Matthew Survey

Section 3 · Matthew 16:21 – 23:39

PART 1 OF 2
Section 3 · Lessons 1–23 · Matthew 16:21 – 20:16

A 36-Lesson Survey by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Layered Outline

Section 3 covers Matthew 16:21 – 23:39, “the third phase of his earthly ministry,” during “that final year” of the Lord's earthly ministry. The issue now is “his impending, approaching rejection at the hands of apostate Israel.”

Its four parts: three major pronouncements of his coming rejection, stressing that it must take place and that it comes by a betrayal, then identifying the players, each followed by edificational matters; then, in Jerusalem (23:1–39), his “final denouncement of Israel's apostate religious system.”

Section 3 at a Glance

Portion	Lessons	What it sets forth
A: 1st Pronouncement & Edification *Matthew 16:21 – 17:21*	1–11	The first pronouncement (16:21–23) underscores that it must take place. Three edificational issues follow: the cost of discipleship (16:24–28), an encouraging foretaste of his kingdom glory (17:1–13), a disappointing foretaste of the coming strength of Satan's policy of evil.
B: 2nd Pronouncement & Edification *Matthew 17:22 – 20:16*	12–23	The second pronouncement (17:22–23) underscores “that it'll take place by a betrayal.” Three edificational issues follow: not offending the Gentiles (17:24–27); chapter 18, not following the vain religious system's conduct; 19:1–20:16, further reproof of its doctrine and practices.

The Thread — Portion to Portion

How each portion leads into the next, from the recaps that open each portion.

A: 1st Pronouncement & Edification → B: 2nd Pronouncement & Edification	With the first pronouncement made and followed by its three edificational issues, the first part of the third section ends at 17:21. The second portion opens with the second pronouncement, the further details added to it, and the three edificational issues that follow.

A: 1st Pronouncement & Edification · Lessons 1–11

The first pronouncement (16:21–23) underscores that it must take place. Three edificational issues follow: the cost of discipleship (16:24–28), an encouraging foretaste of his kingdom glory (17:1–13), a disappointing foretaste of the coming strength of Satan's policy of evil.

L1

From That Time Forth: Section 3 Outlined

Overview of Matthew 16:21 – 23:39; 16:24–25 introduced

Passages: Matthew 16:20–21 · Matthew 16:6, 12 · I John · Matthew 10 · John 14–16 · John 15:18–25 · Psalm 2 · Matthew 16:24–25 · I Peter 4:12–19

- From 16:21 the issue is “his impending, approaching rejection at the hands of apostate Israel.” It involves preparing his disciples, and through them the remnant as a whole, for his coming rejection.
- Section 3 primarily deals with the final year before the rejection. The emphasis: “further edificational issues for the members of the remnant,” to handle the full scope of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.
- The leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees is corruptive doctrine. Its first phase results in “the rejection of Christ”; the next is “the spirit of antichrist”; the third begins once the 5th installment gets underway.
- Once he goes back to the Father, apostate Israel's hatred for him “gets transferred over to them.” John 14–16 is a doctrinal synopsis of Section 3 for the eleven; he is killed because of hatred.
- The first thing after the pronouncement is “the added cost” of being his disciple (16:24–25): their lives are on the line too; losing their own lives for his sake becomes an issue.
- Further information for the remnant is “in Hebrews through the book of the Revelation”; I Peter 4 takes them beyond willingness to realize “it's a privilege.” The doctrines enable them to endure “the like persecution.”
- Four parts: 16:21 – 17:21, 17:22 – 20:16 and 20:17 – 22:46 each open with a pronouncement (it must take place; by a betrayal; the players) followed by edificational issues; then the final denouncement in Jerusalem (23:1–39).

Key terms: *pronouncement of his coming rejection · edificational issues · final denouncement · doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees · spirit of antichrist · doctrinal synopsis*

L2

They Understood Not: A Common Misunderstanding Exposed

Matthew 16:21–23

Passages: Matthew 16:21–23 · Mark 9:9–10, 30–32 · Luke 9:43–45 · Luke 18:31–34 · John 20:9 · Acts 2:22–24, 32–36 · Psalm 110 · Acts 3:12–19, 22–23 · Romans 3:21–26 · Galatians 3:21–25

- Verse 21 contains his death, burial and resurrection; he began to show it “from that time forth”; before this he was not doing it. Verses 22–23 show it did not strike Peter as good news.
- It is commonly taught that people in the gospel accounts understood the death, burial and resurrection as proclaimed in this dispensation of grace. Verse 21 makes it “plain and clear” that this is not true.
- The error develops from failing to rightly divide the word of truth. Peter had not heard this before or placed his faith in the Lord's death, burial and resurrection; he was trying to prevent it.
- Mark 9, Luke 9 and Luke 18: “they understood not,” it was hid from them, they understood none of these things. Not only did they not understand; in the lesson's words, “they couldn't understand it.”
- Nothing is wrong with their ignorance at this time. Even as eyewitnesses, “as yet they knew not the scripture” (John 20:9), not to their blame or shame. In Luke 24 the Lord opens their understanding.
- In early Acts it is “an indictment against Israel” for murdering their Messiah, not good news; the only good news: he sits at the Father's right hand until his foes are made his footstool.
- Only in this dispensation of grace is it preached as good news: the faith of Jesus Christ (Romans 3; Galatians 3). Justification is by grace through faith in both programs; the message heard is different.

Key terms: *the must issue · indictment · foeship · extension of mercy and forbearance · the faith of Jesus Christ · schoolmaster of the law*

L3

The First Pronouncement and the Ignorance Factor *Matthew 16:21–22 (verse 23 set aside)*

Passages: Matthew 16:21–22 · Luke 24:44 · Luke 18:31–34 · Leviticus 26 · Exodus 6:1–9 · Exodus 15–18 · Deuteronomy 29:1 – 30:10 · Deuteronomy 29:4 · Deuteronomy 30:6 · Acts 7

- The rejection “must” take place: not by accident, but as written in the law of Moses, the prophets and the Psalms. It is him “putting that first mandate of the Davidic Covenant into effect.”
- In verse 22 Peter not only did not understand; “he declared it wouldn't happen.” Yet he cannot be blamed, since other verses declare this was hidden from them; the Lord's sharp rebuke is not blame.
- This is “a fruit of something that took place long ago in God's program with Israel.” If God has to open even the apostles' understanding, he did something in the past to close it.
- The 5th course of punishment, the final course, has installments; the 4th gets underway with John the Baptist's ministry. Setting aside the dispensation of grace, the 4th and 5th are “the climactic stage.”
- The ignorance factor worked into the Lord being able to say “Father, forgive them,” and provides for the extension of mercy and forbearance. It begins before Israel enters the land.
- In Exodus 6 God educated Israel in his Jehovahness, his doing for them what they cannot do for themselves, and “they didn't want it.” They capped that rejection at Sinai by accepting a law covenant.
- In the law covenant God brought “an ignorance factor upon them,” until the first mandate of the Davidic Covenant is fulfilled. In the covenant in Moab, Deuteronomy 30:6 stands in stark contrast to 29:4.

Key terms: *the must · ignorance factor · Jehovahness · two semesters of education · covenant in Moab · first mandate of the Davidic Covenant*

L4

The Ignorance Factor Intensified, Then Lifted *Matthew 16:21–23, centered on verse 22*

Passages: Matthew 16:21–23 · Deuteronomy 29:2–4 · II Corinthians 3:6–13 · Isaiah 6:9–10 · Isaiah 29:9–14 · Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12 · Matthew 12:31–32 · Luke 23:32–34 · Acts 3:17, 19 · Luke 24:44–45

- The ignorance factor is not something Israel can use as an excuse. It figures into the provision for having them forgiven when they crucify him, and into the extension of mercy and forbearance.
- In Deuteronomy 29 it is as if God brought “a judicial blindness upon them” regarding his Jehovahness and grace. Only when he puts these into effect in the 5th course will he lift it.
- In II Corinthians 3 Paul uses great plainness of speech, “not as Moses.” Paul is not blaming Moses: that is the way Moses had to conduct himself in connection with the ignorance factor.
- With the 5th course of punishment prophets, Isaiah first doctrinally, the ignorance factor brings another factor: the Lord asks forgiveness “based upon their ignorance” (Luke 23:32–34). At Isaiah 53's redemption, no one in Israel understands.
- Isaiah 6:10 makes, in the lesson's words, “the ignorance factor even stronger.” Converted and healed before his death, Israel would be converted underneath the Old Testament, which would only prolong their situation.
- The nation's negative response was all to be forgiven (Matthew 12:31–32): God makes it so they crucify their Messiah “in genuine ignorance.” Afterward the Holy Ghost testifies with the ignorance factor removed.
- In Acts 3:17 the ignorance is past tense, as is the crucifixion. In Luke 24 the apostles are the first with whom it is lifted; even Peter, James and John, only after the cross work.

Key terms: *judicial blindness · great plainness of speech · 5th course of punishment prophets · intensified ignorance factor · Jehovah Jireh · three honest opportunities*

L5

The Lord's Rebuke Underscores the Must Factor *Matthew 16:21–23 completed; 16:24 – 17:21 previewed*

Passages: Matthew 16:21–23 · Romans 9:31–33 · Isaiah 28:16 · Psalm 118:22 · Luke 24:44–46 · Matthew 4:8–10 · Luke 9:43–45 · John 2:18–22 · Matthew 16:24 – 17:21

- In view of the ignorance factor, Israel did not stumble at Christ at the cross. The stumbling at the stumblingstone (Isaiah 28:16; Romans 9) takes place after it, during the repentance to Israel.
- The Lord's rebuke in verse 23 puts no blame on Peter; it underscores “the must factor” of verse 21. The rejection is part of God's plan and purpose; Peter's words are contrary to it.
- Each pronouncement has a key concept: the first, that it must take place; the second, the betrayal; the third, the players, with the chief priests, Israel's religious leadership and the Gentiles.
- Though they cannot understand the why, he begins to build “their frame of reference,” though they don't know it is being built. In Luke 24, once he opens their understanding, they understand the scriptures immediately.
- “Get thee behind me, Satan” is terminology used before, when the adversary tempted him (Matthew 4). The third temptation was to be a disloyal, compromising servant; compromising the Father's plan is an offense.
- In Luke 9, paralleling the second pronouncement: “Let these sayings sink down into your ears.” They become part of their frame of reference, so when the ignorance factor is lifted, it all makes sense.
- Three edificational issues follow: the cost of discipleship, which “has just gone up” (16:24–28); an encouraging foretaste of the Lord's kingdom glory (17:1–13); a disappointing foretaste of Israel's coming time of affliction (17:14–21).

Key terms: *must factor · stumblingstone · frame of reference · Satan (an adversary) · let these sayings sink down into your ears · cost of discipleship*

L6

The Cost of Discipleship Has Just Risen *Matthew 16:24–28 (verses 24–25 in detail)*

Passages: Matthew 16:24–28 · Matthew 5:10–12 · Matthew 13 · John 15:26 – 16:2 · Hebrews 10:32–35 · Hebrews 11:24–26, 32–38 · Hebrews 12:1–4 · James 5:6 · Revelation 2:8–10, 12–13

- The first edificational issue after the first pronouncement: “the cost of discipleship has just risen.” The hatred of apostate Israel and the vain religious system will be transferred to his disciples, the remnant of Israel.
- When he spoke of persecution in Matthew 5 they were not yet under any of it; now they will start to become victims of it, him first, but then them also.
- “Then” (verse 24) is a connective consequence of verses 21–23. Of three things said, everything pivots on the middle one. To deny yourself is to forego what you value for what someone else values.
- Like a condemned individual taking up his cross, they can be called upon to die. The doctrine works primarily “the willingness to do so”; the Comforter's comfort lets them carry it through.
- In the second and third phases of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, death comes en masse; only “a remnant within the remnant” will lose their lives for his sake and find it.
- Hebrews pertains to the remnant once God resumes Israel's program; they operate on 16:24–28. It is worth it for the profit for their soul when he rewards them: “respect unto the recompence of the reward.”
- In James 5:6 some of the killing was already underway; at Smyrna and Pergamos (Revelation 2) the foundation is Matthew 16:24–28. Losing their lives “was not a remote possibility.”

Key terms: *cost of discipleship · deny himself / take up his cross · willingness doctrines · remnant within the remnant · respect unto the recompence of the reward · better resurrection*

L7

Willing to Lose Their Lives for His Sake *Matthew 16:24–27; 16:28 introduced*

Passages: Matthew 16:24–27 · Psalm 44 · Psalm 55 · Psalm 56 · Hebrews 13:5–6 · Psalm 83 · Psalm 79 · Daniel 11:30–35 · Revelation 6:9–11 · Psalm 116:15

- The cost of discipleship "gets higher": as he tasted death, they will taste death, Stephen being one of the first. The issue now is to make them willing "to lose their lives for His sake."
- The main component of that willingness is "that it's gonna be worth it all": at his return he shall reward every man according to his works, and great will be their reward in that kingdom.
- Hebrews through Revelation is built upon this foundational doctrine. Tasting death will come not only from apostate Israel but "at the hands of the adversary himself through the man of sin," under the extermination policy.
- The book of Psalms "has five sections to it that correspond to the five mandates of the Davidic Covenant": the Redeemer, the Deliverer, the Avenger, the King and the Blesser.
- In Psalm 44 things get "much more intense" than reproach and loss of goods. Psalm 55's appeal is for stability of soul; Hebrews 13:6 has the remnant boldly saying what David said in Psalm 56.
- Psalm 83 describes the confederacy of nations the man of sin puts together and the extermination policy; Psalm 79, the land when the abomination of desolation is set up, the political situation Daniel 11:30–35 describes.
- On the Matthew 16 foundation, they will be "privileged with dying for his name's sake"; Psalm 116:15, "Precious in the sight of the LORD *is* the death of his saints," looks to the 5th installment.

Key terms: *cost of discipleship · tasting death · foundational willing doctrines · recompence of the reward · extermination policy · confederacy of nations*

L8

The Recompence of the Reward; a Foretaste of Glory *Matthew 16:24–28; Matthew 17:1–13 begun*

Passages: Matthew 16:24–27 · Hebrews 10:32–34 · Hebrews 11:24–26 · Hebrews 11:35 · Hebrews 12:1–4 · Revelation 2 · Matthew 24:45–51 · Matthew 16:28 · Matthew 17:1–13

- Lives laid on the line will be "more of the norm than an exception." The doctrine of verses 24–27 is "designed to make them willing," despite great temptations to capitulate and soft pedal the message.
- The primary issue producing that willingness is the recompence of the reward. In verse 25 it is physical life; if they lose it for his name's sake, they are resurrected "with a better resurrection."
- Hebrews through Revelation deals with the remnant. In Hebrews 10 the recompence of the reward enabled them to endure; their enduring substance in heaven is "better than all the gain in this world" (16:26).
- Hebrews 11 "marvelously parallels" Matthew 16:24–27: Moses, who could have gained the whole world in Egypt, "had respect unto the recompence of the reward." The better resurrection is "being resurrected with reward."
- In phase three of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees they "start resisting unto blood," then face the extermination policy (Hebrews 12). The faithful servant becomes "ruler over all his goods" (Matthew 24).
- Verse 28 points to 17:1–13, the second edificational issue: only Peter, James and John are given "a foretaste of seeing the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."
- Of three main purposes, one is restricted until after the rejection; another underscores "the need to hear what the Lord Jesus Christ is saying from this point on"; another concerns the scribes' teaching regarding Elias.

Key terms: *high cost of discipleship · recompence of the reward · better resurrection · enduring substance · crown of life · foretaste*

L9

Elias Truly Shall First Come: Malachi Mishandled *Matthew 17:1–13*

Passages: Matthew 17:5 · Matthew 17:10–13 · Malachi 3:1 · Isaiah 40 · Malachi 4:5–6 · Luke 1 · I Kings 18 · Matthew 17:9 · II Peter 1:12–19

- The event has three main purposes. The first, from verse 5, puts the emphasis on “hear ye him”: Peter, James and John had difficulty with the coming rejection and will be functioning in his absence.
- Second, they must handle Malachi 3 and 4 properly. The scribes said Elias must first come, so John “can't be a real prophet” and Jesus “can't be the Christ, because Elijah isn't here.”
- The main mistake is “to plug Elijah back” into Malachi 3:1, whose individual is called the messenger, not the prophet. It is used more intensively to convince Israel “that this really is not their Christ.”
- “Elias truly shall first come” per Malachi 4:5, not before the climactic stage; restoring all things is the action of 4:6. He comes back to duplicate what he did at Mount Carmel (I Kings 18).
- Malachi 3:1 speaks of a different individual, one coming “in the spirit and power of Elias” (Luke 1). By similarity in ministry the Lord could say Elias is come already, meaning John the Baptist.
- The third purpose, “the main issue of all,” is a foretaste of the coming kingdom glory, to be used for the remnant after the rejection, with the proper handling of Malachi, against scoffers and ridiculers.
- In II Peter 1 Peter commits the eyewitness account to print, to function “once the dispensation of grace is over with” and counter the charge of cunningly devised fables.

Key terms: *Mount of Transfiguration · mishandling of Malachi · the messenger, not the prophet · spirit and power of Elias · foretaste of the coming kingdom glory · cunningly devised fables*

L10

A Disappointing Foretaste: The Sore Vexed Son *Matthew 17:14–21 begun*

Passages: Matthew 17:14–21 · Matthew 4:23–25 · Matthew 10:1, 8 · John 2:1–11 · John 4:46–54 · John 11 · Matthew 12:43–45 · Mark 9:14–22 · Psalm 66:8–12

- After the encouraging foretaste comes the third edificational issue after the first pronouncement: “a disappointing foretaste of the renewed and advanced strength of Satan's policy of evil against Israel.”
- In 17:16 the disciples fail for the first time with the power given them in Matthew 10. This is not “a run-of-the-mill type casting out of devils,” nor simply another hallmark sign of the kingdom.
- Not all his miracles are just signs of the kingdom. John's seven special miracles, John 2 through the raising of Lazarus (John 11), each manifest his deity and one of the seven Jehovah compound names.
- Israel was told to behold their Messiah: Matthew as their king, Mark as Jehovah's perfect servant, Luke as the Son of Man, John as Jehovah's fellow, “Adonai Jehovah in human flesh.”
- Matthew 12 set the stage: the unclean spirits cast out will have opportunity to come back in, not just in renewed but “advanced strength,” ones “more wicked than the ones that were already there.”
- “Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting”: they have not had to do that yet with devils, and must now face “a more powerful form of the satanic policy of evil.”
- The son cast into fire and water is the foretaste: the prophets' terminology, literal and figurative, for Israel's afflictions in the 5th installment (Psalm 66:12), when the policy of evil seeks “to destroy them.”

Key terms: *disappointing foretaste · renewed and advanced strength · sore vexed · two hallmark signs of the kingdom · Jehovah's fellow · fire and water*

L11

Fire and Water; This Kind Goeth Not Out *Matthew 17:15–21*

Passages: Matthew 17:15–21 · Matthew 12 · Psalm 66 · Isaiah 40 · Isaiah 53 · Isaiah 42:18–25 · Isaiah 43:1–3 · Isaiah 8:5–8 · Matthew 9:14–15

- The son's vexation is “a foretaste of this advancement that's coming”: after the rejection, paralleling Matthew 12, the satanic policy against Israel will be allowed to renew its original strength and advance in it.
- Its goal is pollution making Israel offensive to God and the Messiah. The Lord permits its advance as “part of the purging of the nation”: the remnant protected, the apostate element destroyed.
- Fire and water terminology is used “both literally and figuratively” for what Israel suffers from the intense afflictions of the policy of evil; figuratively, the man of sin's armies overflow the land like a flood.
- Psalm 66 (second book: the Deliverer and his deliverance) is the remnant's testimony to the nations once it is all over, “not calling for anything to go on in this dispensation of grace.”
- Isaiah 40 to the end is “almost a progressive calendar-like description” of the climactic stage. After the rejection they are given over to the policy of evil (42:18–25); Isaiah 43 provides for the remnant.
- Two reasons they failed: their unbelief about the coming rejection, and this kind going out only by prayer and fasting, needed once the bridegroom is taken. Together these left them “no influence upon this kind.”
- His cure is a foretaste that, returning as “the deliverer and the avenger,” he will cure Israel of all the policy of evil inflicted. It also reproved the other disciples for “balking at believing.”

Key terms: *foretaste · satanic policy of evil · purging of the nation · fire and water terminology · five mandates of the Davidic Covenant · ultimate king of Assyria*

↓ **Thread, A: 1st Pronouncement & Edification → B: 2nd Pronouncement & Edification:** *With the first pronouncement made and followed by its three edificational issues, the first part of the third section ends at 17:21. The second portion opens with the second pronouncement, the further details added to it, and the three edificational issues that follow.*

B: 2nd Pronouncement & Edification · Lessons 12–23

The second pronouncement (17:22–23) underscores “that it'll take place by a betrayal.” Three edificational issues follow: not offending the Gentiles (17:24–27); chapter 18, not following the vain religious system's conduct; 19:1–20:16, further reproof of its doctrine and practices.

L12

Second Pronouncement: Don't Offend the Gentiles *Matthew 17:22–27*

Passages: Matthew 17:22–23 · Luke 24:44–46 · Acts 1:15–16 · Psalm 69:25 · Psalm 109:8 · Matthew 17:24–27 · Matthew 5:13–16 · Matthew 7:6 · Matthew 24:4–14 · I Peter 2:11–17

- The first pronouncement gave “the must issue”; the second (17:22–23) gives “the way in which the rejection is going to occur”: a betrayal, someone close to him turning him over into the hands of men.
- Judas Iscariot will betray him, known now only to the Father, the Lord Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost. They are to recognize, not yet understand: “Let these sayings sink down into your ears” (Luke).
- After the rejection, opening their understanding (Luke 24:44–46), he uses must again, and the betrayal issue clicks. In Acts 1, in connection with replacing Judas, Peter understands Psalms 69 and 109.
- To help their unbelief he pronounces it a second time and will a third. They were “exceeding sorry,” which is better than Peter's opposition at the first pronouncement.
- The first edificational issue (17:24–27) is “the need to not be offending the Gentiles”: as children of the kingdom “they're free,” but “the times of the Gentiles are still in effect.”
- Until the Gentiles' day of visitation in the 5th installment, Peter and the remnant must not prejudice the Gentiles against them; paying tribute is one of the good works to let shine before men.
- In I Peter 2:11–17 Peter passes this to the remnant among the nations. Times of the Gentiles and day of visitation are both distinct from “the dispensation of Gentile grace in which we live today.”

Key terms: *must factor · frame of reference · children of the kingdom · times of the Gentiles · day of visitation · non-offense issue*

L13

Converted to Humility from High-Minded Pride *Matthew 18 outlined; Matthew 18:1–6 begun*

Passages: Matthew 18:1–6 · Matthew 18:7–35 · II Corinthians 10 · Acts 3:19, 22 · Luke 22:31–32 · Proverbs 6:16–19 · Proverbs 9:1 · Proverbs 30:11–13 · Proverbs 16:16–19 · Proverbs 18:10–12

- Chapter 18 is “the second of the three” major edificational issues following the second pronouncement (17:22–23); all thirty-five verses continue the Lord's edification of his disciples on not following Israel's vain religious system.
- Matthew 18 holds five major issues: humility rather than high-minded pride (18:1–6); a warning to those still of the world (18:7–9); not despising little ones (18:10–14); grace and charity (18:15–20); unlimited forgiveness (18:21–35).
- Raised in this society, the disciples need “more than one dose of corrective doctrine” to see the men they admired are not what they thought: a stronghold of erroneous human viewpoint thinking.
- To convert is to change “from one type of thinking and conduct to another.” In Acts 3, still Israel's program, it is unjustified to justified; in Matthew 18 and Luke 22:31–32, it concerns believers.
- All seven things the LORD hates in Proverbs 6:16–19 characterize Israel's vain religious system, and the first is “a proud look.” Wisdom's seven pillars (9:1) are seven pillars of corrective doctrine.
- Through Agur the Lord prophesies of what the lesson calls “the generation to come” (Proverbs 30:11–13); lofty eyes express inward pride. In Proverbs 16:16–19 destruction was coming; gold and silver would be of no value.
- In Proverbs 18:12, “before honour *is* humility” is for the remnant, honored when he establishes the kingdom. Being great in the kingdom is “the issue of a reward in the kingdom.”

Key terms: *edificational issues · corrective doctrine · stronghold · convert / conversion · seven pillars · the generation to come*

L14

Become as Little Children: Of No Account *Matthew 18:1–6*

Passages: Matthew 18:1–6 · Matthew 20:20–27 · Isaiah 1:16–17 · Isaiah 1:21–23 · Isaiah 10:1–2 · Matthew 10:40 · Matthew 18:10

- Asking who is greatest (18:1), the disciples have rewards in mind, a position of great rulership in the kingdom (Matthew 20:20–27). “The issue is not justification unto eternal life. They've got that.”
- In 18:3, “ye shall not enter” means not entering with those rewards. Justification unto eternal life and entering the kingdom are two different issues; a Jew can be justified and not even enter.
- “Verily I say unto you” marks corrective doctrine, an attack on a stronghold. Two years of it had not completely torn down the stronghold of high-minded thinking, a lack of love and charity.
- Little children were of no account in Israel's vain religious system; only when a father adopted his child did it begin to place value and esteem on that young person.
- The same pride despised the fatherless and the widows (Isaiah 1:16–17, 21–23); in Isaiah 10:1–2 the leadership decreed away their right to judgment. The Lord repeats Isaiah's indictment in the 4th installment.
- To become as little children is to “think of yourselves as of no account” and esteem others above yourself. Love is selfless thinking, charity its outworking; instead of being served, they serve.
- A little child who believes is “an equal member of the remnant of Israel,” not second-class, and in God's thinking it is “a high crime to offend one of these little ones” (18:6).

Key terms: *second major edificational issue · rewards in the kingdom · verily · of no account · love / charity · high crime*

L15

Woe unto the World; Despise Not Little Ones *Matthew 18:7–9; Matthew 18:10–14 begun*

Passages: Matthew 18:7–9 · Luke 12 · Isaiah 65 · Isaiah 66 · Matthew 18:10–14 · Matthew 19:13–14 · Matthew 21:12–16

- Having mentioned offending a little one (18:6), the Lord turns in an interlude (18:7–9) to the world: the focus is "not so much his disciples" as those still in Israel's vain religious system.
- Luke 12 shows the pattern: in an innumerable multitude he speaks to his disciples first, shifts to others (12:13–21), then returns. "That's what's going on back here in Matthew 18 as well."
- Cutting off the hand is a figure of speech: "completely disassociate" from the vain religious system and respond to the truth. Temporal consequences are better than the "spiritual and eternal consequences" of continuing in it.
- The everlasting fire, spoken of in Isaiah 66, is for apostate Israel, purged in the 5th installment; "no member of the remnant of Israel is going to end up in there," even one without rewards.
- Back with the disciples (18:10): "despise simply means to look down upon someone" as possessing inferior qualities. By no means does God look on these little ones that way.
- Two things convert their thinking toward "almost looking at them with admiration": a special role for these little children as the program moves on, and their place as "a special category within the overall flock."
- The stronghold is still there in Matthew 19:13–14. One special role, fulfilling Psalm 8:2, gets underway in Matthew 21, where the Lord took the very ones the leaders despised and gave them that honor.

Key terms: *interlude · little flock · apostate Israel · despise · special role · strongholds*

L16

Why the Little Ones Must Not Be Despised *Matthew 18:10–14*

Passages: Matthew 18:10–14 · Matthew 21:12–16 · Psalm 8:2 · Isaiah 28:9–13 · Zechariah 13:7 · Ezekiel 34:1–16 · Isaiah 40:11

- The chief priests and scribes, the "enemies plural" of Psalm 8:2, were sore displeased at the little children's words in Matthew 21:12–16; the impact on "the enemy and the avenger" follows in the 5th installment.
- Psalm 8 sits in the first book of the Psalms (1–41), the Redeemer and his redemption, yet looks forward to all five mandates of the Davidic Covenant: Redeemer, Deliverer, Avenger, King and Blesser.
- Their role is "a high position of honor and privilege" granted the despised little children. In Isaiah 28:9–13, when sound doctrine is rejected, he teaches "*them that are* weaned from the milk," not the leaders.
- Two main reasons not to despise them: "their angels do always behold the face of my Father" (18:10), and "the Son of man is come to save that which was lost" (18:11).
- Their angels are understood as "the guardian angel concept," a legitimate issue in God's program with Israel; those who don't rightly divide apply it today. The point is that the Father does not despise them.
- The shift to "little ones" makes the connection with Zechariah 13:7, "I will turn mine hand upon the little ones"; a very particular guardian angel provision will protect them when the 5th installment comes.
- Verse 11 refers to Ezekiel 34: he comes as the shepherd, requiring his flock at the hands of the apostate shepherds. The little ones are "equal sheep," the little lambs of Isaiah 40:11.

Key terms: *enemies plural / enemy singular · five mandates of the Davidic Covenant · rehearsal and foretaste · guardian angel concept · equal sheep · little lambs*

L17

Gaining Thy Brother Instead of Frowardness *Matthew 18:15; Matthew 18:16–17 introduced*

Passages: Matthew 18:15–17 · Proverbs 6:12–19 · Proverbs 10:12 · Proverbs 11:12–13 · Proverbs 12:18 · Proverbs 16:27–28 · Proverbs 18:8 · Proverbs 19:11 · Proverbs 25:8–12 · Proverbs 29:22

- "Moreover" (18:15) brings in an additional issue: a brother of the remnant trespassing against one of them. It is dealt with in two major sections, 18:15–20 and 18:21–35.
- Israel's vain religious system sets no godly example here. The disciples could easily pursue "a course that is bent on frowardness," another stronghold issue; the froward mouth drives the brother away.
- In 18:15, "between thee and him alone" counteracts "the tale-bearing, the rumor-mongering, and the loose tongue" of the vain religious system. Every aspect of this corrective doctrine could be traced in Proverbs.
- Proverbs constantly cycles through the seven categories the Lord hates, including sowing discord among brethren (6:16–19). In its opposites the negative characterizes the vain religious system, the positive the remnant.
- "Hatred stirreth up strifes: but love covereth all sins" (10:12): sound doctrine converts the remnant's thinking from hatred to love. The tongue of the wise is restorative, "for gaining him instead of driving him away."
- Once dealt with, the matter is buried, and it is the remnant's glory "to pass over a transgression" (19:11). They are to be "a wise reprover," hopefully met with an obedient ear, gaining their brother.
- If the brother will not hear (18:16–17), they still pursue the course that makes for peace, but also provide for "the isolation of the foolishness of the brother."

Key terms: *frowardness · anti-frowardness · cycling through · isolation policy · wise reprover / obedient ear · the course that makes for peace*

L18

Neglected Reproof, Authority, and Unlimited Forgiveness *Matthew 18:15–35*

Passages: Matthew 18:15–35 · Proverbs 13:18 · Proverbs 27:5–6 · Proverbs 28:13 · Proverbs 29:1 · Proverbs 10:17 · Proverbs 12:1 · Proverbs 15:10, 31–32 · James 5:19–20

- The future remnant of Israel will use Proverbs, because what characterizes Israel's apostate system does not change; so Proverbs comes out in Hebrews through Revelation, especially James.
- If the brother neglects to hear (18:16–17), the course still "makes for peace," yet his foolishness is isolated, "so as not to infect and afflict the rest of the remnant."
- In 18:17, "tell *it* unto the church," the word was used in God's program with Israel before the dispensation of grace began; the remnant of Israel "is their church," not the body of Christ.
- Neglect means deliberate disregard. Told to the church, reproof becomes open rebuke, "still better than secret love"; a hardened remnant member can partake of the system's judgment yet still has "his justification to eternal life."
- Verses 18–20 address authority and confidence for the Lord's absence: binding and loosing declares their right to act authoritatively; even where "two or three are gathered together in my name" (18:20), that same authority applies.
- The doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees has three phases: the first "results in his rejection"; the second works hatred against them; in the third the system "weds itself to the man of sin."
- Peter's "till seven times" is understood to come from the vain religious system's "limited forgiveness policy"; the Lord teaches unlimited forgiveness. The issue is rewards in and entrance into the kingdom, not losing justification.

Key terms: *neglect · church · open rebuke · autonomous organization · limited forgiveness policy · unlimited declaration*

L19

Third Body of Doctrine: Departure from Galilee *Matthew 19:1–9; 19:3 – 20:16 outlined*

Passages: Matthew 19:1–2 · Matthew 20:29 · Matthew 21:1 · Matthew 21:15–16 · Psalm 8 · Matthew 19:3 – 20:16 · Matthew 5:27–28 · Matthew 5:31–32 · Matthew 19:4–9

- This third body of doctrine, following the second pronouncement, runs from 19:3 through 20:16 and is “for the further edification of the members of the remnant, the disciples.” The third pronouncement follows at 20:17–19.
- In 19:1–2 “the physical departure from the land of Galilee occurs,” yet he does not go directly to Jerusalem: across Jordan, to Jericho (20:29), then Bethphage at the Mount of Olives (21:1).
- The entry into Jerusalem is “a rehearsal and a foretaste” of the real victory parade; even the route he takes “as the victorious Son of Man over the usurper is prophesied about.”
- As in chapter 18, this body has “five major issues”: 19:3–12; “a second issue,” 19:13–15; 19:16–22; 19:23–29; and “that fifth issue,” 19:30 – 20:16, the first last and the last first.
- Verses 3–9 review the Sermon on the Mount foundation; 10–12 alone are fresh. Operating on causes beyond the law's one, from their own tradition, the Pharisees, “not naturally righteous and naturally holy,” committed adultery.
- Verse 4's “have ye not read” shows the written word was not the Pharisees' final absolute authority; it is the Lord's. Moses' provision was made “because of sin and the hardness of a man's heart.”
- The Pharisees will carry his answer to the council as “ammunition,” but the Holy Ghost recorded it mainly so the Lord can “provide some further edification for the members of the remnant.”

Key terms: *third body of doctrine · rehearsal and foretaste · stronghold of resistance · naturally righteous and naturally holy · corrective doctrine · final absolute authority*

L20

Eunuchs, Little Children, and Born of Blood *Matthew 19:10–15; 19:16–22 begun*

Passages: Matthew 19:10–12 · Isaiah 55 · Isaiah 56:1–8 · Matthew 19:13–15 · Matthew 19:16–22 · John 1:6–13 · John 8 · Genesis 15:6

- Within the first of the five issues, verses 10–12 are fresh: eunuchs, “easily looked down upon, despised”; those who “made themselves eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake” did an honorable and wise thing.
- Isaiah 55 indicts Israel's ungodliness. Godliness has three components: think like God does, walk in his ways, and labor with God in what he's doing; corrective doctrine remedies the first two.
- Isaiah 56 is primarily so “the eunuch” does not despise himself; Matthew 19, so the remnant does not despise eunuchs. Chapters 17, 18 and 19 deal with three categories the disciples could despise.
- The second issue, 19:13–15, reiterates the little children because it is “one of those stronghold issues”; verse 14 “batters once again into that stronghold of resistance.”
- The rich young man (19:16–22) is “stubbornly persisting” in the system's doctrine of justification unto eternal life; he approaches the Lord “as if the Lord is a Pharisaical master.”
- John 1:13 contrasts born of God with the system's three options: born of blood, of the will of the flesh, of the will of man. The Pharisees claimed the first: a pure bloodline from Abraham.
- In John 8 they are Abraham's seed but not Abraham's children; in Genesis 15:6 Abraham himself “needed to be justified unto eternal life on the basis of faith and faith alone.”

Key terms: *eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake · godliness (three components) · stronghold of resistance · Pharisaical master · born of blood · seed of Abraham / child of Abraham*

L21

The Rich Young Man and the Three Options *Matthew 19:16–22*

Passages: Matthew 19:16–22 · John 1:13 · Matthew 23:1–9 · Matthew 11–12 · Ezekiel 34 · John 3 · Isaiah 40

- John 1:13 frames the three options: born of blood, the Pharisees' claim; the will of the flesh, a Pharisee's prescribed system; the will of man, response to a “benevolent type deed.”
- The first twelve verses of Matthew 23 are a synopsis of the system: the heavy burdens (verse 4) are option two, and rabbi, master and father were names given Pharisees under options two or three.
- The rich young man “simply looked at Jesus as a Pharisee master”; option one not open to him, he pursues option three, wanting to purchase his justification on “that benevolent gift principle.”
- In 19:17, “*there is* none good but one, *that is*, God”: there is no good master Pharisee. Options two and three depend on option one, so tearing down number one “tears down all three.”
- His “keep the commandments” confronts him not with the system's doctrine but “with the law in truth.” The only true option is justification “by a judicial act of God's justice in response to faith.”
- Asking “which?” he shifts to option two, expecting a Pharisee master to pick commandments. But “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” summarizes all, and the law meant doing them all, your life long, perfectly.
- The system taught riches were “a sign of being righteous in God's sight” or of God's blessing, and despised the poor. The doctrine is entrenched in the disciples too, “one of those strongholds of resistance.”

Key terms: *the three options · birth by blood · Pharisee master / good master · the law in truth · stronghold of resistance*

L22

The Doctrine of Riches as a Stumbling Block *Matthew 19:23–26*

Passages: Matthew 19:23–26 · Luke 12 · Luke 16 · Proverbs 11:4–6 · Proverbs 11:28 · Proverbs 18:10–12 · Proverbs 28:11 · James 1:9–11 · James 5:1–6

- The system took riches as “a sign of God's blessing” for the naturally righteous and naturally holy, and their lack as God's disfavor; riches became “a stumbling block for this rich young man.”
- Luke 12: the system looked on a man's life as consisting in the abundance of his possessions; this becomes a bigger factor once he is gone, “especially at the beginning of that fifth installment.”
- Luke 16:1–12 is “a stern admonition” to the disciples; from verse 13 the Pharisees, who justify themselves before men by their mammon, hear of the certain rich man who did not go to Abraham's bosom.
- Proverbs: “Riches profit not in the day of wrath”; the rich man thinks his wealth his strong city. Corrective doctrine ran into a “fortress of opposition,” pride, “the grace rejecting policy of man's sin nature.”
- In James 1:9–11 a positively responding rich man was made low and is to rejoice; James 5 looks forward to when, in the lesson's words, “those rich men kill the just.”
- In verse 23, “hardly” has “the fourth installment in view and on to the extension of mercy and forbearance”; verse 24, “nigh on impossible,” is in view “at the beginning of the fifth installment.”
- Exceeding amazement (verse 25) shows “carryover baggage” in the disciples; verse 26 reproves them: the corrective doctrine “can effectually work with a member of that vain religious system with some honesty of heart.”

Key terms: *stronghold of resistance · mammon of unrighteousness · fortress of opposition · extension of mercy and forbearance · phase two of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees · intensification of the doctrine of riches*

L23

Many First Shall Be Last: The Fifth Issue *Matthew 19:27 – 20:16*

Passages: Matthew 19:27–30 · Isaiah 1:5–26 · Matthew 5:10–12 · Matthew 10:24–38 · Micah 6:10 – 7:7 · Matthew 13 · Matthew 20:1–16

- Peter's “what shall we have therefore?” draws no rebuke: the Lord wants them thinking about reward; as the lesson puts it, “respect unto the recompence of the reward” is “a big and an appropriate issue.”
- The Twelve form “the core of the Lord's government.” Isaiah 1 shows the 5th course ending with “a very small remnant” in which he “sets up the government”; the twelve thrones fulfill Isaiah 1:26.
- Verse 29 turns to the faithful members of the remnant as a whole: whoever forsakes for his name's sake “shall receive an hundredfold,” which is rewards “on top of their justification unto eternal life.”
- Matthew 5:10–12 and Matthew 10 are built upon: to be worthy of him is to be “one of his worthies,” given there to the apostles, now set before the remnant as a whole.
- Many first to join the remnant will be last to enter that kingdom, not enduring faithful; justification to eternal life “does not guarantee them entrance to that kingdom right away.” That kingdom is rewards.
- In 20:1–16 the early and eleventh-hour laborers are rewarded as equal; “many be called, but few chosen”: called by the gospel of the kingdom, chosen “on the basis of their faithfulness to the corrective doctrine.”
- When the present dispensation of grace, which “has suspended Israel's program,” is concluded and that program resumes, the same thing applies to those then edified through Matthew–John and Hebrews–Revelation: both called, the faithful chosen.

Key terms: *respect unto the recompence of the reward · 5th course of punishment prophets · his worthies · remnant within the remnant · many be called, but few chosen · third body of doctrine following the second pronouncement*

Appendix — Section 3 at a Glance (Parts 1 and 2)

The four portions of Section 3, Matthew 16:21 – 23:39, in Keith's outline: three pronouncements of the coming rejection, each followed by edificational issues, then the final denouncement. Part 1 covers Lessons 1–23; Part 2 covers Lessons 24–36. Rows in this PDF are shaded.

Portion	Lessons	Part	What it sets forth
A: 1st Pronouncement & Edification *Matthew 16:21 – 17:21*	1–11	**1** *(this PDF)*	The first pronouncement (16:21–23) underscores that it must take place. Three edificational issues follow: the cost of discipleship (16:24–28), an encouraging foretaste of his kingdom glory (17:1–13), a disappointing foretaste of the coming strength of Satan's policy of evil.
B: 2nd Pronouncement & Edification *Matthew 17:22 – 20:16*	12–23	**1** *(this PDF)*	The second pronouncement (17:22–23) underscores “that it'll take place by a betrayal.” Three edificational issues follow: not offending the Gentiles (17:24–27); chapter 18, not following the vain religious system's conduct; 19:1–20:16, further reproof of its doctrine and practices.
C: 3rd Pronouncement & Edification *Matthew 20:17 – 22:46*	24–34	2	The 3rd and final pronouncement goes beyond the must factor and the betrayal “to include the very players.” “That same pattern” is repeated: the high cost of being the Lord's worthies, an encouraging foretaste, a discouraging foretaste of phase two.
D: The Final Denouncement *Matthew 23:1–39*	35–36	2	Since he is now in Jerusalem, chapter 23 breaks the pattern, setting forth his “final denouncement of Israel's apostate religious system” in three parts: to his disciples (1–12), the vain religious system (13–36), Jerusalem (37–39).

www.enjoythebible.org

For further study visit www.enjoythebible.org