53

"And coming out of the tombs after his resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many."

- **Explanation:** After Jesus is resurrected, the saints who had been resurrected come out of their tombs and appear in Jerusalem. This action was a sign of the promise that through Jesus' death many would be resurrected to eternal life. It was a foreshadowing of the future resurrection of the dead that will take place at the end of time.
-

Verse 54

"The centurion and those with him, guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and all that had happened, and were filled with great fear and said, 'Truly this was the Son of God!'"

- **Explanation:** When the centurion (a Roman officer) and the other soldiers who were guarding the crucifixion saw the extraordinary events—the earthquake, the darkness, the tearing of the veil, and the resurrection—they were terrified and came to the conclusion that Jesus was indeed the Son of God. This recognition by a Roman, who was among those responsible for Jesus' death, shows the greatness and authority of Jesus, which could not be ignored, even by His enemies.
-

Verse 55

"And there were many women there, looking on from a distance, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to him."

- **Explanation:** Meanwhile, several women who had followed Jesus during His ministry were present, watching the crucifixion from afar. They had followed Him from Galilee, and despite the pain and suffering, they remained faithful to the Lord. These women are an example of loyalty and courage, remaining by Jesus' side until the end.

Verse 56

"Among them were Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons."

- **Explanation:** The text specifies some of the women who were there: Mary Magdalene, Mary (mother of James and Joseph) and the mother of Zebedee's sons (James and John). They were witnesses to the crucifixion and played a significant role in following Jesus during His ministry. These women were faithful, unlike the male disciples, who had mostly run away.

Verse 57

"When evening came, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was a disciple of Jesus."

- **Explanation:** As the day drew to a close, Joseph of Arimathea, a wealthy and respected man, went to Pilate. He was also a disciple of Jesus, although he was not one of the twelve apostles. Joseph was a member of the council (the Sanhedrin), but he secretly followed Jesus. His action of burying Jesus shows the courage and faith he had, despite the risk of being associated with Jesus, who had just been condemned to death.

Verse 58

"He went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered that it be given to him."

- **Explanation:** Joseph goes to Pilate and asks for Jesus' body so he can bury Him. Pilate, surprised that someone wanted the body of a man condemned to death,

death, grants the request. This is a sign of respect for Jesus and an act of great courage, since the body of a criminal was usually displayed as a warning.

Verse 59

"And Joseph took the body, and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth,"

- **Explanation:** Joseph, upon receiving Jesus' body, wrapped it in a clean shroud. This gesture of preparing the body for burial with dignity is a sign of love and respect for Jesus, considering the cruel treatment He had received before His death.
-

Verse 60

"And he laid him in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb, and departed."

- **Explanation:** Joseph places Jesus' body in a new tomb that he himself had hewn out of the rock. This further demonstrates his generosity and respect for Jesus, since this tomb was prepared for him, but he offers it to Jesus. The stone that was rolled in front of the tomb also served to protect the body from animals and to ensure that no one would disturb the tomb.
-

Verse 61

"And Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there, looking on, sitting opposite the tomb."

- **Explanation:** The two Marys, who had followed Jesus during His life and were now witnessing His burial, remain there, watching from afar. They are an example of faith and faithfulness, even in the face of Jesus' death. These women become the first witnesses to the burial and, eventually, the resurrection.
-

Verse 62

"The next day, that is, the day after the preparation, the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered before Pilate,"

- **Explanation:** The next day, right after Jesus' burial, the religious leaders, the chief priests and Pharisees, meet with Pilate. This meeting takes place on the Sabbath, the Jewish day of rest, but they were so concerned about what would happen to Jesus' body that they broke their religious routine to deal with it.
-

Verse 63

"And they said, 'Sir, we remember that while he was alive that impostor said, 'After three days I will rise again.'"

- **Explanation:** The religious leaders remember that Jesus said He would be resurrected after three days. They refer to Jesus as an "impostor," rejecting His authority and His words. Even after His death, they still fear that Jesus might fulfill His promise to rise again, so they take steps to ensure that no one steals Jesus' body and spreads such rumors.
-

Verse 64

"Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest his disciples come and steal him away, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' And the last deception will be worse than the first."

- **Explanation:** They ask Pilate to post a guard at the tomb to prevent Jesus' disciples from stealing the body and spreading the lie that He was resurrected. They fear that the situation will become even more complicated if Jesus' followers start spreading this rumor of a resurrection. So they try to prevent any possibility of Jesus' message gaining traction, even after His death.
-

Verse 65

"Pilate said to them, 'You have a guard; go and guard him as best you know how.'"

- **Explanation:** Pilate, perhaps irritated by the religious leaders' request, says that they have the guard (the Roman soldiers) and that they should do whatever is necessary to ensure that the tomb is well guarded. Pilate had already handed Jesus over to be crucified, and now he washed his hands of what else might happen, leaving the religious leaders to take the necessary measures.
-

Verse 66

"And they went and sealed the tomb and set a guard."

- **Explanation:** The religious leaders, with Pilate's permission, seal the entrance to the tomb with a seal, which was a legal and symbolic procedure to ensure

that no one would disturb the tomb. In addition, they placed a guard of Roman soldiers to watch over the tomb. This was to ensure that no one, not even Jesus' disciples, could remove the body and create the idea of a resurrection.

Final Reflection on Matthew 27

Matthew chapter 27 takes us to one of the most dramatic and significant moments in human history: the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Throughout this chapter, we are confronted with the pain, injustice, and suffering that Jesus endured out of love for humanity. Yet, at the same time, we see the perfect fulfillment of God's plan of salvation.

- 1. Betrayal and unfair trial:** From the moment Judas betrays Jesus until Pilate condemns him, we see how human beings are capable of acting with extreme injustice. Jesus, being innocent, was taken to the cross because of the sin and unbelief of men. He was abandoned, mocked and rejected, but he never failed to fulfill the mission that the Father entrusted to him.
- 2. The death of Jesus:** The crucifixion of Jesus is the central point of this chapter. Jesus' sacrifice on the cross was not a mere historical event, but the basis for the salvation of all humanity. His death, marked by pain and humiliation, reveals God's immeasurable love for us. He took upon Himself our sin, our shame, and our guilt, so that we could be reconciled to the Father.
- 3. The resurrection announced and the guarding of the tomb:** Although religious leaders feared that Jesus would be resurrected, God had a perfect plan that would be fulfilled regardless of human actions. The guarded and sealed tomb could not prevent Christ's victory. Jesus rose again on the third day, fulfilling His promise and ensuring our hope.

Personal reflection: This chapter reminds us of the depth of Christ's sacrifice and the seriousness of sin. It also challenges us to reflect on how we respond to that sacrifice. Jesus' rejection by men teaches us that God's choices are often not understood or accepted by everyone, but that does not diminish the power of His truth and His work. As we meditate on the cross, we are invited to live with gratitude, always remembering the price Jesus paid for our salvation.

Ultimately, **Matthew 27** reveals to us not only the death of Jesus, but the great love of God for us, which was demonstrated most clearly and definitively on the cross. May our response to this sacrifice be a life of faith, gratitude and commitment to the One who loved us to the end.

Study of the Gospel of Matthew - Chapter 28 (Verse by Verse Explanation)

Matthew 28 is the final chapter of the Gospel of Matthew and tells of one of the most significant events in the Christian faith: the resurrection of Jesus Christ. After being crucified and buried, Jesus rose again on the third day, fulfilling the promises He made during His life. The chapter narrates the women's visit to the empty tomb, the encounter with the angel who announces the resurrection, and the appearance of the resurrected Jesus to the disciples. In addition, Matthew 28 presents the Great Commission, in which Jesus commands His followers to spread the gospel and make disciples of all nations, assuring them of His constant presence until the end of time. This chapter is essential for the foundation of Christian hope and for sending all believers on a global mission.

Verse 1:

"After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb."

After their Sabbath rest, at dawn on a Sunday, the two Marys—Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James—went to Jesus' tomb. The Sabbath was a day of rest for the Jews, and the first day of the week (Sunday) marks the time when the women went to the tomb to pay homage to Jesus' body.

Verse 2:

"And behold, there was a great earthquake: for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it."

Here we see divine intervention. The stone sealing the tomb was removed by an angel of God, accompanied by a great earthquake. The earthquake symbolizes the power of

God and the supernatural nature of Jesus' resurrection. The angel not only rolled away the stone, but sat on it, as if proclaiming Christ's victory over death.

Verse 3:

"His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing white as snow."

The angel had a radiant and glorious appearance, like lightning. His snow-white garments reinforce the purity and holiness of the heavenly being. This radiant glow conveys the idea of something supernatural and powerful that cannot be ignored.

Verse 4:

"The guards trembled with fear of him and became like dead men."

The guards who were guarding the tomb were terrified when they saw the angel. Their fear was so great that they became as though they were dead. This verse highlights the power and majesty of the divine manifestation that occurred in the resurrection of Jesus.

Verse 5:

"But the angel answered and said to the women, 'Do not be afraid; I know that you seek Jesus, who was crucified.'"

The angel reassures the women and encourages them not to be afraid. He acknowledges the reason for their visit: they were looking for Jesus, who had been crucified. This gesture of encouragement shows the mercy and compassion of God, who does not want his servants to be afraid before the mystery of the resurrection.

Verse 6:

"He is not here, for he has risen, as he said. Come, see the

place where he lay."

The angel reveals the greatest news in history: Jesus is no longer in the tomb, He has risen! The angel affirms that this happened exactly as Jesus had said it would happen. He invites the women to see with their own eyes that the tomb is empty, confirming Jesus' victory over death.

Verse 7:

"Go quickly and tell his disciples, 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee; there you will see him. See, I have told you.'"

The angel instructs the women to go quickly and tell the disciples about Jesus' resurrection. He mentions Galilee, where Jesus would meet his disciples, fulfilling the promises he made before his crucifixion. This invitation to go to Galilee symbolizes the beginning of a new journey for the disciples, marked by faith and mission.

Verse 8:

"And they went out quickly from the tomb with fear and great joy, and ran to tell his disciples."

The women leave the tomb with mixed feelings: fear and great joy. Fear was natural in the face of such a supernatural event, but their joy was greater, because they knew that something extraordinary and wonderful had happened. They could not contain their desire to announce the good news to the disciples, fulfilling the mission that the angel had given them.

Verse 9:

"And as they went on their way, behold, Jesus appeared unto them, saying, Hail! And they came and took hold of his feet, and worshipped him."

While the women were on their way, Jesus met them. They recognized him immediately and, filled with emotion and

reverence, they kneel and worship Jesus. "Hail" is a greeting of peace and joy. This encounter confirms that Jesus has indeed risen and now presents himself as the glorified Lord.

Verse 10:

"Then Jesus said to them, 'Do not be afraid; go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me.'"

Jesus repeats the angel's words: "Do not be afraid." He reinforces the women's mission to inform the disciples about the meeting in Galilee. Jesus calls the disciples "my brothers," emphasizing his closeness and intimate relationship with them. The resurrection of Jesus brings a new reality of hope and fraternity to his followers.

Verse 11:

"While they were going, some of the guards went into the city and told the chief priests everything that had happened." While the women were going to announce the resurrection to the disciples, the guards at the tomb, who had witnessed the great earthquake and the removal of the stone, went to the religious leaders. They not only

They witnessed the resurrection, but they were also aware of something extraordinary that had happened. Instead of believing it, these guards went to report what they saw to the priests, since the resurrection of Jesus was a big problem for the religious leaders, who had tried to eliminate Jesus.

Verse 12:

"And they gathered together with the elders, and took counsel, and gave a large sum of money to the soldiers."

The priests and elders, instead of acknowledging that Jesus really rose again, try to silence the truth by offering a large sum of money to the guards so that

lie about what had happened. They asked the guards to say that Jesus' disciples had stolen the body while they were sleeping.

Verse 13:

"Saying, 'Say, 'The disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept.'"

The lie that the religious leaders ask the guards to tell is blatant. If the guards were truly asleep, how could they know who took the body? This shows the lengths to which the priests were willing to go to maintain power and discredit the resurrection of Jesus.

Verse 14:

"And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will persuade him and relieve you of trouble."

They try to ensure the safety of the guards by promising that if the lie were discovered, they would intercede with the governor (Pontius Pilate) to protect them. This verse reveals the corruption of the religious authorities, who were more concerned with protecting their own reputations than with acknowledging the truth.

Verse 15:

"And they took the money and did as they were instructed. And this is the saying that is spread among the Jews to this day."

The soldiers accepted the bribe and spread the lie. The story that Jesus' body was stolen by the disciples was widely circulated among the Jews, and the author of Matthew notes that up until the time he wrote the gospel, this story was still circulating.

Verse 16:

"But the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go."

While the lie spreads among the religious leaders, Jesus' disciples follow their Master's instructions. They go to Galilee, to the mountain that Jesus had indicated, where He would appear to them after the resurrection. This moment marks the continuation of Jesus' mission, which now extends to His followers.

Verse 17:

"And when they saw him, they worshiped him: but some doubted."

When the disciples see the resurrected Jesus, they worship Him, acknowledging His divinity and authority. However, the verse also shows us the humanity of the disciples: some still doubted. Even with all the evidence of the resurrection, doubt and fear were present. This is something we can relate to, because often, even in the face of miracles and signs, uncertainty can arise.

Verse 18:

"And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, 'All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.'"

Jesus, now resurrected, asserts His authority over heaven and earth. His resurrection is confirmation that He has all power, and this validates His redemptive mission. He is the King, not only of the earth, but of the entire cosmos, and His authority is absolute.

Verse 19:

"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

Jesus gives the Great Commission to His disciples: to go and make disciples of all nations. The mission to spread the

The gospel no longer has borders, and everyone is called to hear and follow Christ. Baptism is a sign of new life in Christ, and this ordinance is performed in the name of the Trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), showing divine unity and authority.

Verse 20:

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Jesus continues to give instructions: to teach everyone to keep the commandments He taught. The mission of making disciples is not just an act of conversion, but involves a process of ongoing teaching. Jesus also promises His constant presence, being with the disciples "always, even to the end of the age." This promise is a source of comfort and confidence for those who follow Christ, knowing that He will never abandon them.

Final Reflection on Matthew 28:

Matthew 28 is one of the most powerful and significant chapters in the entire Gospel, as it presents the resurrection of Jesus, the triumph over death, and the beginning of the global mission of the Church. In this chapter, we see Christ's victory over sin and death, which confirms His divinity and the truthfulness of His message.

The resurrection is not just a historical event, but the foundation of the Christian faith. It is not only a promise of life after death, but also of transformation and hope for the present. When Jesus appears to the women and disciples, He not only confirms the truth of His resurrection, but also commissions them to spread this message of hope to all nations.

The Great Commission, given by Jesus in Matthew 28:18-20, is a universal calling, reminding us of every Christian's responsibility to be a witness to His life, death, and resurrection. "Make disciples of all nations" is more than an invitation to share our faith; it is a command to transform lives and cultures with the message of the gospel.

Furthermore, Jesus' final promise—"And lo, I am with you always, to the end of the age"—is a source of comfort and strength. As we walk through our daily struggles and challenges, we know that we are not alone. Christ's constant presence through the Holy Spirit empowers us to live and fulfill our mission.

Therefore, Matthew 28 is not just the end of a book, but the beginning of a movement that would transform the world. We are invited to actively participate in this mission, with the confidence that Christ is with us every step of the way, until the end of time.