



12. Rejection by Israel; Journey to Jerusalem (Matthew 13:53-20:34)



"The Sermon on the Mount" from *The Life of Christ* by Carl Heinrich Bloch (1834-90)

Part 4: "A Prophet Is Not Without Honor . . ." Peter's Declaration and the Keys of the Kingdom; Matthew's account of the Transfiguration; Question about the Temple Tax and the Sermon on the Church.

Part 5a: Teachings on the Road to Jerusalem, especially on divorce, celibacy, and labourers in the vineyard.

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need

My Shepherd will supply my need: Jehovah is His Name;
In pastures fresh He makes me feed, Beside the living stream.
He brings my wandering spirit back, when I forsake His ways,
And leads me, for His mercy's sake, In paths of truth and grace.

When I walk through the shades of death His presence is my stay;
One word of His supporting grace drives all my fears away.
His hand, in sight of all my foes, doth still my table spread;
My cup with blessings overflows, his oil anoints my head.

The sure provisions of my God attend me all my days;
O may Thy house be my abode and all my work be praise.
There would I find a settled rest, while others go and come;
No more a stranger, nor a guest, but like a child at home (cf. Matthew 17:25–26).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yzARLyXJcc>

“The Lord My Pasture Will Prepare”

Hymn 109; cf. Psalm 23, Matthew 17:27)



1. The Lord my pasture will prepare
And feed me with a shepherd's care.
His presence will my wants supply,
And guard me with a watchful eye.
My noonday walks he will attend
And all my silent midnight hours defend.

2. When in the sultry glebe I faint,
Or on the thirsty mountain pant,
To fertile vales and dewy meads
My weary, wand'ring steps he leads,
Where peaceful rivers, soft and slow,
Amid the cooling verdant landscape flow.

<https://www.lds.org/music/library/hymns/the-lord-my-pasture-will-prepare?lang=eng>

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Part 4: Rejection by Israel

(Matthew 13:53–17:27)



*“A Prophet Is Not Without Honor . . .” Peter’s Declaration
and the Keys of the Kingdom; Matthew’s account of the
Transfiguration; Question about the Temple Tax and the
Sermon on the Church.*

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Part 4: Rejection by Israel (13:53–17:27)

3 instances of rejection punctuate a narrative otherwise characterized by miracles, a transcendent vision, and predictions of Jesus death

- ☞ **1. Rejection at Nazareth** (13:53–58, dramatic episode)
 - ☞ Death of John the Baptist (14:1–12, dramatic episode)
 - ☞ **Miracle Stories 4** (14:13–36): Feeding 5,000+, healing many, walking on water *with Peter detail*
- ☞ **2. Conflict over Pharisaic Traditions** (15:1–20, dramatic episode, formula quotation, teaching saying)
 - ☞ **Miracle Stories 5** (15:21–39): Canaanite woman's daughter, healing multitudes, feeding 4,000+
- ☞ **3. Pharisees and Sadducees Demand a Sign** (16:1–12, dramatic episode, teaching saying)
 - ☞ **Peter's Declaration** (16:13–20, dramatic episode)
- ☞ **Passion Prediction 1 and Results** (16:21–28)
- ☞ **Transfiguration** (17:1–13, apocalyptic vision, teaching saying)
- ☞ **Lesson about Faith: Healing of the Young Demonic** (17:14–20, miracle story and teaching)
- ☞ **Passion Prediction 2 sans correction** (17:22–23)
- ☞ **Question about the Temple Tax** (17:24–27, segue to **Sermon on the Church 18:1–35**)

"Rejection of Jesus in his hometown, misunderstanding by 'Israel,' and growing opposition by the Pharisees lead Jesus to stress teaching to the disciples." (*Harper Collins Study Bible*, 1883)

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Who is Jesus?



- ☞ "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"
 - ☞ The disciples' response: "And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, **Jeremias**, or one of the prophets."
 - ☞ Elijah worked great miracles
 - ☞ Elijah and John strongly called people to repentance
 - ☞ **Jeremiah pronounced woes and lamented that destruction was coming to his people for rejecting God**
 - ☞ Peter's Response: "**Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God.**" (16:16)
 - ☞ *More explicit Christological identification than Mark 8:29, which had simply "Thou art the Christ"*
- ☞ "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.**"
 - ☞ Simon bar Jonah (son of Jonah/John) contrasts with Christ the Son of the living God
 - ☞ Peter's mortal paternity versus Christ's divine
 - ☞ **Peter's knowledge of *who* Christ was had been revealed to him**

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Peter's Declaration (16:13–20)



- ☞ "Thou art Peter (*petros*) and upon this rock (*petra*) I will build my church . . ." (16:18)
 - ☞ *petra* (f.) literally, "living rock, bedrock," in contrast to *petros* (m.), "an isolated stone"
 - ☞ Nevertheless, do not make too much of this
 - ☞ Peter, a male, needed a masculine form, "Rocky," not a feminine, "Rockette"
 - ☞ *Jesus was probably speaking Aramaic, which only has one word for rock, not Greek*
 - ☞ The word "church" (*ekklēsia*) appears here and in 18:17
- ☞ Roman Catholics focus on Peter as the rock, Protestants on the knowledge that Jesus was the son of God as the foundation of authority
- ☞ LDS position?
 - ☞ "Jesus in His teachings says, 'Upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.' What rock? **Revelation!**" (Joseph Smith, *Teachings*, 273-74)
 - ☞ A nuance of this: " . . .remember that it is upon *the rock of our Redeemer, who is Christ, the Son of God*, that ye must build your foundation" (Helaman 5:12)
 - ☞ *Jesus' statement may be interpreted to mean that the Church would be built upon the apostolic testimony of Christ that comes through revelation* (cf. Ephesians 2:20).

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Keys of the Kingdom



- ☞ Matthean addition: a discussion of *keys*
- ☞ "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." (16:19)
 - ☞ **Sealing power**: cf. the promise to Nephi², son of Helaman³, "'Behold, *I give unto you power, that whatsoever ye shall seal on earth shall be sealed in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven; and thus shall ye have power among this people.*" (Helaman 10:7; cf. D&C 128:8-9)
 - ☞ **Administrative priesthood keys**: "Keys are the right of presidency, the directing, controlling, governing power. The keys of the kingdom are the power, right, and authority to preside over the kingdom of God on earth (which is the Church) and to direct all of its affairs. *These keys include the sealing power, that is, the power to bind and seal on earth, in the Lord's name and by his authorization, and to have the act ratified in heaven.*" (McConkie, *DNTC*, 1.389)
 - ☞ Keys are also associated with the ordinances of the holy temple

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Transfiguration experience (17:1-13, Apocalyptic Vision; cf. discussion at Mark 9:2-14)



- ☞ Matthew's reference to keys and the power to seal in heaven and on earth in Matt 16 and again in Matt 18 frames the transfiguration account in Matt 17.
- ☞ In Matthew's account of Peter's declaration, Jesus explicitly promised Peter "the keys of the kingdom of heaven . . ." (Matt 16:19)
- ☞ Thus the idea of receiving keys at the transfiguration can be seen as *implicit* in Matthew
- ☞ **Latter-day Insights on the Transfiguration given the introduction of "keys" in Matt 16:19**
 - ☞ "The Priesthood is everlasting. **The Savior, Moses, and Elias, gave the keys to Peter, James and John, on the mount, when they were transfigured before him.**" (Joseph Smith Teachings, 158)
 - ☞ This is not just the sealing power to bind and loose, but to "seal" all ordinances, especially those of the House of the Lord
 - ☞ *These priesthood keys were restored by the same characters in the Kirtland Temple on April 3, 1836* (Passover that year; see D&C 110:11-16)
 - ☞ **Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery saw a glorified Jesus Christ on this occasion** (D&C 110:1-10)
 - ☞ "I am convinced in my own mind that when the Savior took the three disciples up on the mount, which is spoken of as the 'Mount of Transfiguration,' *he there gave unto them the ordinances that pertain to the house of the Lord and that they were endowed.* That was the only place they could go. That place became holy and sacred for the rites of salvation which were performed on that occasion." (Joseph Fielding Smith, DS 2:165)

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Question about the Temple Tax (17:24-27)



- ☞ Mustard Seed as faith (17:20)
- ☞ Second Passion Prediction, no correction
- ☞ **"Tribute" (17:24) refers to the *didrachma* = half-shekel annual Temple tax, not to tax to Rome or Herod**
 - ☞ **Parable**
 - ☞ Kings demand tribute of subjects not children > **Peter and the disciples are now children of God, do not need to pay tax to his house**
 - ☞ "O may Thy house be my abode and all my work be praise. There would I find a settled rest, while others go and come; No more a stranger, nor a guest, but like a child at home" (cf. last lines, "My Shepherd Will Supply My Need")
 - ☞ This is a **segue**, or literary bridge, into **the Sermon on the Church**, which deals with the church (*ekklesia*) or gathering of the children of God
 - ☞ **Miracle**
 - ☞ Peter finds four dracma in a fish!

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Sermon on the Church (18:1–35, discourse)

Matthew's Second Theme: God's Purposes Will Be Fulfilled in the Church



- ☞ **Precedence in the Kingdom (18:1–6)**
 - ☞ Disciples ≈ Twelve ≈ Church leaders
 - ☞ Little children: literal *and* a figure for members of the Church
- ☞ **Disciplining "Offenders" (those who "cause to stumble, 18:6–9)**
 - ☞ Hyperbole of casting off body parts; body ≈ Church
 - ☞ Cutting off = sundering fellowship, excommunication
- ☞ **Seeking the Lost (18:10–14, parable of the lost sheep)**
- ☞ **Disciplining Those Who Wrong (18:15–20)**
 - ☞ The word "church" (*ekklesiā*) appears in 18:17
 - ☞ "Verily I say unto you (plural), Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (18:18; keys given earlier to Peter are now given to all the disciples)
- ☞ **Necessity of Forgiveness (18:21–22): 70 x 7 = no limit!**
- ☞ **Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (18:23–35)**
 - ☞ He owed 10,000 talents (a talent was 25.86 kg [almost 57 pounds] = 15 years' wages); he owed 568,920 pounds of silver but could not forgive a sum worth 100 days' labor

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Part 5a: Journey to and Ministry in Jerusalem (Matthew 19:1–25:46)



*Teachings on the Road to Jerusalem, especially on divorce,
celibacy, and labourers in the vineyard.*

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Teachings on the Road to Jerusalem



- ☞ **On the Road to Jerusalem (19:1–20:34)**
 - ☞ Teachings (19:1–20:17)
 - ☞ **On Divorce (19:1–12)**
 - ☞ Strict teaching as opposed to ancient (and modern) exceptions due to “hardness of hearts” (see Dallin H. Oaks, “Divorce,” *Ensign* May 2008, 70–73)
 - ☞ Addition of sections **on temporary or necessary celibacy** (≈ eunuchs)
 - ☞ Children and the Kingdom (19:13–15)
 - ☞ True Riches: the Young Man and the Apostles (19:16–30)
 - ☞ **Parable of the Laborers in the Vineyard (20:1–16)**
 - ☞ **Passion Prediction 3 (20:17–20–28)**
 - ☞ precedence in the kingdom: the mother of James and John (20:20–28)
 - ☞ Jesus heals **two** blind men (20:29–34, **healing story**)
- ☞ **[Jerusalem Ministry (21:1–23:39)]**