

# Matthew 16 - Sign from Heaven; Jesus Withdraws; Peter's Confession

III. King's interim kingdom program (Matt 13:1—20:28)

(3) Christ trains the disciples (Matt 14:13—20:28)

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## Matthew 16

(G) Warnings against pharisaical doctrine (16:1-12) (Cf. Mark 8:11-12)

**1** The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and **putting Jesus to the test**, they asked Him to show them a **sign from heaven**.

**1** The Pharisees and Sadducees came up, and testing Jesus, they asked Him to show them a sign from heaven.

**1** When the Pharisees and Sadducees arrived, in order to test Jesus they asked him to show them a sign from heaven.

**1** The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.

- Jesus was back in Jewish territory, and quickly faced another attack from Israel's religious leaders

- The Pharisees *with* the Sadducees—strange combination because the Pharisees were the extreme religionists. The single article "the" implies that they acted together.

— This is remarkable, since they were political and theological enemies (Cf. Acts 23:6-10).

The Sadducees were the unitarians, the modernists. They did not believe in the supernatural, or the resurrection.

— Representatives of both parties constituted the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish governing body

- "...putting *Jesus* to the test" - *peipazontes*, to try whether a thing can be done; for the purpose of ascertaining quality

— Their purpose was to demonstrate who Jesus was by subjecting Him to a trial that they had contrived

- "...sign from heaven" - the Pharisees and Sadducees had asked Him for a sign earlier (12:38); now, they asked Him to produce a "sign from heaven"

— The Jews believed that demons could do signs on earth, but only God could produce a sign out of heaven

2 But He replied to them, "When it is evening, you say, '*It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.*'

2 But He replied to them, "When it is evening, you say, '*It will be fair weather, for the sky is red.*'

2 He replied to them, "You say, 'Red sky at night, what a delight!

2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be fair weather: for the sky is red.*

3 And in the morning, '*There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.*' You know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but are you unable *to discern* the signs of the times?

3 And in the morning, '*There will be a storm today, for the sky is red and threatening.*' Do you know how to discern the appearance of the sky, but cannot *discern* the signs of the times?

3 Red sky in the morning, cloudy and storming.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, yet you can't interpret the signs of the times?

3 And in the morning, *It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowering.* O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not *discern* the signs of the times?

- Jesus said that they did not need a special sign since many things pointed to His being the Messiah

— They could read the "sky" well enough to predict the weather, but they could not read what was happening in their midst well enough to know that their Messiah had appeared

— The proof that they could not discern the signs of the times was the fact that they asked for a sign

4 An evil and adulterous generation wants a sign; and so a sign will not be given to it, except the **sign of Jonah.**" And He **left** them and went away.

4 An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign; and a sign will not be given it, except the sign of Jonah." And He left them and went away.

4 An evil and adulterous generation craves a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah." Then he left them and went away.

4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

- "...sign of Jonah" - the second time that Jesus has used the prophet Jonah as a "sign of the times" (Matt 12:40)
  - The sign of Jonah was Jonah himself and his message from God. The only sign the religious leaders would get was God's sign: Jesus Himself and His message.
  - Some scholars believe that this has a double fulfillment. The first fulfillment is, indeed, as Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of the whale, so shall the son of man spend three days and three nights in the belly of the earth: this clearly refers to Jesus' death and resurrection.
  - Some scholars believe that the second fulfillment refers to the nation Israel and will be a sign when they, as a prerequisite condition to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ, the remnant petitions for Him to save them and after the third day He comes and intervenes.
  - "...left" - *kataleipo*, to forsake or abandon; a stronger Greek word than Matthew has used before
  - Jesus turned His back on these religious leaders because they were hopeless
  - This was Jesus' last and most important withdrawal from Galilee before His final trip south to Jerusalem (19:1). He remained outside Galilee until 17:20.
- Miracles will give confirmation where there is faith, but not where there is willful unbelief.*  
[Wiersbe]

### **Jesus' Teaching About the Yeast of the Pharisees and Herod (Cf. Mark 8:14-21)**

**5** And the disciples came to the other side *of the sea*, but they had forgotten to bring *any* bread.

**5** And the disciples came to the other side *of the sea*, but they had forgotten to bring *any* bread.

**5** When his disciples reached the other side, they had forgotten to take any bread along.

**5** And when his disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread.

**6** And Jesus said to them, "**Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.**"

**6** And Jesus said to them, "**Watch out and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.**"

**6** Jesus told them, "**Watch out! Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!**"

**6** Then Jesus said unto them, **Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.**

- "...leaven" - an illustration of something small, mixed in, that inevitably spreads and has a large effect. It often stands for something evil (Cf. Ex 34:25; Lev 2:11; 1 Cor 5:6-8)

— The disciples probably didn't understand what Jesus meant because they were thinking literally, but Jesus was speaking metaphorically

7 They began to discuss *this* among themselves, saying, "*He said that* because we did not bring *any* bread."

7 They began to discuss *this* among themselves, saying, "*He said that* because we did not bring *any* bread."

7 As they began to discuss this among themselves, they kept saying, "We didn't bring along any bread."

7 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, *It is* because we have taken no bread.

- The disciples believed that Jesus meant that they should not buy bread from people belonging to either of these sects

8 But Jesus, aware of *this*, said, "*You men of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you have no bread?*"

8 But Jesus, aware of this, said, "*You men of little faith, why do you discuss among yourselves that you have no bread?*"

8 Knowing this, Jesus asked them, "*You who have little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you don't have any bread?*"

8 *Which* when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, *O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread?*

- They think that Jesus brings up leaven because they had forgotten to bring bread. Jesus realizes that they are misunderstanding the whole thing.

9 *Do you not yet understand nor remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets you picked up?*

9 *Do you not yet understand or remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets full you picked up?*

9 *Don't you understand yet? Don't you remember the five loaves for the 5,000 and how many baskets you collected,*

9 *Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?*

10 *Nor the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many large baskets you picked up?*

10 *Or the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many large baskets full you picked up?*

10 *or the seven loaves for the 4,000 and how many baskets you collected?*

10 *Neither the seven loaves of the four thousand, and how many baskets ye took up?*

- Jesus' rebuke arose from the disciples' failure to believe that He could provide bread for them, in spite of them witnessing two feeding miracles

11 *How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you about bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."*

11 *How is it that you do not understand that I did not speak to you concerning bread? But beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees."*

11 *How can you fail to understand that I wasn't talking to you about bread? Beware of the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees!"*

11 *How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?*

12 Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

12 Then they understood that He did not say to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

12 Then they understood that he did not say to beware of the yeast used in bread, but of the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

12 Then understood they how that he bade *them* not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

This section (13:54--16:12) emphasizes the mounting opposition to the King. Matthew recorded Jesus withdrawing from this opposition twice (14:13; 15:21). In both instances He proceeded to train His disciples. the first time He ministered to Jews, and the second time He ministered to Gentiles. Opposition arose from the Jews (13:54-58), from the Romans (14:1-12), and most strongly from the religious leaders within Judaism (15:1-9; 16:1-4). The rejection of the last group became so firm that Jesus "abandoned" them (16:4). From this point on, He concentrated on preparing His disciples for what lay ahead because of Israel's rejection.

(H) Revelation of the church (16:13-20) (Cf. Mark 8:27-30; Luke 9:18-21)

13 Now when Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, *"Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"*

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, *"Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"*

13 When Jesus had come to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, *"Who do people say the Son of Man is?"*

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?*

- Caesarea Philippi: Near the headwaters of the Jordan River, 25 miles north of Galilee. It was mainly Gentile territory.
- The purpose of Jesus' question was to ensure the disciples were fairly committed to the doctrine of His Messiahship before He proceeded to talk to them about His impending death.

14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and *still* others, Jeremiah, or one of the *other* prophets."

14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."

14 They said, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

**14** And they said, Some say *that thou art* John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

- Herod Antipas believed He was the resurrected John the Baptist (14:2)
- Others believed He was the fulfillment of Elijah, prophesied in Mal 4:5-6 (Cf. Matt 3:1-3; 11:9-10; 17:10-13)
- Others thought He was a resurrected prophet
- It's interesting that the disciples did not answer that some said Jesus was the Messiah, although that belief was not widespread in Israel.

15 He \*said to them, "But who do **you** yourselves say that I am?"

15 He \*said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

15 He asked them, "But who do you say I am?"

**15** He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

- "...you" - in the emphatic first position in Greek, plural; addressing all of the disciples
- Peter again responded, partly as spokesman for the disciples again (Cf. 15:15)

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the **Christ**, the **Son of the living God**."

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!"

**16** And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

- Peter said he believed Jesus was "the Christ," the Messiah that the OT prophesied, the hope of Israel
- "...Christ" - Greek for *Meshiach* in Hebrew, the Anointed One
- "...Son of the living God" - by phrasing his response in this way, Peter left no doubt about which "God" was the Father of Jesus
- Peter expressed belief that Jesus was both Messiah and God

17 And Jesus said to him, "**Blessed** are you, **Simon Barjona**, because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

17 And Jesus said to him, "**Blessed** are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

17 Then Jesus told him, "**How blessed** you are, Simon son of Jonah, since flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, though my Father in heaven has.

**17** And Jesus answered and said unto him, **Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.**

- "...Blessed" - *makarios*, someone God has favored and therefore enjoys happiness

- "...Simon Barjona" - Son of Jonah or Son of the Dove. The Dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

- Jesus asked a question, and Peter gave the correct answer. Peter probably thought pretty highly of himself after giving Jesus the right answer, then Jesus burst his bubble...Jesus told Peter that he had the right answer because the Father first made a move toward him through revelation and allowed him to have that particular thought.

— The insight Peter had gained about Jesus was because God had given it to Him (Cf. 11:27; Cf. John 6:44). It did not come from Peter himself

### **Instruction About the King's Program**

18 And I also say to you that **you are Peter**, and upon this **rock I will build My church**; and the **gates of Hades** will not overpower it.

18 I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

18 I tell you that you are Peter, and it is on this rock that I will build my congregation, and the powers of hell will not conquer it.

18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

- "...you are Peter" - Jesus mentions Peter's name because He is about to make a pun on it

— "Peter" - is a transliteration of the Greek name *Petros* ("little stone"). *Petros* translates the Aramaic *kepa* (massive rock). *Kepa* translated into Greek is *Kephas*, from which we get Cephas.

- "...rock" - *petra*, Jesus' use of "rock" refers to the veracity (truthfulness) of Peter's statement; it's Peter's confession that Jesus was the Messiah

— Jesus is not building the church on Peter; He's building the Church on Peter's confession (v16) of who Christ is

— Jesus is the Rock; the OT prophets likened Jesus to a Stone (Ps 118:22; Is 28:16); Jesus claimed to be that Stone (Matt 21:42); Peter himself identified Jesus as that Stone (Acts



4:10-12; 1 Peter 2:5-8), as Paul did (Rom 9:32-33; 1 Cor 3:11; 10:4; Eph 2:20)

— The OT used the figure of a Rock to describe God (Deut 32:4,15,18,30-31,37; 2 Sam 22:2; Ps 18:2,31,46; 28:1)

— Jesus used two different words for “rock”; if He wanted to identify Peter as the rock on which He would build the Church, the clearest way to do so would have been to use the same word.

— Although Peter’s confession led to Jesus’ comment about building His Church on a rock, it did not place Peter in a privileged position in the Church simply based on his confession.

— The NT never connects Peter’s leadership in the early Church with his confession

- “...I will build” - *oikodomeo*, future tense, indicating that the Church did not exist either at the time or before He made the statement

— In other words, the Church was destined to come into existence in the future; it did not exist in either the OT era or during the time of Christ

— Building the Church is one of the works of Christ during His Present Session.

See [Present Ministry of Christ](#) for details on what Jesus is doing from heaven today (Cf. Acts 2:47; 1 Cor 3:6).

- “...My” - Jesus claimed the Church as His own in a unique sense; He is revealing the existence of this new organization here for the first time

— There is no OT revelation of its existence; Jesus brought it into being because Israel had rejected Him as Messiah. Consequently, God would postpone the kingdom on earth; in the meantime, Jesus would construct an entirely new entity

- “...church” - *ekklesia*, an assembly of people called out for a particular purpose

— Used only here and 18:17 in the Gospels

— It comes from the Greek verb *ekkaleo*, “to call out from”; the LXX used it of Israel (Deut 4:10; Joshua 9:2; Judges 20:2, et al; Cf. Acts 7:38)

— Jesus is referring here to a new body, that is on the horizon (due to the future tense “I will build”)

— Amillennialists will point to the use of *ekklēsia* here, as well as in Acts 7:38, to argue that the church existed in the OT

- Jesus could have said, “I will build my kingdom,” if the Church was the first phase of the coming kingdom

- “...gates of Hades” - the powers of death and Satan, along with his demons, will never prevail over the Church

— Even Jesus’ death did not prevent Him from building the Church

## **God's Purposes for the Church**

1. To glorify God (Eph 3:21)



2. To edify or build up its members
3. To fulfill the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20)

During this present Church Age, which has lasted roughly two thousand years so far, the Church, rather than national Israel, comprises the preeminent servants of God on earth. During this time, God is busy "...taking from among the Gentiles a people for His name" (Acts 15:14).

19 I will give you the keys of the **kingdom** of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth **shall have been bound** in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth **shall have been loosed** in heaven."

19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

19 I will give you the keys to the kingdom from heaven. Whatever you prohibit on earth will have been prohibited in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will have been permitted in heaven."

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.

- "...kingdom" - *basileia*, refers to the future earthly reign of Christ

- In this verse, Jesus is speaking of Peter's future role in the millennial kingdom.

Unfortunately, some people interpret this verse as Peter being given permission by God to open/unlock citizenship in the future kingdom to people now. They point to Peter's sermon at Pentecost (Acts 2) and Cornelius' conversion (Acts 10) as examples.

— However, this verse is not related to today, nor the area of demonology or spiritual warfare, which is how it is often interpreted. These are promises exclusively to Peter for the future messianic kingdom.

— Both "to bind" (*deō*) and "to loose" (*luō*) are references to the execution of Peter's authority, which will be manifested in the coming messianic kingdom. This is a promise to Peter of a place of authority in the kingdom; with this promise, the Lord gives Peter the basis of the decisions that he will make. Peter is to discern the mind of God, then judge accordingly.

— Peter's kingdom authority will only come from discerning what heaven has already decreed. If Peter operates as such, then he will have tremendous authority. Same is true in the Book of Acts...Peter's authority to open avenues of salvation to various people groups outside of Judaism came from the fact that he was operating within what heaven had already decreed, not out of his own authority.

- "...shall have been [bound/loosed]" [2x] - a problem exists as to these perfect tense periphrastics
- The Roman Catholic church bases its sacerdotal (priestly) authority (that the power to bind/loose was given to Peter, thus all popes) on this verse, along with Matt 18:18; John 20:23. The pope will argue that he has this authority today. However, this false doctrine is a result of an improper translation in Jerome's Latin Vulgate (400 AD).
- Martin Luther would not refer to Jerome's Latin Vulgate when he translated the Hebrew OT and Greek NT into German, because it was tilted toward Roman Catholicism.
- Since Jerome, many translators have followed the Latin Vulgate and translated these verbs as *simple futures*, not as perfect tense periphrastics. When you translate them as futures, it makes it sound like Peter has a "leash" on heaven, meaning when Peter binds something on earth, it is then bound in heaven.
- If you translate them as perfect tense periphrastics, as in the original Greek, the whole meaning changes. Instead of seemingly making Jesus teach that the apostles' acts will determine policies in heaven, it should have been translated "shall have been bound" and "shall have been loosed." This makes the apostles' acts a matter of inspiration or heavenly guidance.
- A careful translation of the original Greek tenses would be: ...and whatever you forbid on earth *must be what is already forbidden in heaven*, and what you permit on earth *must be what is already permitted in heaven*." This proper translation of the Greek tenses puts heaven in the driver's seat, not man, and makes it clear that man only has authority when he declares what God has already decreed.
- The current spiritual warfare movement follows the error of the Jerome's Latin Vulgate (and the error of Roman Catholicism, which Martin Luther made it a point not to do) and teaches that whatever believers bind or loose on earth will be followed suit in heaven, meaning that heaven is taking direction from believers on earth. Heaven must accommodate what believers want because (they say) Jesus gave us that power in this verse.
- See [James 23 Binding and Loosing \(James 4:7\)](#) for additional details on binding and loosing Satan.

20 Then He gave the disciples strict orders that they were to tell no one that He was the Christ.

20 Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.

20 Then he strictly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

**20** Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

- Why to keep a secret? His time had not yet come (Dan 9:25)

- He was not trying to conceal His true identity, but rather trying to control how people would respond to Him (Cf. 12:38-39; 16:4)
- If the disciples had broadcast the fact that Jesus was the Messiah, some people would have tried to draft Jesus as a political liberator. However, Jesus wanted people to come to believe on Him because of the words He spoke and the works He performed
- Jesus did not want the disciples to appeal for people's acceptance of Jesus because of nationalistic zeal or misguided messianic expectations, but because of faith rooted in understanding
- He didn't want His popularity on a superficial level to short-circuit the Cross. After His death and resurrection, the disciples could take a more unrestrained approach to calling people to repentance and faith
- The disciples apparently grasped the danger of people accepting Jesus for superficial reasons, but they did not understand the threat of short-circuiting the Cross, as the next passage shows.

(I) First prediction of Christ's death (16:21-28) (Cf. Mark 8:31-33; Luke 9:22)

**21 From that time** Jesus began to **pointout** to His disciples that it was **necessary** for Him to go to Jerusalem and to suffer many things from the **elders, chiefpriests**, and **scribes**, and to be killed, and to **be raised up on the third day**.

**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 up on the third day.

**21** From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he would have to go to Jerusalem and suffer a great deal because of the elders, the high priests, and the scribes. Then he would be killed, but on the third day he would be raised.

**21** From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

- Jesus predicted His own death and resurrection multiple times (Matt 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19; Mark 8:31-33; 9:31; 10:32-34; Luke 9:22,43b-45; 18:31-34; John 10:17-18).

— He had hinted at His death earlier (9:15; 10:38; 12:40), however this is the first time He discussed it with His disciples

- "From that time" - *apo tote exxato*, only the second time Matthew used this phrase; the first was 4:17, where Jesus began to present Himself to Israel as Messiah

— Here it announces Jesus' preparation of His disciples for the Cross. This is a significant turning point in Jesus' ministry.

— The two instances in Matthew where this phrase is used actually describe the two great purposes for which Jesus came into the world: (1) to offer the kingdom to Israel, the

chosen people (4:17); and after their rejection, (2) to offer Himself as a sacrifice for the sin of mankind (here).

- "...began" - Jesus had not previously preached about His death and crucifixion, but after the rejection of Israel's religious leaders (Cf. 12:24), who committed the unpardonable sin, Jesus changed the entire tenor and purpose of His ministry (see notes at end of Matt 12).

- "...point out" - *deikeyo*, to show, to explain; He began to show these things with His actions as well as His words, not just "teach" them

- "...necessary" - *dei*, He had to do this because it was God's will for the Messiah to suffer and die, and experience resurrection

— He also had to do this to fulfill prophecy

- "...elders...chief priests...scribes" - Jesus identified three groups who would be responsible for His sufferings and death; together these groups constituted the Sanhedrin, Israel's supreme religious body

— The definite article "the" before this list is a definite article, which means Jesus is speaking of these three groups as one group, binding them together as a single entity

- "...be raised up on the third day" - here, just as in Jesus' other two announcements to the disciples about His impending death, the announcement of His resurrection made no impression on the disciples

— Apparently the thought of Him dying so upset them that they did not hear the rest of what He told them

	<b>Matthew</b>	<b>Mark</b>	<b>Luke</b>
First passion announcement	16:21-23	8:31-33	9:22
Second passion announcement	17:22-23	9:30-32	9:43-45
Third passion announcement	20:17-19	10:32-34	18:31-34

22 And yet Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid it, Lord! This shall **never** happen to You!"

22 Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "God forbid *it*, Lord! This shall never happen to You."

22 Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, "God be merciful to you, Lord! This must never happen to you!"

**22** Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

- This clearly shows Peter's lack of understanding of the gospel. He clearly did not understand the Messiah as a Suffering Servant, which almost everyone in Israel rejected as well

— However, Peter's complete misunderstanding of the coming atoning work of Christ on the Cross also leads to questions about the content of the ministry of the disciples up to this time.

— If the gospel presented earlier by Jesus and the apostles concerned the atoning work of Christ, why is Peter so clueless concerning the necessity and benefit of the impending crucifixion? Clearly, whatever message Jesus and the apostles were presenting during their early ministry, it did not include a clear understanding of the necessary death of Christ.

- "...never" - *ou me*, a very strong negative expression

— Peter followed up his confession (v16) with a great contradiction

— His strong will and warm heart linked with his ignorance produced arrogance. He confesses that Jesus is the Messiah, then speaks in a way implying that he knows more of God's will than the Messiah. Like many modern readers of the Bible, Peter did not want to accept what did not agree with his hopes and ambitions.

23 But **Returned** and said to Peter, "**Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's purposes, but men's.**"

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 God's interests, but man's.**"

23 But Jesus turned and told Peter, "**Get behind me, Satan! You are an offense to me, because you are not thinking God's thoughts but human thoughts!**"

**23** But he turned, and said unto Peter, **Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.**

- "...He turned" - Jesus turned to confront Peter face to face

- "...Get behind me, Satan!" - do not stand in My way as a stumbling block

— Jesus used similar language when rebuking Satan himself (4:10)

— Jesus viewed Peter's comment as ultimately coming from Satan

- Based on his confession, Jesus just called Peter a "rock"; just moments later, Jesus called Peter a different type of rock, a "stumbling block"

— Satan had offered Jesus Messiahship without suffering (4:8-9), now Peter was suggesting the same thing

— The idea of a suffering Messiah caused Peter to stumble; after Jesus' resurrection, the same concept caused many Jews to stumble (1 Cor 1:23)

### **Revelation of Jesus' Reward (Cf. Mark 8:34-37; Luke 9:23-25)**

**24** Then Jesus said to His disciples, "**If anyone wants to come after Me, he must deny himself, take up his cross, and follow Me.**"

**24** Then Jesus said to His disciples, "**If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.**"

**24** Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone wants to follow me, he must deny himself, pick up his cross, and follow me continuously.

**24** Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any *man* will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me.

- "...deny himself" - discipleship requires self-denial in the most fundamental areas of individuality

— Death to self is not so much of a prerequisite of discipleship to Jesus as it is a continuing characteristic of it

— Self-denial does not involve denying oneself material things as much as it involves denying one's own authority over their life (Cf. 4:19; John 12:23-26)

— "deny" - aorist imperative verb indicating a decisive action

- "...take up his cross" - willing to be rejected, even as Jesus was rejected (Cf. Luke 14:27)

— "take up" - aorist imperative verb indicating a decisive action (same as "deny" above)

— The Romans typically required someone condemned to crucifixion to carry at least part of his own cross. This gave public testimony to them being submissive to the rule he had opposed, as both a punishment and a humiliation.

— In the same way, Jesus' disciples must publicly declare their submission to the One whom they previously rebelled against

— Jesus did not formally announced the method of His death until later (20:19), but the disciples at minimum understood what Jesus meant about the price they would have to pay

— This is not a premise for salvation! This is what *comes out* of our salvation, contrary to what Lordship Salvation advocates believe (see [Soteriology 07 - Lordship Salvation \(Matt 16:24-25\)](#) for additional details on Lordship Salvation.

- "...follow Me" - present imperative verb indicating continuing action

**25** For whoever wants to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

**25** For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.

**25** Whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it,

**25** For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.

- Jesus restates the idea previously expressed in 10:28

- "...life" - *psyche*, translated other places as "soul"; if refers to the whole person (Cf. James 1:21; 5:20)

— Jesus was not talking about someone's eternal salvation

- His point is that living for oneself now will result in a leaner life later, whereas denying oneself now, for Jesus' sake, will result in a fuller life later
- It pays to serve the Lord, but the payday will come later. "Later," as the next verse explains, was the inauguration of the kingdom

26 For what good will it do a person if he gains the whole world, but forfeits his soul? Or what will a person give in exchange for his soul?

26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

26 because what profit will a person have if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what can a person give in exchange for his life?

26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

- Two rhetorical questions show the pointlessness of earning great material wealth at the expense of one's life (*psyche*, v26)

### **Prophecy of the Second Coming (Cf. Mark 8:38–9:1; Luke 9:26-27)**

27 For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His **angels**, and **WILL THEN REPAY EVERY PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.**

27 For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

27 The Son of Man is going to come with his angels in his Father's glory, and then he will repay everyone according to what he has done.

27 For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.

- God's future judgment should be an inducement to deny self, identify with Christ, and follow Him
- "...angels" - the angels will enhance Christ's glory at His Second Coming, and assist Him in gathering people for judgment (13:41; 24:31; 25:31-32; Luke 9:26)
- At that point, He will reward each person "according to his works" (conduct)
- "...REPAY" - again Jesus referred to the disciples' rewards (Cf. 5:12, et al)
- The prospect of reward should motivate Jesus' disciples to deny self and follow Him. It is perfectly proper to serve Jesus to gain a reward, if our motives are correct (6:19-21)
- We will one day lay our crowns at the feet of our Savior
- Jesus notes both the angelic manifestation as well as the final judgment associated with the coming of His kingdom.
- Some make this to be the Bema Seat judgment of believers (Cf. Rev 19:8), but it is likely better to interpret this as the Sheep & Goat Judgment (Cf. Luke 9:26; 1 Cor 4:5; Rev 22:12)



- No one is saved by works. Here He is talking to His disciples, instructing them to make their salvation fruitful

Peter's inability to comprehend that death is the essence of Jesus' ministry is only part of the problem afflicting the disciples: they are also incapable of perceiving that servanthood is the essence of discipleship.

### **The Announcement of the Kingdom's Appearance (Cf. Mark 9:1; Luke 9:27)**

**28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see **the Son of Man** coming in His kingdom."**

**28 "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."**

**28 I tell all of you with certainty, some people standing here will not experience death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."**

**28 Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.**

- Jesus is predicting a preview of His coming to establish the kingdom, which He gave Peter, James and John in the Transfiguration (17:1-8; see note on 10:23)

— Kingdom Now theologians jump on this verse to say that Jesus inaugurated the kingdom because all of these guys have since died. The kingdom had to come before their death since that's what Jesus just predicted.

— But Matthew, Mark and Luke all linked Jesus' prediction and the Transfiguration (which immediately follows this prediction in all three Gospels) with connectives: Matthew and Mark used "and" (*de*) while Luke used "and...it came about"

— Peter, an eyewitness of the Transfiguration, interpreted it as a preview of the kingdom (2 Peter 1:16-18)

- "...the Son of Man" - the Person of the Son of Man coming, not the Kingdom coming

- "...in His kingdom" - the answer is before us in Matt 17! Peter, James and John, who were standing there, are going to have a very unique experience (Cf. Luke 9:27)

— Six days after Jesus made this statement, the Transfiguration happened. It was a "foretaste" or "token" of the kingdom. Jesus is saying that if the nation accepts Me as their King, here's what you can expect...and He transfigures Himself into a glorified state, with Moses and Elijah with Him.

— So in Matt 16:27-28, Jesus is not talking about the establishment of the kingdom, He's talking about a foretaste or token of the kingdom six days later through the Transfiguration

— Keep in mind that the Holy Spirit did not put the chapter divisions in...they are not divinely inspired

## **The Transfiguration**

Since this glorified manifestation of Himself was a temporary appearance during His First Advent, His Transfiguration was a foretaste or a token of what the Son of Man coming in His glory and the splendor of His kingdom would be like. Thus, contextually in Matt 16:28, Christ predicted that the Transfiguration would take place before some of His immediate audience had died. It did, six days later.

All three accounts of the prophesied event speak of seeing the kingdom. The transfiguration fits all aspects of the various emphases found in each of the three precise predictions. Matthew says they will see "the Son of Man coming in His kingdom," emphasizing the person of the Son of Man coming. His stress upon the actual, physical presence of the Son of Man is clearly met in the Transfiguration because Jesus was personally and visibly present.

Mark says, "they see the kingdom of God" and he adds that it will come "with power." His emphasis upon a display of the kingdom with "power" was certainly fulfilled by the Transfiguration. No one could doubt that the Transfiguration certainly fit the definition of a "power encounter" for the disciples. That Jesus appears dressed in the *Shekinah* glory of God upon the Mount (Mark 9:3) is further evidence to the disciples that He was God and acted with His power.

Luke simply says that "they see the kingdom of God." His simple statement about some who will "see the kingdom of God" is vindicated also by his account (Matt 17:28-36). Twice Luke records our Lord describing the Transfiguration with the term "glory" (Matt 17:31-32).