

# Matthew 17

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# Matthew 17

The Bible's view of ghosts, evil spirits

In the book of Ezekiel, the Bible describes the devil as a perfect cherubim who, because of the pride in his heart, eventually led to his own depravity, becoming Satan in opposition to God, and becoming the source of the evil of the universe.

Satan, demons and demons

Satan's rebellion became a fallen angel, an evil spirit. The Bible describes Satan as the leader of the power of the air, and his men as the angels of the power of the air. During Satan's rebellion, the creatures of the earth also participated in the rebellion, making them unclean spirits on the earth. These unclean spirits used human bodies as their temporary dwellings. In the Gospel of Matthew, it is mentioned that unclean spirits wander in waterless places after leaving people, looking for a resting place but cannot find them, and they may possess people.

"Demons" are not transformed after death. Humans and ghosts are essentially different beings. In the book of Jaber, it is mentioned that people do not return to the underworld after death, nor do they return to the world as ghosts, so the dead do not come to the living. Unclean spirits have the potential to possess people and cause harm or supernatural phenomena. If there is a paranormal event that appears to be the return of the deceased, it is usually the impersonation of the unclean spirit.

There is a pervasive fear of ghosts in the subconscious. The book of Hebrews states that Jesus abolished the devil who held the power of death in order to free those who were enslaved by fear of death. This means that if people are afraid of ghosts, they will be controlled by them. People worship ghosts even though they know they are ghosts, and this behavior is mostly due to fear and unnecessary superstition.

The Bible's view of ghosts is to see them as evil spirits that are in opposition to God for the purpose of deceiving and resisting humanity. The ghost by-law refers to a state controlled by evil spirits that usually requires the power of the gods to rescue. There are many references in the Bible of Jesus' exorcism of demons, such as in Matthew 8 and Mark 5, where Jesus drove demons into pigs and healed demon-possessed people, respectively.

Jesus' exorcism was part of his ministry while he was on earth, demonstrating his authority over the spiritual realm. Not only did he exorcise demons himself, but he also gave his disciples the authority to cast out evil spirits in the name of Jesus. Although the Bible does not explicitly list all the causes of demonic possession, it suggests that sin or detachment from God may be involved.

Christians are taught not to fear evil spirits because the presence of the Holy Spirit keeps them safe from evil spirits. In addition, the Bible prohibits contact with spirits, including spiritualism and divination, which it believes will lead to demonic control.

Matthew 17 focuses on Jesus' ascent of the mountain in disguise, with Peter, James, and John witnessing Him shining on the mountain and talking to Moses and Elijah. The chapter also records that Jesus healed a demon-possessed boy and taught his disciples the importance of faith. The theology of Jesus in disguise is far-reaching, symbolizing the manifestation of Jesus' divinity. The disguise also emphasized His coming suffering, while encouraging the disciples to strengthen their faith because the glory would be revealed in the resurrection. Jesus healed a demon-possessed boy and emphasized the importance of faith. Jesus pointed out their lack of faith. He said that if their faith could be like the mustard seed, no matter how small, it could move mountains and seas. Casting out demons is not something that everyone can do, and the authority of the King of Heaven must be exercised in faith to deal with demons. "Prayer and fasting" is to recognize our own shortcomings, to admit our "no" and "can't" before God, and to let the "have" and "can" of the Lord overshadow us. The effect of "fasting" is not due to its behavior, but to its intention and attitude.

Moses symbolized the law because he was the conveyor of the Ten Commandments; Elijah symbolizes the prophet and represents all prophecies. Jesus was with them to symbolize His being the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, demonstrating His divinity and mission, especially His imminent crucifixion and resurrection.

"After six days, the Gospel of Luke counts the first and last two days, so it says, 'About eight days'

Jesus was transfigured before them; His face was as bright as the sun, and his garments were as white as light." And one day we shall all become in the likeness of the Lord, from glory to glory, as from the Spirit of the Lord.

Moses and Elijah appeared to them as "the two witnesses" who were used by God before the millennial kingdom came.

Suddenly a bright cloud covered them; And a voice came out of the clouds, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; Listen ye to Him. God the Father appreciates Jesus' for being a man for 30 years, and Jesus was fully human on earth and fulfilled the Father's heart. Jesus ascended the mountain and transfigured, allowing the three disciples to experience the glorious manifestation of the kingdom firsthand, showing that He was indeed the Christ of the Kingdom of Heaven. And they lifted up their eyes, and saw no one, but there was Jesus." It is the shadow of the kingdom of heaven, the Son of God is the only authority in the kingdom of heaven, and all must obey him. The Lord Jesus is the only one

worthy to be exalted, and by living in His presence, we can enjoy Him as joy and comfort. As we mature in life, our eyes gradually turn from people and things other than the Lord to Christ Himself, "seeing no man, only Jesus." Everything that is spiritually human is only there to help us find Christ. Jesus instructed Peter to go fishing on the seashore, and the first fish caught took money to pay the temple tax, demonstrating God's provision and Jesus' respect for worldly responsibilities. Jesus gave Peter a miracle of getting money from the mouth of a fish. He did not fail to pay taxes because he did not need to pay them, he was always sympathetic to people's weaknesses and paid taxes so as not to stumble over people. Not only did he pay his own taxes, but he even prepared money for Peter's taxes.

Let's pray together. Dear Lord, you are the King of glory! Help us to have faith in you, in your power, in your love, in your goodness, in your mercy. Sometimes we are low on faith, so ask the Lord to increase it! Help us live a life of faith and also help those in need and bring people to you. It also helps us to experience and experience your miracles and mercy in every bit of our daily life. Thank you, Lord! Bless Your children! Pray and thank you in the holy name of the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Matthew 17

### **The Transfiguration**

<sup>1</sup> Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John the brother of James, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. <sup>2</sup> And His appearance changed dramatically in their presence; and His face shone [with heavenly glory, clear and bright] like the sun, and His clothing became as white as light. <sup>3</sup> And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Jesus. <sup>4</sup> Then Peter began to speak and said to Jesus, "Lord, it is good *and* delightful *and* auspicious that we are here; if You wish, I will put up three [sacred] tents here—one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." <sup>5</sup> While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and <sup>[a]</sup>a voice from the cloud said, "<sup>[b]</sup>This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased *and* delighted! Listen to Him!" <sup>6</sup> When the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were terrified. <sup>7</sup> But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Get up, and do not be afraid." <sup>8</sup> And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus Himself alone.

<sup>9</sup> And as they were going down the mountain, Jesus commanded them, "Do not tell anyone what you have seen until the Son of Man has been raised from the dead." <sup>10</sup> The disciples asked Him, "Then why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" <sup>11</sup> He answered and said, "Elijah is coming and will restore all things; <sup>12</sup> but I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not recognize him, but did to him as they wished. The Son of Man is also going to suffer at their hands." <sup>13</sup> Then the disciples understood that He had spoken to them about John the Baptist.

### **The Demoniac**

<sup>14</sup> When they approached the crowd, a man came up to Jesus, kneeling before Him and saying, <sup>15</sup> "Lord, have mercy on my son, for he is a lunatic (moonstruck) and suffers terribly; for he often falls into the fire and often into the water. <sup>16</sup> And I brought him to Your disciples, and they were not able to heal him." <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered, "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me." <sup>18</sup> Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was healed at once.

<sup>19</sup> Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and asked, “Why could we not drive it out?” <sup>20</sup> He answered, “Because of your little faith [your lack of trust and confidence in the power of God]; for I assure you *and* most solemnly say to you, <sup>[e]</sup>if you have [living] faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and [if it is God’s will] it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. <sup>21</sup> <sup>[d]</sup>[But this kind of demon does not go out except by prayer and fasting.]”

<sup>22</sup> When they were gathering together in Galilee, Jesus said to them, “The Son of Man is going to be betrayed *and* handed over to men [who are His enemies]; <sup>23</sup> and they will kill Him, and He will be raised [from death to life] on the third day.” And they were deeply grieved *and* distressed.

### **The Tribute Money**

<sup>24</sup> When they arrived in Capernaum, the collectors of the <sup>[e]</sup>half-shekel [temple tax] went up to Peter and said, “Does not your teacher pay the half-shekel?” <sup>25</sup> Peter answered, “Yes.” And when he came home, Jesus spoke to him first, saying, “What do you think, Simon? From whom do earthly rulers collect duties or taxes, from their sons or from strangers?” <sup>26</sup> When Peter said, “From strangers,” Jesus said to him, “Then the sons are exempt [from taxation]. <sup>27</sup> However, so that we do not offend them, go to the sea and throw in a hook, and take the first fish that comes up; and when you open its mouth, you will find a shekel. Take it and give it to them [to pay the temple tax] for you and Me.”

Matthew 17 is a pivotal chapter in the New Testament, rich with spiritual meaning and key events that highlight Jesus' divinity, His mission, and the faith required of His followers. Below is a breakdown of the chapter, its important verses, and its spiritual influence.

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### **Summary of Matthew 17**

#### **1. The Transfiguration (Verses 1-13):**

- Jesus takes Peter, James, and John to a high mountain where He is transfigured before them. His face shines like the sun, and His clothes become dazzling white. Moses and Elijah appear, talking with Him.
- Peter suggests building three shelters for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. A bright cloud overshadows them, and a voice from the cloud declares, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him!"
- The disciples are terrified but are comforted by Jesus. On their way down the mountain, Jesus instructs them not to tell anyone about the vision until after His resurrection.
- The disciples ask about Elijah's return, and Jesus explains that Elijah has already come (referring to John the Baptist).

#### **2. Healing of a Demon-Possessed Boy (Verses 14-21):**

- A man pleads with Jesus to heal his son, who suffers from seizures caused by a demon. The disciples were unable to cast it out.

- Jesus rebukes the demon, and it leaves the boy. He chastises the disciples for their lack of faith and explains that such miracles require faith and prayer (some manuscripts add fasting).
3. **Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection (Verses 22-23):**
- Jesus tells His disciples that He will be betrayed, killed, and raised on the third day. The disciples are deeply grieved.
4. **The Temple Tax (Verses 24-27):**
- In Capernaum, collectors of the temple tax question Peter about Jesus' payment of the tax.
  - Jesus explains to Peter that, as the Son of God, He is exempt but instructs Peter to avoid causing offense by paying the tax.
  - Jesus miraculously provides the tax money by instructing Peter to catch a fish, which has a coin in its mouth.
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### Important Verses

1. **Matthew 17:2**

- *“There He was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and His clothes became as white as the light.”*
- **Significance:** This reveals Jesus' divine nature and glory, affirming His identity as the Son of God.

2. **Matthew 17:5**

- *“This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him!”*
- **Significance:** God the Father confirms Jesus' authority and divinity, calling for obedience to Him.

3. **Matthew 17:20**

- *“Because you have so little faith. Truly I tell you, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”*
- **Significance:** Highlights the power of faith and the importance of trusting God completely.

4. **Matthew 17:27**

- *“Take the first fish you catch; open its mouth and you will find a four-drachma coin. Take it and give it to them for My tax and yours.”*
- **Significance:** Demonstrates Jesus' divine authority over creation and His humility in fulfilling obligations.

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## Spiritual Influence and Lessons

### 1. **The Glory of Christ:**

- The Transfiguration reminds believers of Jesus' divine nature and His role as the fulfillment of the Law (represented by Moses) and the Prophets (represented by Elijah).

### 2. **Faith and Prayer:**

- The healing of the demon-possessed boy emphasizes the necessity of faith and reliance on God through prayer (and fasting) to overcome spiritual challenges.

### 3. **Jesus' Sacrificial Mission:**

- The prediction of Jesus' death and resurrection underscores His purpose to redeem humanity, encouraging believers to trust in His plan even when it involves suffering.

### 4. **Humility and Obedience:**

- The temple tax episode teaches humility and the importance of not causing unnecessary offense, even when one is in the right.

### 5. **God's Power and Provision:**

- Jesus' miraculous provision of the temple tax coin demonstrates God's sovereignty and ability to meet every need.

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## Reflection and Application

- **Deepen Your Faith:** Reflect on the power of faith, even as small as a mustard seed, to accomplish great things through God.
- **Listen to Jesus:** Embrace the call to listen to Jesus as the ultimate authority in your life, as emphasized by God during the Transfiguration.
- **Live Humbly:** Follow Jesus' example of humility and willingness to meet societal expectations without compromising His mission.
- **Trust God's Plan:** Remember that Jesus' path included suffering and glory, encouraging believers to trust God's plan for their lives.

Matthew 17 inspires awe in Jesus' divinity and encourages believers to grow in faith, humility, and trust in God's provision and sovereignty.