

Lectures on the life of Peter

Part 5

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[00:00:00] Let us turn to the seventeenth chapter of Matthew, and then we'll read from the last verse of chapter sixteen, verse twenty-eight.

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.

And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John, his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them.

And his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here. If thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

[00:01:01] While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them. And behold, a voice out of the cloud which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye him. And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid. And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man save Jesus only. And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead.

Now we'll turn over to Mark's gospel, where we have the parallel passage, and just notice there a few little variations. He's in chapter 9, Mark chapter 9.

And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here which shall not taste of death till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power. [00:02:10] And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter and James and John, and leadeth them up into a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them. And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow, so as no fuller on earth can white them. And there appeared unto them Elias with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. And Peter answered and said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. For he wished not what to say, for they were sore afraid. And there was a cloud that overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, hear him. And suddenly, when they had looked around about, they saw no man any more save

Jesus, only with themselves. [00:03:05] And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they have seen till the Son of Man was risen from the dead. And they kept that saying with themselves, questioning with one another what the rising from the dead, or it really is what the rising from among the dead, should mean. Now in Luke's gospel, also chapter 9, we read in verse 28, And it came to pass, about an eighth days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray.

And as he prayed, the passion of his countenance resulted, and his raiment was white and blistering. And behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias, who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. [00:04:04] But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep, and when they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here, and let us make three tabernacles, one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias. Not knowing what he said, while he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them, and they feared as they entered into the cloud. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son, be of him. And when the voice was passed, Jesus was found alone, and they kept it close, and told no man in those days any of those things which they had seen.

Coming back now to Matthew, we were noticing in the last meeting, especially Peter's confessions of the Lord as the Christ, the Son of the living God, both in the 6th chapter of John, and here in the 16th chapter of Matthew.

[00:05:17] And in Matthew, the Lord's statements to Peter, and how that he told him that he was going to build his church, and the gates of hell would not prevail against it.

And then the chapter goes on, and the Lord tells them that he begins to show to them that instead of setting up the kingdom, he's to go to Jerusalem, and to suffer many things of the elders, and of the chief priests, and of the scribes, and be killed and be raised again the third day.

And Peter, it says, began to rebuke him. Peter says, No, Lord, that mustn't happen to you. And the Lord then has to rebuke Peter.

[00:06:09] You know, we find these ups and downs in Peter's life as we're going through Peter. Peter making some wonderful statements, and then making what seemed to us to be some foolish statements, and the Lord having to rebuke him. When Peter makes a true statement, the Lord commends him. When Peter says, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, the Lord said to him, Blessed art thou, Simon, for flesh and blood is not revealed unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And when Peter says to him, Lord, you mustn't do that. Be apart from me, Lord, to go up to Jerusalem, and to suffer, and to be killed, and so on. And the Lord says, Get thee behind me, Satan. Now, I don't believe this means that the Lord's calling Peter Satan. But the Lord saw in what Peter said a temptation of Satan, an effort of Satan, to use those words of Peter to turn him aside from the pathway that was marked out for him from the past eternity.

[00:07:19] And so, that was a temptation of Satan, and the Lord says, Get thee behind me, Satan. He says to Peter. But it was a foolish statement for Peter to make, of course. But Peter made it, I believe, even though it was foolish, in all love to the Lord. And you know, this is one of the dangers of natural affection. Now, natural affection is a very precious thing. And the Bible says that in the last days,

people will be without natural affection. And so, that natural affection is a very proper thing for us to desire, to love those that we're in contact with, our own relatives, and our own brothers and sisters in the Lord, and to desire the best for them.

[00:08:07] But the danger is, in desiring the best for them, we might be inclined to turn them away from what is the will of God. No one likes to see his own suffer. And so, there have been places where there have been those who have been called of God to a special work, and that work entailed some suffering, and their loved ones, because they didn't want to see them suffer, have tried to turn them aside from the path. And that has become a temptation of the enemy, to turn them away from God's path for them. And that's what we find here. Peter's love for the Lord, his natural love for the Lord, his real desire for the best for the Lord, would have led him to desire to turn the Lord away from the path that was before him, the path of suffering. And then the Lord goes on and says, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Then the Lord says, speaks about the coming glory, the Son of Man, verse 27, shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, then shall he reward every man according to his will. [00:09:18] Yes. We live in the day of the suffering and patience of Jesus Christ. The kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ. The kingdom and glory is coming. And it's when the glory comes, and when we're in the Lord's presence, then we'll see the full reward of our labors. And the Lord looks on to that.

So he looks on to the coming glory as the time when all motives will be revealed and when all that is done for the Lord will receive its true praise from the Lord himself. Then the Lord goes on and says, there are some of you standing here, he says, but shall not taste of death until you see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.

[00:10:09] And well, you say, well, the Son of Man hasn't come in his kingdom yet. And these people have been dead nearly 2,000 years. What did the Lord mean when he said this? The transfiguration that we have, that we've read of in the 17th chapter of Matthew and in the 9th chapter of Mark and Luke is the answer. And Peter, while he didn't understand this at the time, he makes a reference to it in his epistle.

Well, if we turn over just for a minute to his second epistle of Peter, and you see that Peter refers to this very thing, and he refers to it as the kingdom, the coming kingdom.

In 2 Peter chapter 1 and verse 16, Peter says, for we have not followed cunningly devised fables when we've made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

[00:11:19] For he received from God the Father honor and glory when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy mount. So you see, Peter says here that this transfiguration was what we might say a picture, a little replica beforehand of the coming power and glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

First of all, I'd like to point out what seems to be a discrepancy. Matthew and Mark says that it was after six days, six days that the Lord took these three apostles up into the mountain. But Luke says it was about eight days after.

[00:12:16] And you know the people that like to find fault with the Bible and say that the Bible has

discrepancies and it says different things in different places, would take this thing up and they say, there you are, the Bible is not exactly correct. In one place it says six days, and in another place it says eight days. Well you know it's very easy to account for. Matthew and Mark give the Jewish reckoning which included the first and the last day, or rather which excluded the first and the last day. It's six days, but it doesn't include the first and the last. Luke gives us the Gentile reckoning, because Luke we know especially wrote for the Gentiles. Luke gives us the Gentile reckoning which would include the first day and the last day, which would be eight days, and so there's no discrepancy. It just depends on the viewpoint of the persons that were being reached, whether it was about six days after or whether it was eight days after. [00:13:19] To use our language today we'd say it was about a week after that this happened. About a week after this wonderful statement of Peter that the Lord was the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and the Lord gave the revelation that he would build his church, we have this picture, this transfiguration, this picture of the kingdom. And Peter is here again, Peter, James and John. I think we said in one of the previous meetings these three form the inner circle of the Lord's apostles. These three are seen here on the Mount of Transfiguration, the Lord takes them with him up onto the mountain. [00:14:03] These three are present when Jairus' daughters reign. These three are the ones that the Lord took into the garden of Gethsemane when he went in there to pray. And they were the, it seems that they were what you might call the inner circle, those that were the closest to the Lord of all the apostles, Peter, James and John. James, you know, we know was beheaded by Herod after the Lord's resurrection. And Peter and John continued on for many, many years in the Lord's service. And Peter is always mentioned first. Not that he had a place that a certain big group in Christendom had given him. They say he was the Pope and all that kind of thing. Scripture doesn't give any evidence of that at all. But he was a leader, the leader we might say, of the little apostolic group. And yet we find that he was a failing man who made some statements from time to time that the Lord had to correct.

[00:15:05] But it's a lovely thing to see when he refers to this back further on in his epistle there that we just referred to. He makes special reference to the voice that he heard from heaven. This is my beloved son. That really went home to Peter when the Lord caused him to hear that voice. First of all, we notice it says the Lord was transfigured. And from the three accounts that we read, it seems there was a change in his face and there was a change in his garments. It says his face did shine as the sun. He was transfigured. He looked different. And then it says here his raiment was white as the light. And Mark says it was white as no fool on earth can white them. No one who cleans things on earth, no laundry could make any garment as white as the Lord's garment appeared.

[00:16:09] And Luke says it was white and blistering or white and effulgent as the new translation says. So we find the Lord's countenance is altered and his garments are altered. What does this speak to us of? This is the glory. This is a picture of the glory.

And beloved, when the Lord had a glorified body, after he rose from the dead, when he had a glorified body, we know that even the disciples didn't know him when they saw him. They afterwards realized who he was. He looked different. And I think this is a picture of what we'll look to when we get glorified bodies. We'll be different. The identity will be there, because even after the Lord rose from the dead, their eyes were holding that they shouldn't know him, but then when they did see him, they recognized him. And you remember, and we'll come to this later on in our studies, that when Peter went fishing after the Lord rose from the dead, when the boat gets nearer up to the land, they recognized that it's the Lord. John says it's the Lord. He could see that it was the Lord. He knew him. [00:17:20] But here the Lord's glorified. His countenance is different. This is the glory. And this is what the glory will be. You'll see the Lord in all his glory. And his garments are different. They're pure

white. It's a picture of the absolute spotless purity and holiness of the glorified position. While the Lord was down here on earth, he was here mingling among men, though absolutely perfect and sinless. But in the glory was a difference. And we will be glorified too. And there'll be absolutely nothing will enter into that glorious scene that has any of the marks of this world upon it whatsoever. [00:18:05] The only thing I believe that's going to be seen there that reminds us of what man has done when we get there will be that the Lord will still carry in his hands, in his feet, and in his side the marks of Calvary. There you'll see where he was nailed to the cross. Those wounds will still be there. At least the scars, no doubt, will still be carried by the Lord as the reminder throughout eternity of what our redemption cost him. Then it says that there were two men with him, Moses and Elias, or Elijah as he's called in the Old Testament.

I believe that in this picture, seeing that we have a picture of the coming kingdom, we have the Lord as the central one, his face shining as the sun, his raiment white as no sunnah on earth can whiten.

[00:19:07] And Moses and Elijah, they represent the glorified saints. Moses was the one who was buried by the Lord. You remember, says no man knoweth this sepulchre by this day.

He wasn't allowed to get into the land. He was buried on the east side of Jordan, there on Mount Nebo. But here he is, he's finally in the land. He's there on the Mount of Transfiguration with the Lord. And Moses represents those who died and who've been raised up again. Apparently, when the Lord raised Moses up, that he might be on the Mount of Transfiguration, Satan raised some objection.

I suppose Satan raised some objection because the Lord hadn't died yet, and yet he'd raised Moses up before he'd been raised up himself. And so Satan must have raised some objection about this because it tells us that Michael the archangel disputed with the devil about the body of Moses. [00:20:15] We're not told exactly what it was, but I think it had something to do with the fact that Moses appeared on the Mount of Transfiguration. Moses represents, beloved, all the saints who have died and will be raised again when the Lord comes. And Elijah, you remember, he went to heaven without dying. The scripture says that he was caught up to heaven in the whirlwind and went up in a fiery chariot. And so Elijah represents those who will be alive when the Lord comes. If the Lord were to come tonight, we'll all be caught up, every one of us who is saved, we'll all be caught up as Elijah was caught up and as Enoch was caught up. We'll all be caught up to be with the Lord. So here we have Moses and Elijah representing the whole redeemed company, not only the church, but the Old Testament saints also. Turn Abel down, the dead raised and the living changed, as we have it set forth in 1 Corinthians 15 and in 1 Thessalonians 4, and all caught up to be with the Lord and to be there forever with the Lord. [00:21:26] So we have Moses and Elijah there talking with the Lord. What are they talking about? Matthew and Mark don't tell us what they're talking about, but Luke tells us what they were talking about.

It says they were talking about his decease or his departure that he should accomplish in Jerusalem. You know, that's a most remarkable thing. Up in heaven, Moses and Elijah had come down from heaven to be there.

[00:22:08] And they let us know what the theme was at that time in heaven. What they were interested about in heaven at that time was the fact that the Son of God was about to die on a cross in Jerusalem. They were talking about his decease that he would accomplish in Jerusalem. They knew in heaven.

The inhabitants of heaven, God had made known to them in heaven that the Son of God who had come down to this earth was about to die in Jerusalem on a cross. And here Moses and Elijah were conversing with the Lord about this, and the Lord was conversing with them. They were interested. All heaven was interested in the fact that the Son of God was to die. This act that was to take place shortly at Jerusalem was the most stupendous act that has ever taken place in the history of the whole universe.

[00:23:14] The death of the Lord Jesus on Calvary's cross was a more important thing than the creation of this world. God spoke and called the worlds into being. The Lord created this earth and all that's connected with it just with his word.

But in order for redemption to take place, in order for God to be glorified about the sin question, in order for sinners like you and me to be saved, the Son of God had to leave the glory and come down to this earth and be born in Bethlehem's manger and live his life down here and be nailed on a cross in Jerusalem so that there he might atone for our sins. And all heaven was interested in this. And if heaven was interested in it, and Moses and Elijah having come down there were interested in this, certainly Peter, James and John should have been interested in it too. And the sad thing about Peter, James and John was that they were asleep. [00:24:20] You know, this was night when they went up there to this mountain to pray. The Lord was busy during the daytime and it was at night time that he went up into the mountain to pray. And it says in Luke that they went up to pray. Matthew and Mark don't tell us that. You've got to take these three accounts to get the full picture. But Luke says that they went up there to pray. The Lord is seen in prayer in Luke seven times and this is one of the times. They go up in the mountain to pray. And as he prayed, it says, the fashion of his countenance was altered. Maybe there's a lesson in that for us that if we prayed more, the fashion of our countenance would alter more. That we would give the manifestation that we were living in the Lord's presence. [00:25:02] Perhaps many of our difficulties, beloved brethren, come in because we don't spend the time in prayer that we should. But we should be spending more time before the Lord in prayer. What was the Lord praying about? We're not told. We know that he spent all night in prayer when he was going to choose his apostles and no doubt he prayed specifically about that. But here, the Lord is spending the time in prayer with his apostles but instead of them praying with him, after the hard day's work, they go to sleep. The Lord had to say there in the Garden of Gethsemane, the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak. That's what it is with us sometimes, you know. You want to keep awake and you find yourself going to sleep because the flesh is weak. Not the flesh in the bad sense there. I think that just means the body's weak. And that's what it was with these three apostles. They were heavy with sleep. And it seems that while they were asleep, this scene was going on there. And when they were awake, they see his glory. And they see Moses and Elijah talking with the Lord. And Peter gets carried away in a kind of a rapture over this. [00:26:14] Oh Lord, he says, how wonderful is this? Peter just felt this was such a wonderful thing that he just liked to stay like it was. To have the three of them there talking. And so he says, let's make three tabernacles, he says. One for these, one for Moses, and one for Elijah. Not knowing what he said. Peter didn't realize that in saying that, he was really putting these two men on a level with the Lord. And he was bringing the Lord down to their level. The father was displeased. Immediately there comes a cloud. And they were afraid, it says, as they entered into the cloud. Because the Jews knew what the cloud was. In the Old Testament, the cloud, the Shekinah glory, the cloud of God's presence. [00:27:04] That went before the children of Israel through the wilderness. A pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The cloud that filled the tabernacle, and again the temple with its dedication, was the signal or the sign of the presence of God with his people. And they knew what that cloud was. And they feared. Because they knew that was the divine presence. And then a voice comes out of the cloud. This is my beloved son. It's the

father speaking. This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Or, as the New Translation puts it even a little better, in whom I have found my delight. The father says, this is my beloved son in whom I have found my delight. Hear him. And what did the father really fully mean when he said that? Don't hear Moses. Don't hear Elijah. Hear his. Who were Moses and Elijah? Wonderful servants of God. And yet servants of God who failed. None is perfect. We don't find one perfect man in Scripture except God's beloved son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

[00:28:20] It's true that we don't have anything against Joseph mentioned, but we know that he wasn't perfect all the same. The only perfect person in the world of God is the Lord Jesus himself. Moses failed. He spoke unadvisedly with his lips and got kept out of the promised land. Elijah failed when he got scared of Jezebel and went for his life. Moses here, when the Lord says, this is my beloved son, hear him, I think we can take Moses here to represent the law. He was the lawgiver and it's just as if the father is saying, Moses had his place in giving the law. But now, my son has come. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. It's him you should hear. [00:29:07] Elijah was the prophet and he had a wonderful work to do as a prophet when the people had departed in calling them back to the truth. Elijah stands out alone there before all of those prophets of Baal and the prophets of the grove and says, I am the prophet of the Lord. And if the God of Israel is the true God, let him answer by fire and send the fire down on the sacrifice. And if Baal is the true God, let Baal send the fire. We know what happened. Baal's priests called on their God from morning till evening and nothing happened. And Elijah makes the thing very difficult. He builds a big trench around and fills it with water. And when Elijah prays, down comes the fire and consumes everything. He even licks up the water. He calls the people back to the truth in the day of departure. That's what a prophet does. But now, we don't need either the lawgiver or the prophet because we have the one who's superior to both. [00:30:12] The true prophet that had been prophesied in the Old Testament, in the book of Deuteronomy, the Lord Jesus himself has come. This is my beloved son. Hear him, says the father. And you know, beloved, in Christendom, we find that men have put others in the place of Christ. They've made others, other redeemers and other saviors and other mediators and mediatrixes between God and men. But the word of God still stands as we have it here. This is my beloved son, in whom I have found my delight. Hear him.

Or as the apostle Paul says in writing to Timothy, there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, no other. That could be translated, there is one only God and one only mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

[00:31:09] There is one God, was the great truth of the Old Testament, when many gods were brought in. And there is one mediator, is the great truth of the New Testament, and man has brought in many mediators. But the truth still stands, in the Old Testament, there was only one God for Israel. And in the New Testament, there's only one mediator for the whole world. And who is it? The Lord Jesus Christ, God's son. And we're all friends tonight, if there's one here unsaved, he's the only one who can save you. And if you've been looking to other mediators to save your soul, they won't save you. God only has set forth one, and that's his beloved son, the one that he gave testimony to here. One God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

[00:32:03] And it says, and when they have lifted up their eyes, they saw no man save Jesus only. The Lord came to them. They were afraid. They realized they were in the presence of God. And they were afraid. And the Lord comes and touches them. He says, be not afraid. You know, that's very lovely. Be not afraid, says the Lord. Arise and be not afraid. So many times in the Bible we have these words. Be not afraid. Fear not. Do you remember when the, when the fiddle chef was brought before

David?

David finally, after he got established in the kingdom and remembered the pact that he made with Jonathan, he raises the question, is there any of Saul's house that I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake? And they said, yes, there's my fiddle chef. He's away down in Lady Bar. And send and fetch him.

[00:33:09] And the fiddle chef is brought to David. A poor cripple. His nurse had dropped him at the time that Saul and Jonathan were killed, or his brothers were killed. And he'd been crippled and he'd been a cripple ever since. And he's living away there nowhere in fear of his life, in fear that David will find him and kill him because he was of Saul's lineage. And David sends and fetches him and he's brought him and stands before David. We can imagine the fear that filled his heart as he brought him before the king. And he's, and he's thinking, well, now he is David. And my grandfather was his great enemy. And he tried to kill him. And no doubt he'll have his revenge on me. And he'll just order one of his soldiers to cut my head off. I can just imagine that's what the fiddle chef's thinking. And David says, sees him there as trembling. And he says, my fiddle chef, fear not. Fear not, my fiddle chef. Don't be afraid, my fiddle chef. I'm going to show kindness to you for Jonathan your father's sake. He didn't say, I'm going to have my vengeance on you because of what your grandfather did to me. [00:34:19] And if he'd done that, nobody would have found fault with David. If he'd done that. But David says, no, I'm going to show kindness for Jonathan's sake. And so it is, beloved, that that's what the Lord says to the sinner. Don't be afraid. Because of your sins, because you belong to Adam's race, and because you're a sinner, I could judge, send you down to a lost eternity. And if God said that to us, we wouldn't be able to find fault with him. We'd say, well, God's only doing what's righteous. We're sinners. We belong to a corrupt and sinful race. And we've sinned ourselves. And if God sent us to hell, it'll be what we deserve. But God doesn't do that. God says, don't be afraid. I want to show kindness to you. I want to save your soul. [00:35:06] The sad thing is that God is saying this to so many people, and they won't listen. They say, I don't believe it. Well, I don't want it. I just want to go on as I am in my sins, and I want to leave God out of my life. And here we find these disciples, these three apostles. They're afraid as they're going to enter into this cloud, and when the cloud has passed, there they are, and they're afraid. The Lord says, don't be afraid. And when they lift up their eyes, what do they see? Jesus only.

Moses has disappeared. Elijah has disappeared. And Jesus only is standing there. And he's the one that we need. Yes, beloved, Jesus only. He's the only one that we need for salvation. Jesus only. He's the only one that we need for the Christian pathway.

[00:36:03] You know, Christians don't need to call themselves by the names of great men. All we need is to say, we are those who follow the Lord Jesus Christ. Call ourselves by his name. It tells us in the New Testament, in the book of Acts, that the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch. What does the word Christian mean? Christ's one. One who belongs to Christ. They, the people, called them that as a nickname. Why do you think they called them Christians? Well, because they were always talking about Christ. These are those who belong to Christ. And that's where the name Christian came from. So many people are known as Christians today, but they're not Christians at all. But if you know the Lord Jesus as your Savior, well then you're a real Christian. And we can rejoice in the name of Christ. Yes. So they saw no man save Jesus only. Now it says, as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, tell the vision to no man until the Son of Man be risen again from the dead. And Luke says they kept it close and didn't tell it to anybody. [00:37:07] The Lord told them not to tell it to anybody. Why did the Lord say that they were to tell it until the Son of Man

be risen from the dead? Because the Lord didn't want the truth as to his glory to be promulgated yet. This was something that had to be preached after the work of the cross was done. The Lord now had to go to the cross. That was what he said. He set his face as a flint, it says in Luke, to go up to Jerusalem. You know, in Luke we have several times mentioned, we see the Lord journeying toward Jerusalem. That was his last journey. And when he got to Jerusalem, he was crucified. And this was where the Lord was headed for. He set his face as a flint. He wasn't being turned aside to the right hand or to the left. The coming glory was not now to be preached. Now it was the cross. Now it was the suffering. Now the Lord had to bring home even to his apostles that he had to suffer. And even they didn't take it in. They couldn't take it in. They so had their hearts set on the fact that the Lord was going to be a great king and deliver them from the Romans. [00:38:17] They didn't believe the Lord when he told them that he had to go to Jerusalem and to suffer. And you see, when those two go to Emmaus after the Lord's resurrection, they say, well, we thought it would have been he that would have redeemed Israel. We thought he was going to be the one who was going to deliver us out of the hands of the Romans. He did come to redeem Israel, not to redeem them from the Romans, but to redeem them from their sins. And that's what he's come to do still. He's still redeeming people from their sins. God isn't delivering, isn't working in delivering people from certain political entities today. God even allows governments to take over in some countries that are completely opposed to his. Like Russia and China, for instance, where you have communistic governments who even want to tell people that there's no God. God allows that. But his work's still going on. [00:39:16] Sister Elsie Cole, who was with us in the Jamaica Missionary Conference, says that the Christians in Hong Kong reckon there are two million Christians in China, in communist China, meeting secretly, meeting in homes, even having the breaking of bread. They come together for a meal. And in the middle of the meal, they remember the Lord. And if someone from outside comes in that they don't know, well, they're just having a meal. And they get together for their meetings, and there are many, many Christians in Russia, in spite of all the political things that are going on. God's working, and God's saving souls. That's the work he's doing. And he's still doing that. He's still, because the message of his death and resurrection and ascension and the gospel is the message that brings salvation to precious souls. [00:40:05] Well, something further we get here. The true rendering, when it says, the Lord says, tell this to no man until the Son of Man be risen from among the dead, is really the true expression.

And it says the disciples, it tells us in Luke, they put among themselves what the rising from among the dead should mean. They knew quite well what the resurrection of the dead was. That was something that was believed on right back from Adam's day.

Right back from the very time that people were first died, it was known. It was a well-known teaching, right through the Old Testament, the truth of the resurrection. And we have in the 16th Psalm, thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol, neither wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption. [00:41:04] Here you get a prophecy concerning the resurrection of the Lord. But the resurrection from among the dead, they didn't understand. The Lord said there would be two resurrections, the resurrection of the just and the resurrection of the unjust. But people generally in those days just thought of one final resurrection. And many people do today. We still have many people who say, oh yes, there's going to be just one great resurrection. The Bible says there's going to be two resurrections, beloved, the first and the second. And the first could take place at any moment. Tonight, if the Lord came, all those who died in Christ would be raised. The living would be changed. And we'd all be caught up to be with the Lord, as we already saw with Moses and Elijah, a typical of these two groups. And then in Revelation 20 it says, the rest of the dead, the wicked dead, live not again until the thousand years are ended. The wicked dead will not be raised. The unsaved, those who died in their sins, will not be

raised until the end of the Lord's thousand years reign. And they'll be raised up to be judged and condemned. [00:42:20] And so the resurrection from among the dead is the first resurrection. And we get this explained in 1 Corinthians 15. It says, Christ the first roots. Afterwards, they did a Christ that is coming. Christ was the first one to be raised from among the dead. And afterwards, all of those will be raised up when he comes for his people at the rapture. And then there's going to be some gleanings from the great harvest, because we find that those who were beheaded at the time of Antichrist will be raised up to have part in the first resurrection. So you have the first roots, Christ himself. [00:43:03] The great harvest, the millions that will come out of their graves and rise to meet the Lord in the air when the Lord comes. To be united with the living who will be caught up and chained and caught up to be with the Lord. And then the gleanings, those who will be, who won't be able to enter into the millennium because they've been killed after the church is taken and before the millennium is established during those seven years. Those who will be headed for their testimony and those who refuse to worship the beast. They will have part in the first resurrection. What a blessed thing. I hope that everyone here tonight is going to have part in the first resurrection. Beloved, if you know the Lord is your Savior, you'll be there. Peter and James and John will be there. And I, by grace, expect to be there to faith in the Lord Jesus as my Savior. I trust this could be true of every one of us here tonight that can say, yes, we belong to the first resurrection because we know the Lord Jesus as our Savior. We're linked up with this very one. We've looked away from ourselves to see no man save Jesus only as our Savior. [00:44:22] And may we look away to him more and more in our daily life to be occupied with him. Because it's not only to look to see Jesus only to save us. We need to keep our eyes on him day by day. We need to be occupied with the person of Christ. And that's what's going to keep us from the many snares that we find around us. The more we're occupied with him, the less time we'll have for the other distracting things around. People, Christians, get carried away with the distracting things around them because they get their eyes off God's beloved Son. So God, may the Lord help us, beloved, to keep our eyes on him. I'd just like to refer to one more thing before we close in connection with Peter. In the same 13th of Matthew, it says in verse 24, when they were come to Capernaum, that was the Lord's own city, they that received tribute money came to Peter and said, does not your master pay tribute? [00:45:16] He said, yes. And when he was coming to the house, Jesus presented him saying, what thinkest thou, Simon, of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? Of their own children or of strangers? Peter said unto him, of strangers. Jesus said unto him, bring other children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea and cast a hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up. And when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money. Take that and give it to them for me and thee. Now, this tribute money wasn't the Roman tax that Matthew had to collect. This was the temple money. This was the half shekel, like the half shekel that had to be given back in the book of Exodus when they numbered the people.

[00:46:08] Every Jew was supposed to pay this half shekel every year for the support of the temple. And when they came and said to Peter, does your master pay tribute? And Peter says, yes. It was just as if they were really saying to Peter, Peter, is your master a good Jew? Does he pay the temple tribute?

And Peter says, of course my master's a good Jew. That's what he does. But when Peter came into the house, the Lord knew what Peter had done. So he says to Peter, he says, well, to whom do the kings of the earth take tribute? Of their own children or of strangers? And he says, of the strangers. Well, he says, the children are free. And they were the children of the kingdom. You see, Peter, the Lord was the head one and they were the children of the kingdom. But Peter, the Lord says, Peter, lest we should offend. It's just as if the Lord says to Peter, well, you know, really, I don't have to pay

tribute, Peter. But I'm not going to offend people by not paying the tribute. I don't have to pay it. [00:47:18] But he says, we'll pay it. You and I will pay it, Peter. Isn't it lovely how the Lord associates Peter with himself? But where did the Lord have the money to pay the tribute? He could say, the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests and the Son of Man has not where to lay his head. Well, Peter, I'm the Son of Man. It's just as if the Lord said, I'm the Son of Man. I have power over all the fish in the sea. You go down, Peter, and catch a fish. And the first fish you catch, open its mouth. And there you'll find a piece of money. And this piece of money was just double the amount that each one was to pay. This piece of money, Peter, I'll pay for me and for thee. You go and pay it, Peter. So that's just what he did. So the Lord, you see, even though he didn't have to pay, he paid for himself and for Peter. [00:48:13] I think there's a lovely lesson in this for us. Sometimes, as Christians, we have demands made upon us to do some things that perhaps we might consider that we don't really have to do. But we have to consider whether, by not doing it, we might offend and not give a good testimony. So we've got to raise up that question of, is this what we're doing, giving a testimony for the Lord, or is it not? And to give a good testimony, the Christian should have a good testimony for those that are outside. He should be one that recognizes his responsibility. And that's what we find the Lord did here. Take it for me and for thee. And so the tribute money was paid for the Lord and for Peter, too, with the piece of money that the Lord caused that fish to have in its mouth and sent Peter along to get it. [00:49:05] Showing again who he was, the Son of Man, the one who is Lord over all things and over all circumstances.