

**Pine Knoll Sabbath School Study Notes**  
**Second Quarter 2016: *The Book of Matthew***  
**Lesson 8 “Peter and the Rock”**

**Read for this week’s study**

Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 7:26; Matthew 16:13–20; Ephesians 2:20; Matthew 16:21–27; 17:1–9.

**Memory Text**

“ ‘But what about you?’ he asked. ‘Who do you say I am?’ ” (Matthew 16:15, NIV).

**Lesson Outline from Adult Sabbath School Study Guide**

- I. Introduction
- II. “You Are the Christ”
- III. “On This Rock”
- IV. Peter as Satan
- V. A Little Encouragement From Heaven
- VI. Jesus and the Temple Tax
- VII. Further Study

**Questions and Notes for Consideration**

**Facilitator: Jon Paulien**

1. Why did Jesus say that He “must” die in Jerusalem (Matthew 16:21 and many other texts)? (Sabbath afternoon)
2. Read Matthew 16:13-17. What is the significance of Peter being the only one recorded as answering? Why is Peter’s testimony so important for Jesus? What are some things that Jesus has done in your life that would form the basis of a similar testimony? How can we keep such things fresh in our minds? (Sunday’s lesson)
3. Read Matthew 16:17-20. What was Jesus saying to Peter here and how are we to understand what He meant? Are 1 Corinthians 10:4 and Ephesians 2:20 relevant to this issue? (Monday’s lesson)
4. Read Matthew 16:21-23. Why is Jesus suddenly so tough on Peter? The lesson goes on to explain that Peter had become a threat to the mission of Christ. In what sense is this the case? (Tuesday’s lesson)
5. Read Matthew 16:24-27. What does Jesus mean when He speaks about losing and saving one’s life in verse 25? What is “our” cross and how can we carry that cross in practical terms today? What does this passage have to say about our view of God’s character? (Tuesday’s lesson)

6. Read Matthew 17:1-9. What happened on this occasion and why was this event so important to Jesus and His disciples? Why is it Moses and Elijah who appear here and not other Old Testament characters like Abraham and David? What was God's purpose in "scaring" the disciples here? (Wednesday's lesson)
7. Read Matthew 17:24-27. What is going on behind the scenes of this incident, and what does this tell us about Jesus? Although Jesus and His disciples were not actually obligated to pay the tax Jesus went ahead and arranged for the payment anyway, in order to avoid unnecessary controversy. Why didn't Jesus simply hand Peter the money and tell him to pay it rather than perform a miracle to come up with the payment? Are there situations today where we engage in "unnecessary controversy."? When should controversy occur and when should it be avoided? (Thursday's lesson)
8. In Malachi 1:13 God asks the Jews to bring only their best animals for sacrifice. Why would God care what kind of sacrifices we bring to Him? What does the purity of the sacrifices tell us about God? (Friday's lesson)

### Thoughts from Graham Maxwell

You remember when Jesus was asking, "Who do men say that I am?" In Mark 8:27: "Jesus went on with his disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, 'Who do men say that I am?' And they told him, 'John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah.'" Is that because of the ending of Malachi, remember, that we read? "And others say one of the prophets.' And he asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered him, 'You are the Christ.' And he charged them to tell no one about him."

That's brief, isn't it? I thought there was quite a discussion after that where Jesus said, "Flesh and blood has not revealed this unto you." And He commended Peter. Where's the commendation? Now, maybe that one matches leaving out the story of his folly in walking on the water. He left out the compliment here. I wonder why. Well, one can only wonder. Is it because later on he denied his Lord three times? He thought, "How can I put in the story about how, when I said, 'You are the Christ' He commended me for it." He did put in the denial. In fact, he puts it in more detail than any of the others. So he's modest, and he's truthful. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, The Picture of God in all 66 – Mark, recorded April, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/53MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/54MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

By the way, is the church built on Peter? If you say no, then you're going to have to say, "Built upon the foundation of all the apostles except Peter." Then it is all right, you see, if one of our Catholic friends says, "Do you believe the church is built upon Peter?" Rather than argue with

them, I say, “By all means. He just didn’t carry the whole load. The prophets helped, too. And if you are looking for a church that builds its beliefs and practices upon the teachings of the apostles and the prophets, guess who’ll be the chief cornerstone, but Jesus Christ.” So I like to use Ephesians 2:20 with Matthew 16:18 when answering that question. {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Ephesians and Colossians*, recorded May, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/67MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/68MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

Centuries before, God had told meek Moses that some day he would raise up a special prophet from among the people of Israel, “a prophet like you.” (See Deuteronomy 18:15-18) Jesus recognized this prediction as referring to himself. (See Luke 24:27, 44; see also Acts 3:17-26) And Moses must have watched with increasing wonder and admiration as the Son of God dealt with all kinds of people, and especially his enemies, with such humility and grace.

Before Jesus went out to be crucified, Moses came to talk with him on the Mount of Transfiguration. The prophet Elijah joined them, and all three—two men and their Creator God, though now in human form—talked “face to face,” as friends speak with each other. Luke says they talked about the cruel rejection and execution Jesus was about to endure. (See Luke 9:28-36; see also Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8)

Though so many despised Jesus for his meekness, do you suppose Moses was ashamed to stand there with his Lord? What an honor to be identified with “gentle Jesus, meek and mild!” Moses had not been ashamed to describe himself in the book of Numbers as more meek and humble “than anyone else on the face of the earth.” To be that kind of a person is to be like God. {Maxwell, Graham. *Servants or Friends*, 73-74. Redlands, California: Pine Knoll Publications, 1992.} <http://www.pineknoll.org/graham/sof/chapter6.html>

Well then, if Jesus was demonstrating how the wicked will die at the end, why was He not consumed? Why was He not exposed to the glory of God? Or was He, just a few hours before? On the Mount of Transfiguration, He stood in the unveiled glory of His Father, and He was not consumed. And maybe God chose to do it that way to show that the One who went out to die the death of a sinner was absolutely perfect. For had He been in any way out of harmony with His Father, He would have been consumed on the Mount of Transfiguration. I like to ask myself, “God, consummately skillful Teacher that you are, what are you trying to say here by doing it this way?” {Graham Maxwell. Excerpt from the audio series, *The Picture of God in all 66 – Romans*, recorded May, 1982, Riverside, California} *To listen to the entire audio of the above reference, click on the following direct links:*

<http://pkp.cc/61MMPOGIA66> (Part 1) <http://pkp.cc/62MMPOGIA66> (Part 2)

## Further Study with Ellen White

To human eyes Christ was only a man, yet He was a perfect man. In His humanity He was the impersonation of the divine character. God embodied His own attributes in His Son—His power, His wisdom, His goodness, His purity, His truthfulness, His spirituality, and His benevolence. In Him, though human, all perfection of character, all divine excellence, dwelt. And to the request of His disciple, “Shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us,” He could reply, “Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?” “I and my Father are one” (John 14:8, 9; 10:30). . . . {TMK 111.2}

Christ, the Light of the world, veiled the dazzling splendor of His divinity and came to live as a man among men, that they might, without being consumed, become acquainted with their Creator. Since sin brought separation between man and his Maker, no man has seen God at any time, except as He is manifested through Christ. {MH 419.1}

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This love on behalf of man, expressed in the gift of His only-begotten Son, called forth from Satan the most intense hatred, both toward the Giver and toward the priceless Gift. Satan had represented the Father to the world in a false light, and by this great Gift his representations were proved untrue, for here was love without a parallel, proving that man was to be redeemed by an inconceivable cost. Satan had tried to obliterate the image of God in man in order that as God looked upon him in his wretchedness, in his perverseness, in his degradation, He might be induced to give him up as hopelessly lost. But the Lord gave His only begotten Son in order that the most sinful, the most degraded, need not perish, but, by believing on Jesus Christ, may be reclaimed, regenerated, and restored to the image of God, and thus have eternal life (*Signs of the Times*, Nov. 20, 1893). {LHU 212.4}

Christ came to this world as the expression of the very heart and mind and nature and character of God. He was the brightness of the Father’s glory, the express image of His person. But He laid aside His royal robe and kingly crown, and stepped down from His high command to take the place of a servant. He was rich, but for our sake, that we might have eternal riches, He became poor. He made the world, but so completely did He empty Himself that during His ministry He declared, “Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay His head.” {MM 19.1}

Taking humanity upon Him, Christ came to be one with humanity and at the same time to reveal our heavenly Father to sinful human beings. He was in all things made like unto His brethren. He became flesh, even as we are. He was hungry and thirsty and weary. He was sustained by food and refreshed by sleep. He shared the lot of men, and yet He was the blameless Son of God. He was a stranger and sojourner on the earth—in the world, but not of

the world; tempted and tried as men and women today are tempted and tried, yet living a life free from sin. {8T 286.3}

Tender, compassionate, sympathetic, ever considerate of others, He represented the character of God, and was constantly engaged in service for God and man. {8T 286.4}

God never asks us to believe, without giving sufficient evidence upon which to base our faith. His existence, His character, the truthfulness of His word, are all established by testimony that appeals to our reason; and this testimony is abundant. Yet God has never removed the possibility of doubt. Our faith must rest upon evidence, not demonstration. Those who wish to doubt will have opportunity; while those who really desire to know the truth will find plenty of evidence on which to rest their faith. {SC 105.2}

God gives sufficient evidence to every soul. He does not promise to remove every doubt, but he gives a reason for faith. And sufficient evidence was given to the Jews. {RH, January 24, 1899 par. 7}

Satan has ability to suggest doubts and devise objections to the pointed testimony that God sends, and many think it a virtue and mark of intelligence in them to be unbelieving and questioning, and quibbling. Those who desire to doubt will have plenty of room. God does not propose to remove all occasion for unbelief. He gives evidence, which must be carefully investigated with a humble mind and teachable spirit. All should decide from the weight of evidence. {RH, September 16, 1873 par. 10}

Faith in a lie will not have a sanctifying influence upon the life or character. No error is truth, or can be made truth by repetition, or by faith in it. Sincerity will never save a soul from the consequences of believing an error. Without sincerity there is no true religion, but sincerity in a false religion will never save a man. I may be perfectly sincere in following a wrong road, but that will not make it the right road, or bring me to the place I wished to reach. The Lord does not want us to have a blind credulity, and call that the faith that sanctifies. The truth is the principle that sanctifies, and therefore it becomes us to know what is truth. We must compare spiritual things with spiritual. We must prove all things, but hold fast only that which is good, that which bears the divine credentials, which lays before us the true motives and principles which should prompt us to action.—Letter 12, 1890. {2SM 56.1}

Amid the perplexities that will press upon the soul, there is only One who can help us out of all our difficulties, and relieve all our disquietude. We are to cast all our care upon Jesus, and bear in mind that He is present, and is directing us to commune with Him. We are to keep our minds stayed upon God; and in our weakness, He will be our strength; in our ignorance, He will be our wisdom; in our frailty, He will be our enduring might. {SD 27.2}

Genuine faith is followed by love, and love by obedience. All the powers and passions of the converted man are brought under the control of Christ. His Spirit is a renewing power, transforming to the divine image all who will receive it. {5T 219.4}

The Son of God came to the world as a restorer. He was the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Every word He uttered was spirit and life. He spoke with authority, conscious of His power to bless humanity, and deliver the captives bound by Satan; conscious also that by His presence He could bring to the world fullness of joy. He longed to help every oppressed and suffering member of the human family, and show that it was His prerogative to bless, not to condemn. {LHU 37.2}

**Recommended Reading:**

*Desire of Ages* chapter 46 – “He Was Transfigured”

*Desire of Ages* Chapter 85 – “By the Sea Once More”

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