

EDITOR'S NOTE: *THE BIBLE IS LIKE NO OTHER BOOK, FOR IT HOLDS THE VERY WORDS OF GOD, WHICH HAVE POWER TO CHANGE THE LIVES OF ANY WHO READ IT AND PUT THEIR FAITH IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. PSALM 34:8 SAYS, "OH, TASTE AND SEE THAT THE LORD IS GOOD! BLESSED IS THE MAN WHO TAKES REFUGE IN HIM!" THROUGH THE NEBRASKA LIVING TIMES YOU MAY "TASTE" AND SEE THE GOODNESS OF GOD THROUGH HIS VERY OWN WORDS, EACH MONTH, RIGHT HERE. MAY GOD BLESS YOU WITH HIS WORD!*

The Book of Matthew

(CONTINUED FEBRUARY 2017)

CHAPTER 16

THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES DEMAND SIGNS

1 AND THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES CAME, AND TO TEST HIM THEY ASKED HIM TO SHOW THEM A SIGN FROM HEAVEN. 2 HE ANSWERED THEM.[FN] "WHEN IT IS EVENING, YOU SAY, 'IT WILL BE FAIR WEATHER, FOR THE SKY IS RED.' 3 AND IN THE MORNING, 'IT WILL BE STORMY TODAY, FOR THE SKY IS RED AND THREATENING.' YOU KNOW HOW TO INTERPRET THE APPEARANCE OF THE SKY, BUT YOU CANNOT INTERPRET THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES. 4 AN EVIL AND ADULTEROUS GENERATION SEEKS FOR A SIGN, BUT NO SIGN WILL BE GIVEN TO IT EXCEPT THE SIGN OF JONAH." SO HE LEFT THEM AND DEPARTED.

THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES

5 WHEN THE DISCIPLES REACHED THE OTHER SIDE, THEY HAD FORGOTTEN TO BRING ANY BREAD. 6 JESUS SAID TO THEM, "WATCH AND BEWARE OF THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES." 7 AND THEY BEGAN DISCUSSING IT AMONG THEMSELVES, SAYING, "WE BROUGHT NO BREAD." 8 BUT JESUS, AWARE OF THIS, SAID, "O YOU OF LITTLE FAITH, WHY ARE YOU DISCUSSING AMONG YOURSELVES THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE NO BREAD? 9 DO YOU NOT YET PERCEIVE? DO YOU NOT REMEMBER THE FIVE LOAVES FOR THE FIVE THOUSAND, AND HOW MANY BASKETS YOU GATHERED? 10 OR THE SEVEN LOAVES FOR THE FOUR THOUSAND, AND HOW MANY BASKETS YOU GATHERED? 11 HOW IS IT THAT YOU FAIL TO UNDERSTAND THAT I DID NOT SPEAK ABOUT BREAD? BEWARE OF THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES." 12 THEN THEY UNDERSTOOD THAT HE DID NOT TELL THEM TO BEWARE OF THE LEAVEN OF

BREAD, BUT OF THE TEACHING OF THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES.

PETER CONFESSES JESUS AS THE CHRIST

13 NOW WHEN JESUS CAME INTO THE DISTRICT OF CAESAREA PHILIPPI, HE ASKED HIS DISCIPLES, "WHO DO PEOPLE SAY THAT THE SON OF MAN IS?" 14 AND THEY SAID, "SOME SAY JOHN THE BAPTIST, OTHERS SAY ELIJAH, AND OTHERS JEREMIAH OR ONE OF THE PROPHETS." 15 HE SAID TO THEM, "BUT WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?" 16 SIMON PETER REPLIED, "YOU ARE THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD." 17 AND JESUS ANSWERED HIM, "BLESSED ARE YOU, SIMON BAR-JONAH! FOR FLESH AND BLOOD HAS NOT REVEALED THIS TO YOU, BUT MY FATHER WHO IS IN HEAVEN. 18 AND I TELL YOU, YOU ARE PETER, AND ON THIS ROCK[FN] I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH, AND THE GATES OF HELL[FN] SHALL NOT PREVAIL AGAINST IT. 19 I WILL GIVE YOU THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, AND WHATEVER YOU BIND ON EARTH SHALL BE BOUND IN HEAVEN, AND WHATEVER YOU LOOSE ON EARTH SHALL BE LOOSED[FN] IN HEAVEN." 20 THEN HE STRICTLY CHARGED THE DISCIPLES TO TELL NO ONE THAT HE WAS THE CHRIST.

JESUS FORETELLS HIS DEATH AND RESURRECTION

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 ON THE THIRD DAY BE RAISED. 22 AND PETER TOOK HIM ASIDE AND BEGAN TO REBUKE HIM, SAYING, "FAR BE IT FROM YOU, LORD![FN] THIS SHALL NEVER HAPPEN TO YOU." 23 BUT HE TURNED AND SAID TO PETER, "GET BEHIND ME, SATAN! YOU ARE A HINDRANCE[FN] TO ME. FOR YOU ARE NOT SETTING YOUR MIND ON THE

THINGS OF GOD, BUT ON THE THINGS OF MAN."

TAKE UP YOUR CROSS AND FOLLOW JESUS

24 THEN JESUS TOLD HIS DISCIPLES, "IF ANYONE WOULD COME AFTER ME, LET HIM DENY HIMSELF AND TAKE UP HIS CROSS AND FOLLOW ME. 25 FOR WHOEVER WOULD SAVE HIS LIFE[FN] WILL LOSE IT, BUT WHOEVER LOSES HIS LIFE FOR MY SAKE WILL FIND IT. 26 FOR WHAT WILL IT PROFIT A MAN IF HE GAINS THE WHOLE WORLD AND FORFEITS HIS SOUL? OR WHAT SHALL A MAN GIVE IN RETURN FOR HIS SOUL? 27 FOR THE SON OF MAN IS GOING TO COME WITH HIS ANGELS IN THE GLORY OF HIS FATHER, AND THEN HE WILL REPAY EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO WHAT HE HAS DONE. 28 TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, THERE ARE SOME STANDING HERE WHO WILL NOT TASTE DEATH UNTIL THEY SEE THE SON OF MAN COMING IN HIS KINGDOM."

CHAPTER 17

THE TRANSFIGURATION

1 AND AFTER SIX DAYS JESUS TOOK WITH HIM PETER AND JAMES, AND JOHN HIS BROTHER, AND LED THEM UP A HIGH MOUNTAIN BY THEMSELVES. 2 AND HE WAS TRANSFIGURED BEFORE THEM, AND HIS FACE SHONE LIKE THE SUN, AND HIS CLOTHES BECAME WHITE AS LIGHT. 3 AND BEHOLD, THERE APPEARED TO THEM MOSES AND ELIJAH, TALKING WITH HIM. 4 AND PETER SAID TO JESUS, "LORD, IT IS GOOD THAT WE ARE HERE. IF YOU WISH, I WILL MAKE THREE TENTS HERE, ONE FOR YOU AND ONE FOR MOSES AND ONE FOR ELIJAH." 5 HE WAS STILL SPEAKING WHEN, BEHOLD, A BRIGHT CLOUD OVERSHADOWED THEM, AND A VOICE FROM THE CLOUD SAID, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON,[FN] WITH WHOM I AM WELL PLEASED; LISTEN TO HIM." 6 WHEN THE DISCIPLES HEARD THIS, THEY FELL ON THEIR FACES AND WERE TERRIFIED. 7 BUT JESUS CAME AND TOUCHED THEM, SAYING, "RISE, AND HAVE NO FEAR." 8 AND WHEN THEY LIFTED UP THEIR EYES, THEY SAW NO ONE BUT JESUS ONLY.

9 AND AS THEY WERE COMING DOWN THE MOUNTAIN, JESUS COMMANDED THEM, "TELL NO ONE THE VISION, UNTIL THE SON OF MAN IS RAISED FROM THE DEAD." 10 AND THE DISCIPLES ASKED HIM, "THEN WHY DO THE SCRIBES SAY THAT FIRST ELIJAH MUST COME?" 11 HE ANSWERED, "ELIJAH DOES COME,



The Living Word

AND HE WILL RESTORE ALL THINGS. 12 BUT I TELL YOU THAT ELIJAH HAS ALREADY COME, AND THEY DID NOT RECOGNIZE HIM, BUT DID IT FOR WHATEVER THEY PLEASED. SO ALSO THE SON OF MAN WILL CERTAINLY SUFFER AT THEIR HANDS." 13 THEN THE DISCIPLES UNDERSTOOD THAT HE WAS SPEAKING TO THEM OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

JESUS HEALS A BOY WITH A DEMON

14 AND WHEN THEY CAME TO THE CROWD, A MAN CAME UP TO HIM AND, KNEELING BEFORE HIM, 15 SAID, "LORD, HAVE MERCY ON MY SON, FOR HE HAS SEIZURES AND HE SUFFERS TERRIBLY. FOR OFTEN HE FALLS INTO THE FIRE, AND OFTEN INTO THE WATER. 16 AND I BROUGHT HIM TO YOUR DISCIPLES, AND THEY COULD NOT HEAL HIM." 17 AND JESUS ANSWERED, "O FAITHLESS AND TWISTED GENERATION, HOW LONG AM I TO BE WITH YOU? HOW LONG AM I TO BEAR WITH YOU? BRING HIM HERE TO ME." 18 AND JESUS REBUKED THE DEMON.[FN] AND IT[FN] CAME OUT OF HIM, AND THE BOY WAS HEALED INSTANTLY.[FN] 19 THEN THE DISCIPLES CAME TO JESUS PRIVATELY AND SAID, "WHY COULD WE NOT CAST IT OUT?" 20 HE SAID TO THEM, "BECAUSE OF YOUR LITTLE FAITH. FOR TRULY, I SAY TO YOU, IF YOU HAVE FAITH LIKE A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED, YOU WILL SAY TO THIS MOUNTAIN, 'MOVE FROM HERE

TO THERE,' AND IT WILL MOVE, AND NOTHING WILL BE IMPOSSIBLE FOR YOU."[FN]

JESUS AGAIN FORETELLS DEATH, RESURRECTION

22 AS THEY WERE GATHERING[FN] IN GALILEE, JESUS SAID TO THEM, "THE SON OF MAN IS ABOUT TO BE DELIVERED INTO THE HANDS OF MEN, 23 AND THEY WILL KILL HIM, AND HE WILL BE RAISED ON THE THIRD DAY." AND THEY WERE GREATLY DISTRESSED.

THE TEMPLE TAX

24 WHEN THEY CAME TO CAPERNAUM, THE COLLECTORS OF THE TWO-DRACHMA TAX WENT UP TO PETER AND SAID, "DOES YOUR TEACHER NOT PAY THE TAX?" 25 HE SAID, "YES." AND WHEN HE CAME INTO THE HOUSE, JESUS SPOKE TO HIM FIRST, SAYING, "WHAT DO YOU THINK, SIMON? FROM WHOM DO KINGS OF THE EARTH TAKE TOLL OR TAX? FROM THEIR SONS OR FROM OTHERS?" 26 AND WHEN HE SAID, "FROM OTHERS," JESUS SAID TO HIM, "THEN THE SONS ARE FREE. 27 HOWEVER, NOT TO GIVE OFFENSE TO THEM, GO TO THE SEA AND CAST A HOOK AND TAKE THE FIRST FISH THAT COMES UP, AND WHEN YOU OPEN ITS MOUTH YOU WILL FIND A SHEKEL. [FN] TAKE THAT AND GIVE IT TO THEM FOR ME AND FOR YOURSELF."

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