

## Introduction

In Matthew 13, Jesus teaches eight parables whose underlying truth was that the kingdom in its final fulfillment would be postponed until the time that Israel would believe in and receive her King. That time will be at the second coming of Christ, when He will establish His earthly kingdom for a thousand years. God cannot forsake His promise, and in His grace He will send His Son again to offer the kingdom...But an internal kingdom was established, because “as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12). Christ’s external, visible kingdom was postponed, but the internal, spiritual kingdom of His saints was established, and in their hearts the Lord reigns and through their lives and testimony He now expresses His will on earth.”

John MacArthur  
*The MacArthur New Testament Commentary, Matthew  
8–15, p. 343*

This year we are memorizing Ephesians 2. This week’s verse is Ephesians 2:3:  
“Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.”

## Day One

Read Matthew 12; *The Rejection of the Kingdom*

1. In Matthew 12:1–14, how did Jesus respond to the Pharisees’ two accusations that He was breaking the Law?
  
2. In 12:22–23, a miracle caused the people to ask if Jesus was the Son of David. Why is that significant?
  
3. In verses 24–28, contrast the responses to the people’s question by the Pharisees and by Jesus.
  
4. From Matthew 12:33–37, summarize Jesus’ teaching on the tongue.
  - a. From Ephesians 4:29 and James 3:1–12, list some biblical principles for guarding one’s speech.

## Day Two

Read Matthew 13; *The Parables of the Kingdom*

1. According to Matthew 13:3, 10-17, and 34-35, what reason did Jesus give for now teaching in parables?
  
2. From Matthew 13:3–8, identify each soil of the four soils and what they represent spiritually.
  
3. In Matthew 13:31–33, what do the parables of the mustard seed and leaven teach about what the kingdom will one day be?

4. From Matthew 13:44–50, identify different truths about the kingdom of heaven in the three different parables that Jesus taught.

## Day Three

Read Matthew 14–15; ***The Opposition against Jesus Intensifies***

**Note:** As you read this section of Matthew watch for the narrative that builds on the previous chapter's themes of varied responses to Jesus as well as how it builds momentum for His final days in Jerusalem.

1. According to Matthew 14:1–12, why did Herod imprison and then kill John?
  - a. Are you willing to speak the truth even when it could cost you, as it did John? How can you strengthen your faith to be better prepared to defend your beliefs in the face of opposition?
2. From verses 13–21, what attributes of God are displayed in Jesus' feeding the 5,000?
3. From verses 22–36, list some of the ways that Jesus demonstrated His authority.
  - a. In Matthew 14, how does seeing Jesus' character displayed in these miracles deepen your faith and trust in Him? How can you use what you've learned this week to practically battle fear and doubt?
4. In Matthew 15:1–20, identify spiritual principles that Jesus taught in His confrontation with the Pharisees.
  - a. According to verses 18–20, what is the source of sin? How do Romans 12:2, Philippians 4:8, and Colossians 3:2 deepen your understanding of the text in Matthew?
5. In Matthew 15:21–28, how did Jesus test the faith of the Canaanite woman?
  - a. How do you respond when your faith is tested? How can this account help you respond rightly to testing?

## Day Four

Read Matthew 16 and 17; ***Peter's Confession and the Transfiguration***

1. From Matthew 16:1–12, why did Jesus refuse to give a sign to the Pharisees and Sadducees? (See also Matthew 12:38–41.) Why did He warn His disciples against their teaching?

2. From Matthew 16:13–21, identify three things Jesus clearly and directly revealed to His disciples.
3. In verses 21–23, what did Jesus reveal to His disciples, and how did Peter respond?
  - a. How can you practically set your mind on God’s interests this week?
4. In Matthew 17:1–13, what did the Transfiguration of Christ reveal?
  - a. In verse 5, what did God say about Jesus Christ?
  - b. In telling the disciples to listen to Jesus, God was telling them to submit to His Son. Where in your life do you struggle to submit to Christ, and what steps can you take to battle that sin this week?

## Day Five

*Read Matthew 18–20; **Jesus Trained the Twelve***

**Note:** *Jesus now focused on training his disciples before He entered Jerusalem. Though Christ was focusing on establishing the twelve so they could lead the church, this teaching is equally necessary for all who seek to follow Christ.*

1. From Matthew 18:1–6, what is necessary to enter the kingdom, and what is considered great in the kingdom?
  - a. How does this remind you of Jesus’ teaching in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1–12)?
2. In light of Matthew 18:21–35, evaluate how quick are you to forgive, whether you keep a record of wrongs done to you, and whether there someone in your life you need to forgive. What do you need to do to act on God’s prompting through this text?
3. In Matthew 19:16–30 what is the reward for following Christ? Are you living your life in such a way that you will receive a hundredfold in the kingdom?
4. From Matthew 20:1–16, briefly explain the meaning of the parable of the laborers in the vineyard.

5. Matthew 18 opens with the question “Who is greatest in the kingdom?” and ends on a similar note in Matthew 20:20–28. Why do you think humility is emphasized so often in this text, and how can you practically combat pride and cultivate humility?
- a. What practical steps can you take to develop a greater servant’s heart this week?

### Questions for Additional Study:

This lesson has covered nine chapters of Matthew’s gospel, and a number of amazing events. What stands out to you most, and why? What passage do you want to go back and explore further?

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## Matthew 12–20

### I. How Deep the Rejection of the King

- A. Rejection by Israel’s religious elite; Matthew 12:22–28
- B. Justice to the Gentiles; Matthew 12:15–21
- C. Continued rejection; Matthew 13:54–58

### II. How Marvelous the Fulfilled Prophecies of the King

- A. The redemptive thread in Isaiah’s prophecy; Matthew 12:18–21
- B. Hearing they do not hear; Matthew 13:13–15

### III. How Beautiful the Transfiguration of the King

- A. The King in His Kingdom; Matthew 17:1–6