



The Transfiguration of Jesus

TRANSFIGURATION

First let us go to Lk 9:27

- verse 27: There are some here who will not taste death until they see the Kingdom of God.
Who was Jesus speaking to?
- Lets go back to Lk 9: 18-27 - (These are the parallel passages we just covered in Mt 16: 13-28).
- *Here in Luke, as in Matthew - the Transfiguration follows Peter's confession.*
 - **The Apostles are the audience.**

TRANSFIGURATION

- Christ's words in v. 27 may refer to the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem (*which occurred in the year ad 70*) or to his own transfiguration, which took place shortly after this prophecy.
- If the former, the destruction of Jerusalem would in effect be the external sign indicating the changeover from Jewish rites to Christian rites; some of those present would actually witness this change.

Saint Luke's Gospel. (2005). Dublin; New York: Four Courts Press; Scepter Publishers.

TRANSFIGURATION

- Eight Days after he said this, He took Peter, ...
- This transitional sentence, which appears to relate back to the prior verse as a reference point makes many commentators believe that the Transfiguration is the Kingdom of God present before the witness of Peter, James and John.



TRANSFIGURATION

- The number 8 in Scripture signifies Resurrection and Regeneration.
- It is the number of a new beginning.
- Eight is 7 plus 1 and since it comes just after seven, which itself signifies an end to something, so eight is also associated with the beginning of a new era or that of a new order.

TRANSFIGURATION

- **Eight in Scripture:**
 - Entry into the covenant by **circumcision**. A new beginning as a son of Abraham.
 - 8 was the number of **people saved in the Ark**, after the flood that gave mankind a new beginning in repopulating the Earth.
 - **Jesus resurrected** on the 8th day of the week, and on the 8th day after Nisan 10 - Lamb selection day.

TRANSFIGURATION

- The most joyous Feast period of the year is the 7 day period of the Feast of Tabernacles followed on the 8th by the **Last Great Day**. (Jn 7:37)
- The Feast of **First Fruits** - which symbolized Jesus' resurrection fell on the first Sunday (8th day of the week), during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- **Pentecost** - the beginning of the church - falls on the 8th day after 7 weeks, after the feast of First Fruits.

TRANSFIGURATION

- Jesus showed Himself 8 times after his resurrection from the dead:
 1. Mary Magdalene,
 2. Appearance on road to Emmaus,
 3. Easter night to the Apostles,
 4. Next Sunday with Thomas.
 5. 500 believers at one time (1 Cor 15:4-7).
 6. Galilee Commission (Mt 28).
 7. Galilee shores near a charcoal fire.
 8. Mount of Olives to ascend into Heaven (Acts 1)

TRANSFIGURATION

- Under both understandings of Luke's use of 8 days, there are new beginnings:
 - Jesus' transfiguration - First actual demonstration of Jesus' dual nature, by partially unveiling his Divine nature
 - End of the Temple period - the beginning of Christian worship and the end of Temple sacrifices.

TRANSFIGURATION

Lk 9: 28-36

- Jesus took Peter, John and James up to the mountain to pray.
- In the Old Testament, **God appears on the top of Mountains.** One ascends to meet God.
 - **Who else ascended a mountain in the OT?**
- Here, Jesus is taking His three closest apostles to reveal His divinity.

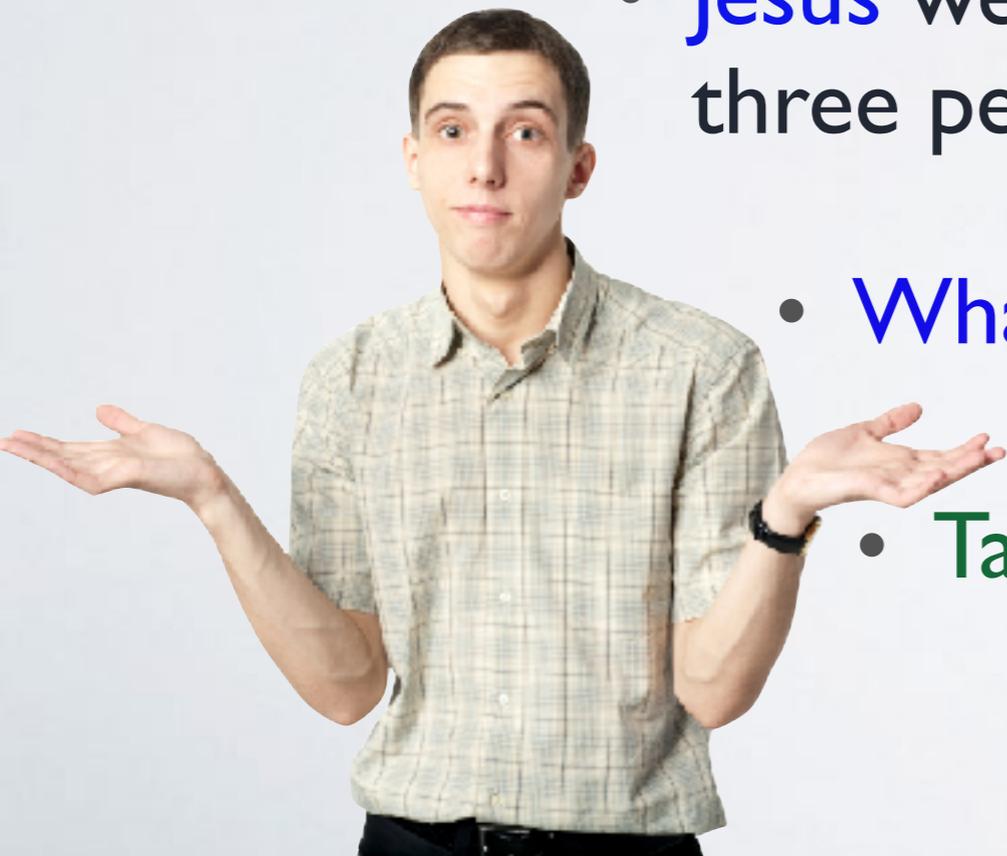
TRANSFIGURATION

- While praying Jesus face turned dazzling white
 - **Dan 7:9** - God the Father has white hair and clothing that is snow white bright.
 - **Ex 34: 29-35*** - Moses face shone radiant when in the presence of God.
 - Notice that Moses' face shone because he was in the presence of God. Jesus face shone without reflection, for He is God.
 - Not unlike the Sun and the Moon.



TRANSFIGURATION

- Ex 24: 1-2 - **Moses** first went up Mt Sinai, with three persons: **Aaron, Nadab and Abihu**
 - and **70 of the elders of Israel**
- **Jesus** went up the Mountain (Mt Tabor) with three persons, **Peter, John and James**.
 - **What about the 70?**
 - **Take a peak at Luke Chapter 10:1**



TRANSFIGURATION

- What do Moses and Elijah represent?

- The Law and the Prophets



- Significance?

- Jesus *fulfilled* the Law and the Prophets

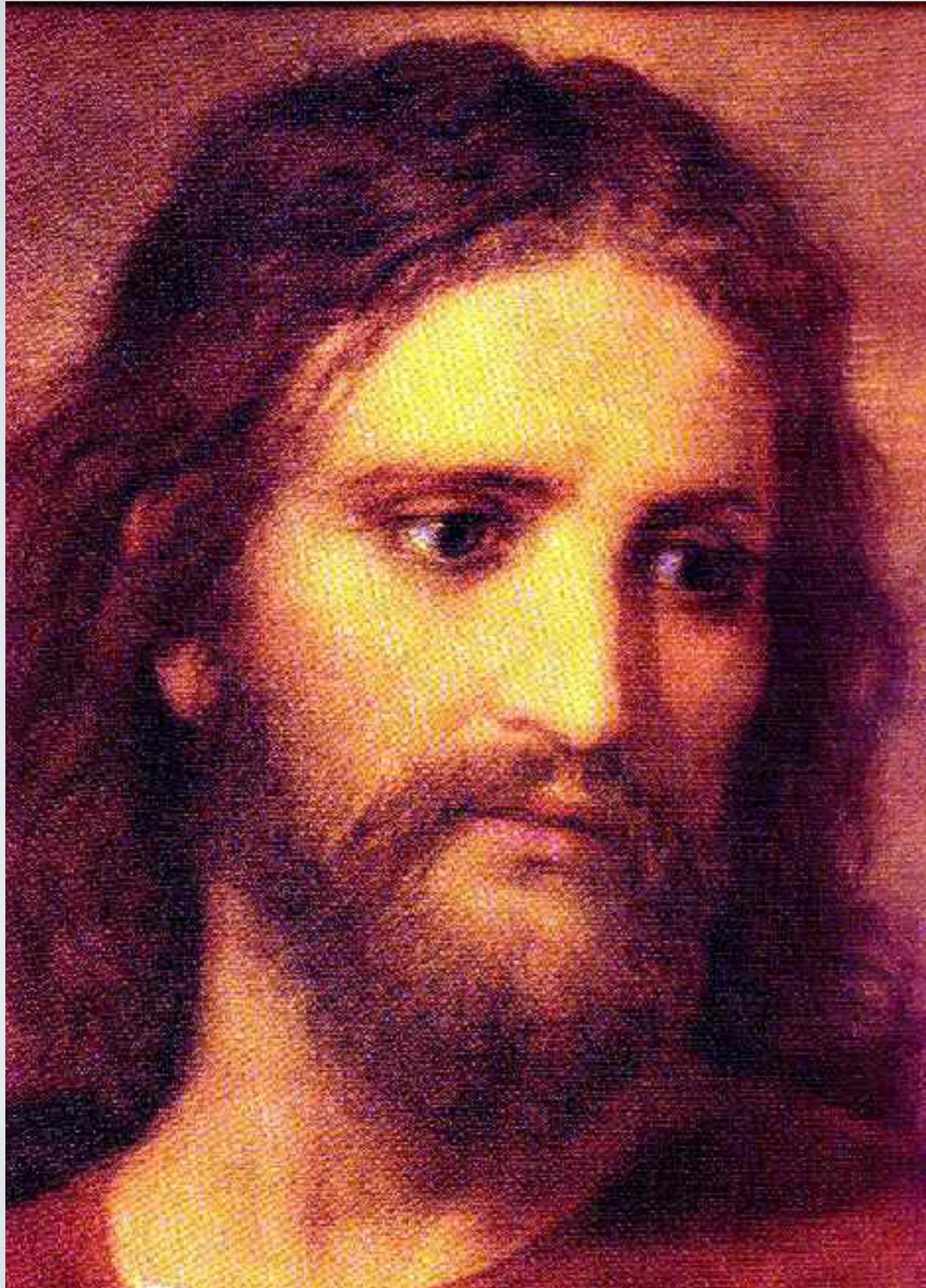
- As the Word of God - He fulfilled the Law
(John 1:14*, Mt 5:17*)

- As the Divine Messiah - He fulfilled all prophecy,
and as Son is the fulness of revelation.
(Col 1:15-20*)

TRANSFIGURATION



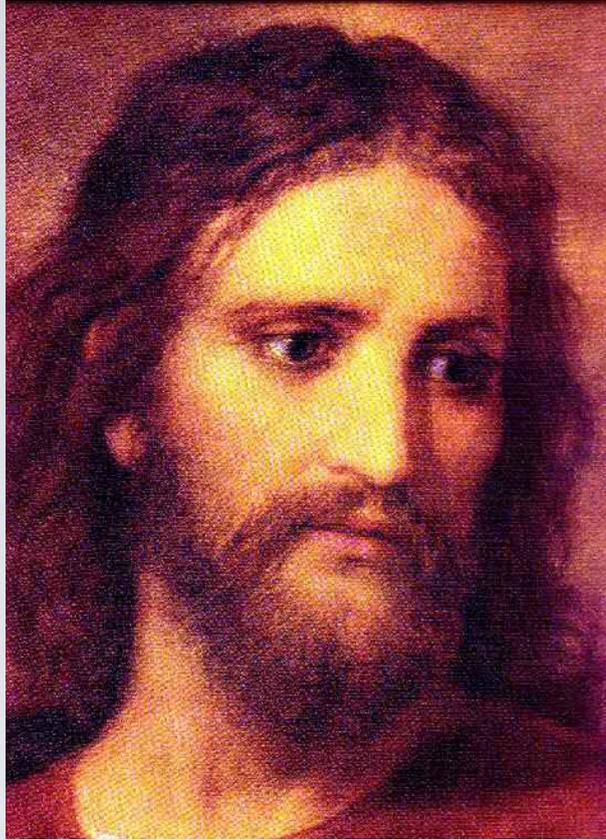
- Jesus is therefore the one foretold in the **Law** and in the **Prophets**.
- He is the promised one that the people were waiting for.



PROPHECIES

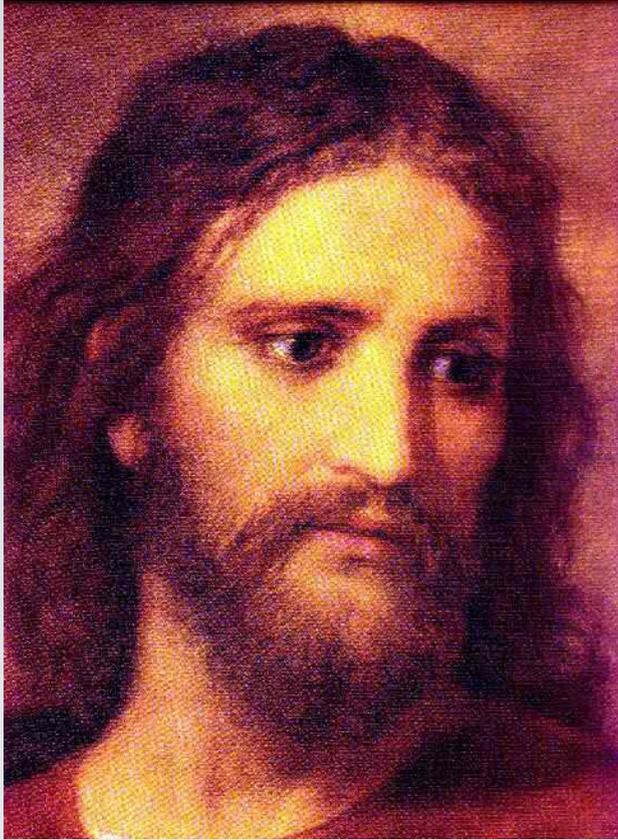
Jesus fulfilled many passages in Scripture.

Many of the Old Testament passages, were not initially thought to be prophecies, until illuminated by the light of the New Testament, as God's unified plan was fully revealed.



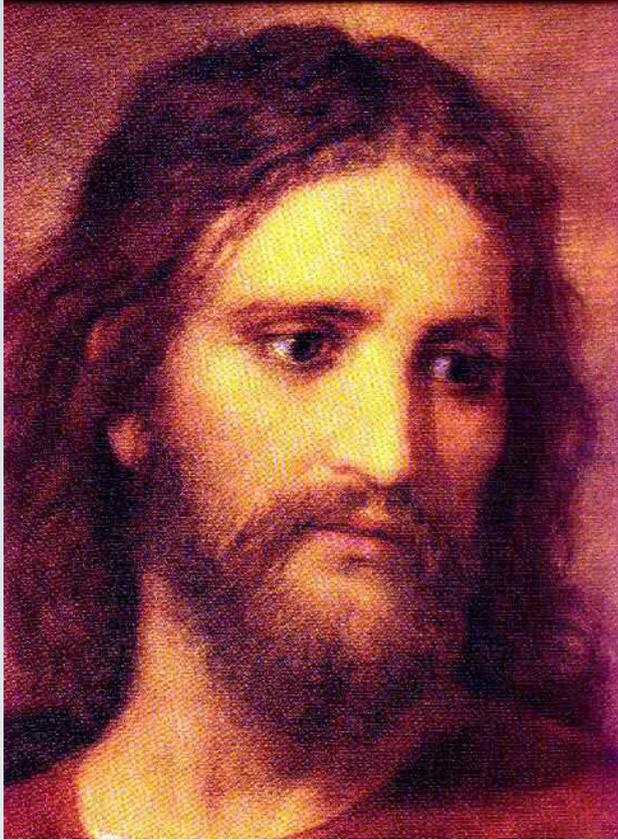
PROPHECIES

- Gen 3:15 - **The messiah would be born of a woman.** (Gal 4:4)
- Micah 5:2 - **in Bethlehem.** (Mt 2:1)
- Isaiah 7:14 - **of a virgin.** (Lk 1:26-31)
- Gen 22:15-18 - **He will come from the line of Abraham.** (Mt 1:1)
- Gen 21:11-13 - **through Isaac, not Ishmael.** (Lk 3:34)



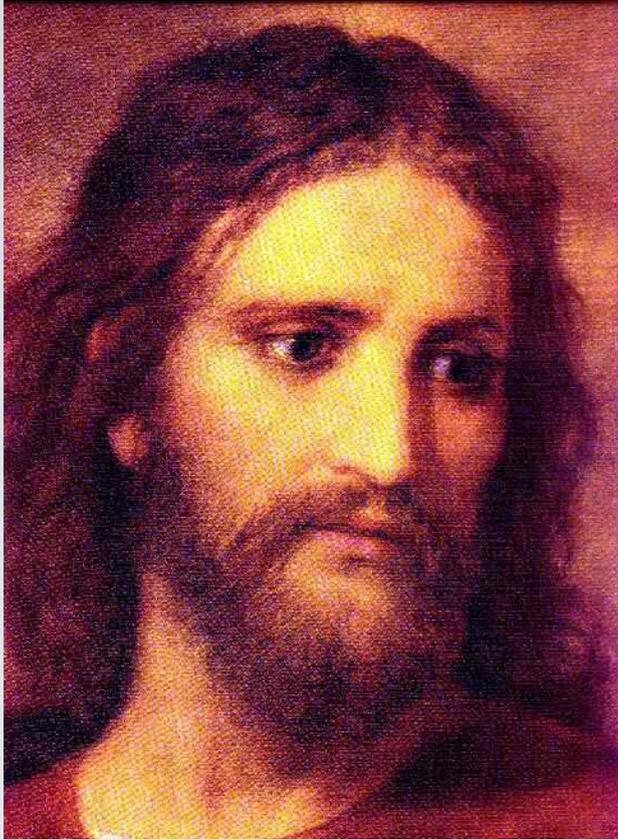
PROPHECIES

- Gen 24:17 - and through Jacob and Jacob's son, Judah. cf. Gen 49:10 (Lk 3:33)
- 2 Sam 7: 12-13 - He would also be a son of David, in the line of a King. (Lk 1:32-33)
- Hos 11:1 - The Messiah, like Israel would spend a time in Egypt. (Mt 2:14-15)
- Jer 31:15 - A massacre would occur in His birthplace. (Mt 2:16-18)



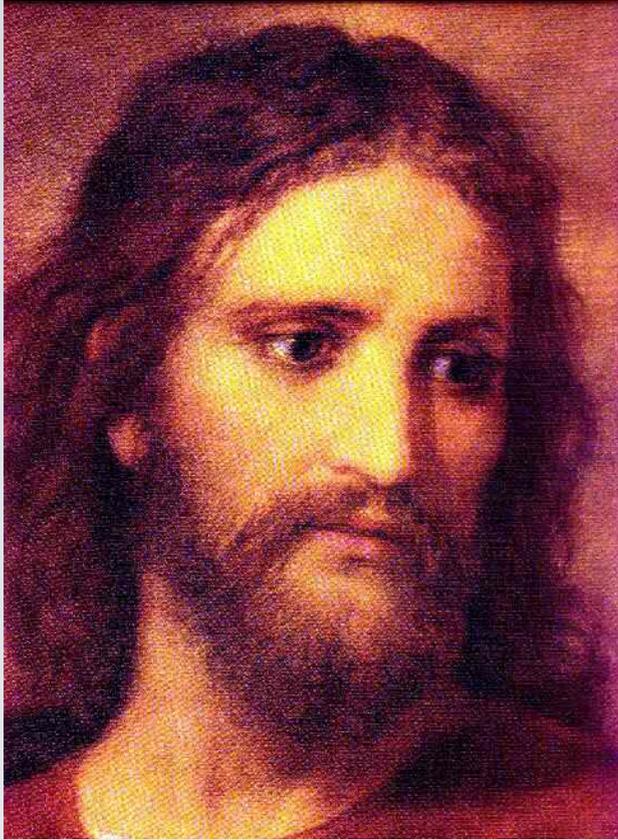
PROPHECIES

- Isa 40:3-5 - **A messenger would prepare His way, and come first.** (Lk 3:3-6)
- Mal 3:23 - **The messenger would remind people of Elijah.** (Mal 4:5-6 - RSV-KJV)
- Ps 2:7 - **The Messiah would be a Son of God and declared to be so.** (Mt 3:16-17)
- Isa 11:1 - **He would be a Nezer (the branch) - A Nazarene.** (Mt 2:23)



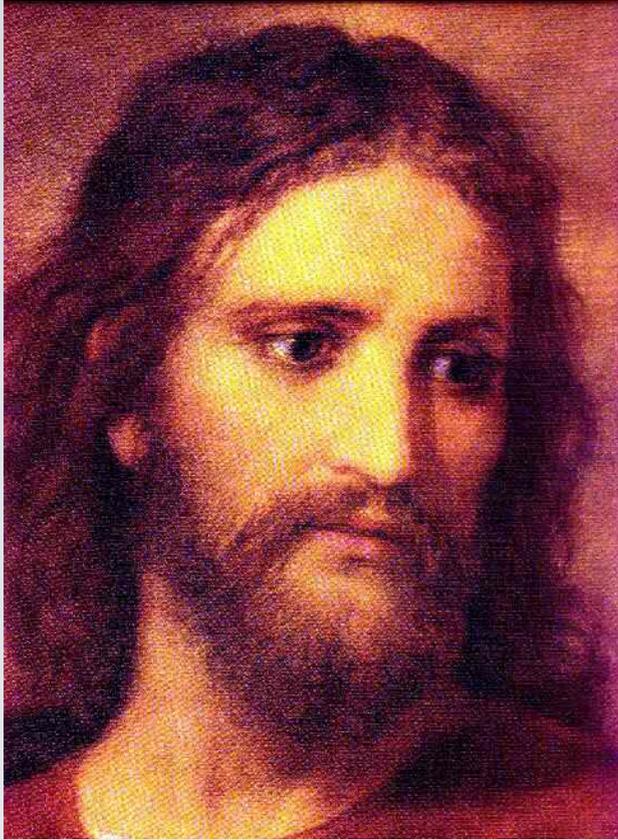
PROPHECIES

- Isa 9:1-2 - He would be a light to Galilee first. (Mt 4: 13-16)
- Ps 78:2 - and speak in Parables. (Mt 13: 10-15)
- Isa 61: 1-2 - He would heal the brokenhearted. (Lk 4:18-10)
- Ps 110:4 - and be a Priest in the order of Melchizedek. (Heb 5: 5-6)



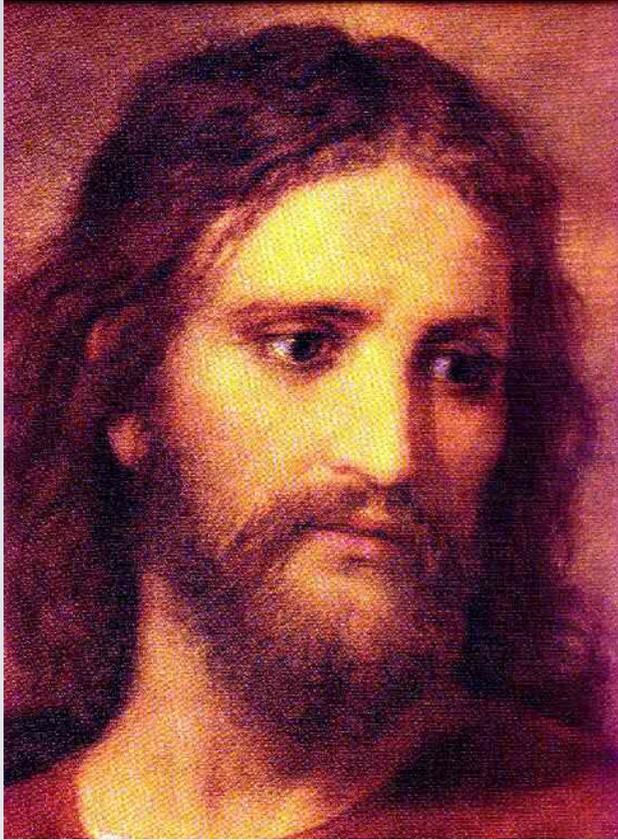
PROPHECIES

- Zec 9:9 - **He would be called a King.**
(Mt 27:17)
- Zec 9:9 - **and ride into Jerusalem on a donkey.** (Mt 21:4)
- Ps 8:2-3 - **He would be praised by children and the innocent.** (Mt 21:16)
- Ps 41:10 & Zec 11: 12-13 - **He, the Good Shepherd would be betrayed by one of His own friends for 30 pieces of Silver.**
(Mt 26:14-16; Lk 22:47-48)



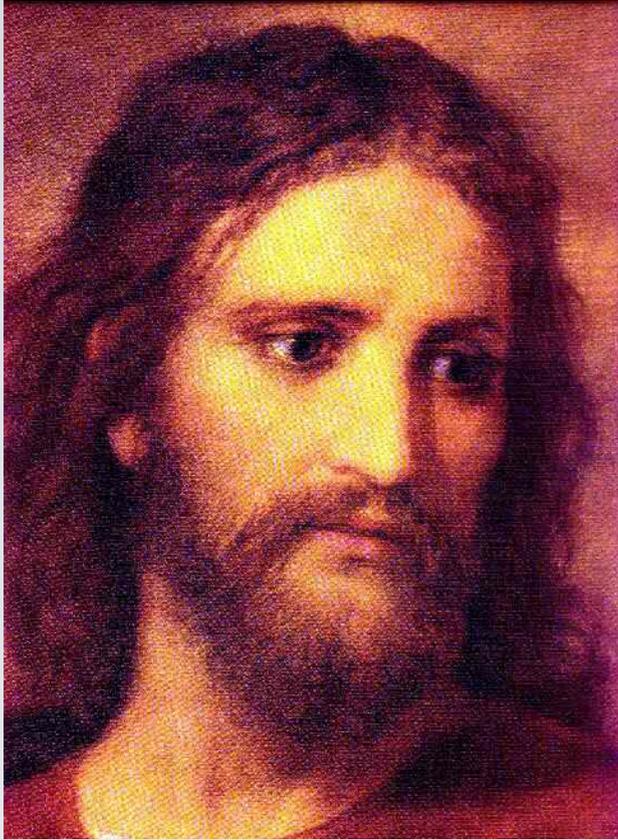
PROPHECIES

- Zec 11:12-13 - The money used to betray the Messiah would be used to buy a field. (Mt 27: 9-10)
- Ps 35:11 - He would be falsely accused. (Mk 14:57-58)
- Isa 53:7 - Yet, would remain silent before His accusers. (Mk 15: 4-5)
- Isa 50:6 - He would be spat upon and struck. (Mt 26:67)



PROPHECIES

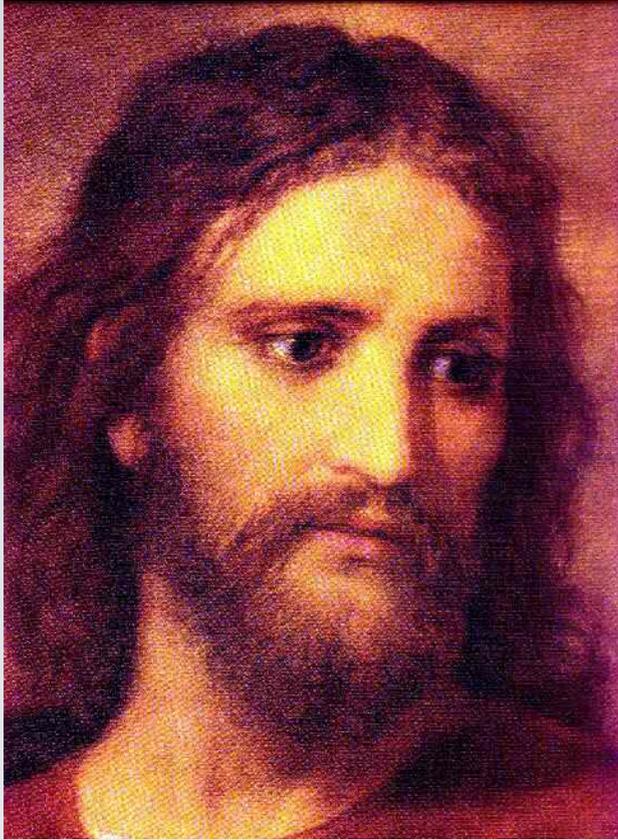
- Isa 53:12 - **He will die among criminals.**
(Mt 27:38)
- Zer 12:10 - **They will look upon Him, who they have pierced, as one mourns for an only son ... a firstborn.**
(Mt 27:35).
- Ps 69:21 - **He would be offered vinegar to drink.** (Mt 27:34)
- Ps 22:7-8 - **While dying He would be mocked and ridiculed.** (Lk 23:35)



PROPHECIES

- Ps 22:18 - **Soldiers would gamble over His garments.** (Lk 23:34)
- Ps 22:11 & Ex 12:46 - **Not a bone of His would be broken.** (Jn 19:33-36).
- Ps 16:10 - **But He would not be left in Sheol.** *(He would be raised)*
(Acts 2:24-27)
- Dan 7: 11-12 - **The Son of Man would not only rise, but He would ascend to Heaven.** (Lk 24:51)

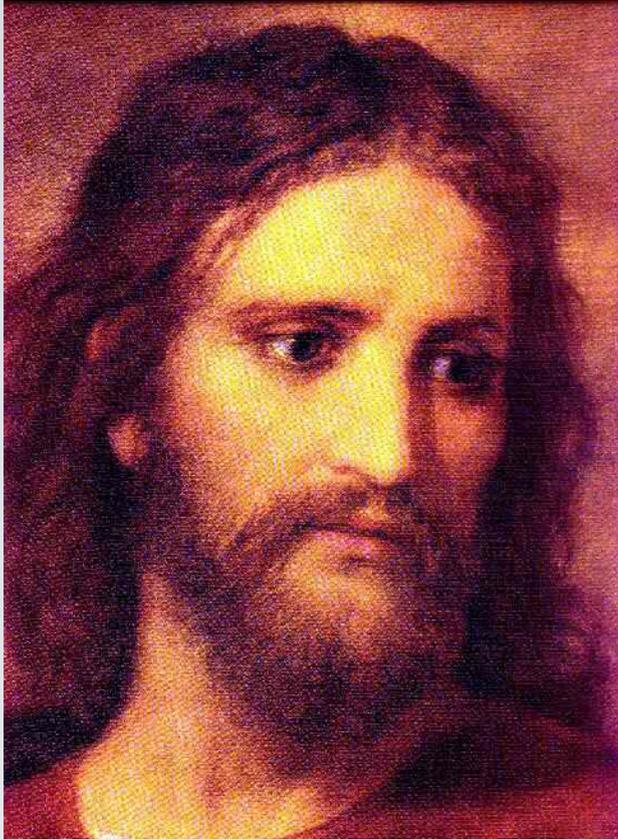
PROPHECIES



- **Finally:**
- Ps 110:1 - He will be seated at the right hand of God. (Mk 16:19)

... and, the ultimate reason for it all:

PROPHECIES

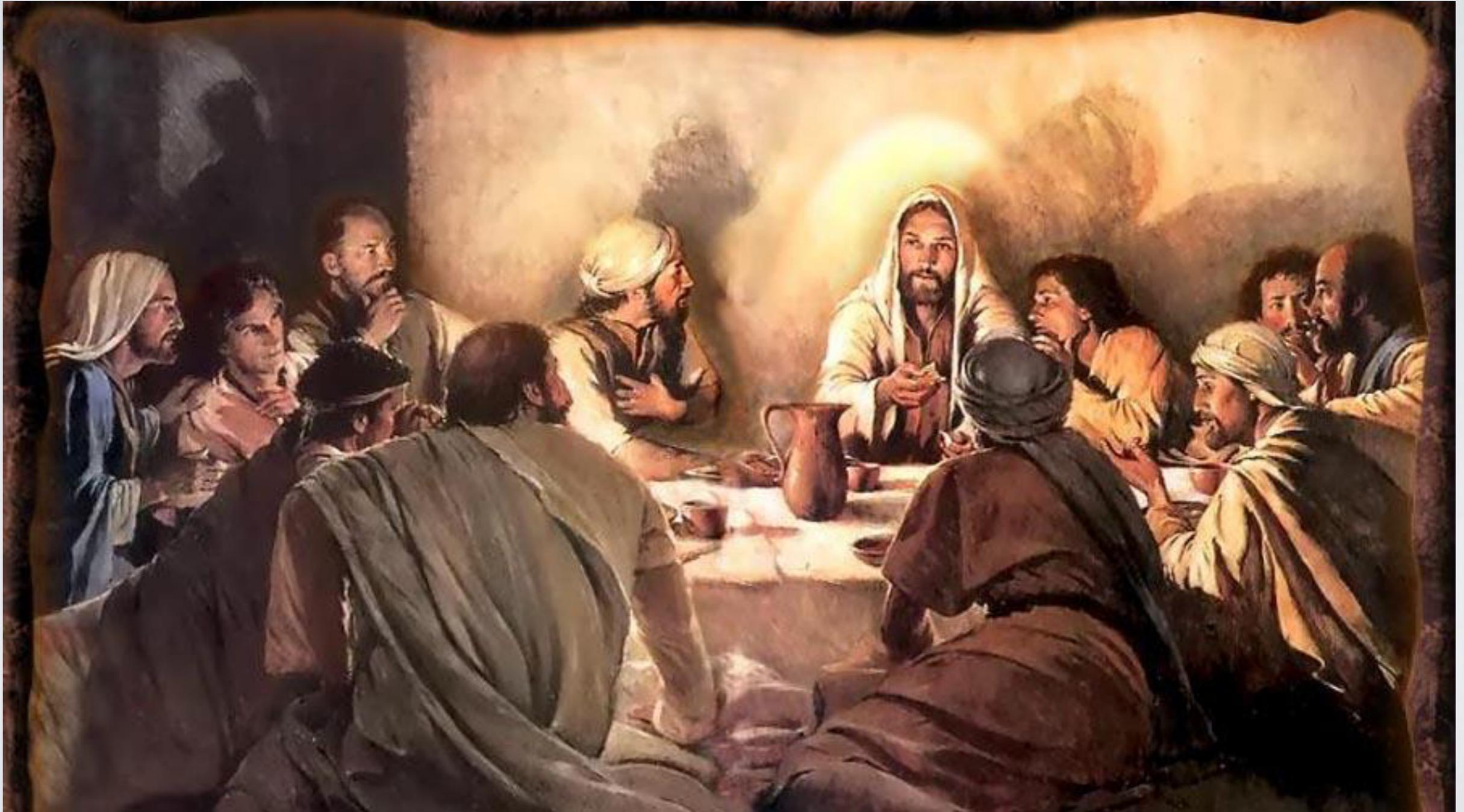


- **Finally:**
- Ps 110:1 - He will be seated at the right hand of God. (Mk 16:19)

... and, the ultimate reason for it all:

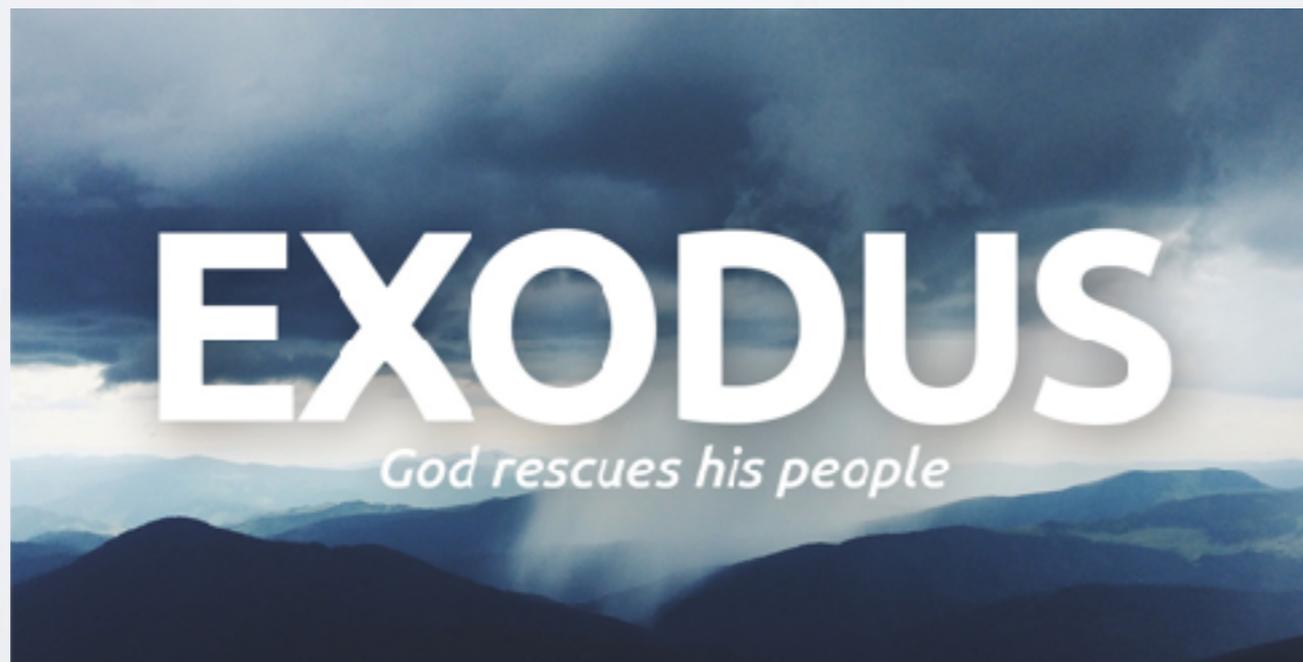
- Isa 53:5-12 - Messiah's suffering would be a sin sacrifice that would redeem us from our sin. By His stripes we are healed. (Jn 1:29)

HIS EXODUS



HIS EXODUS

- Curious Discussion - Moses and Elijah, who appeared in glory, and Jesus spoke about
 - “His exodus (ἔξοδος) that He was going to accomplish (πληρώω (plēroō)) in Jerusalem.”
 - What is all this about?



HIS EXODUS

- **For us** - through the miracle of the transfiguration Jesus shows **one of the qualities of our future glorified bodies—brightness,**
 - “by which the bodies of the saints shall shine like the sun, according to the words of our Lord recorded in the Gospel of St Matthew:
 - **‘The righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father’ (Mt 13:43).”**

Saint Luke's Gospel. (2005). Dublin; New York: Four Courts Press; Scepter Publishers.

HIS EXODUS

- St Paul expounds on this reality at Philippians 3:21:
- “...we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will change our lowly body to be like His glorious body, by the power which enables Him even to subject all things to Himself.”



Deacon Ken Ramage
reading the Gospel
at Calvary



HIS EXODUS

- Moses & Elijah appeared in Glory - they were special men.

- **Elijah - 2 Ki 2:1-12***

- v1. - Elijah was to be taken to Heaven

- v11 - flaming chariot and flaming horses took Elijah to Heaven.

- *Difficult to understand. NO Jewish understanding of anyone going to Heaven.*

Note, Elijah does not appear to die.



HIS EXODUS

- **Moses**
- Moses did die
- buried on Mount Nebo
- His body was fought over by the Archangel Michael and the Devil himself (Jude 1:9) - ***note**
- His special status is testified by the redactor of Deuteronomy, and needs no further amplification. See Dt 34: 1-11*



HIS EXODUS

- Exodus (ἔξοδος) - departure, as in a going out from, an exit
 - Moses departed Egypt with the Israelites to lead the people of God out of the Slavery of Egypt - an allegory to removing them from the sin of an idolatrous nation and life.
- Moses departed during the Passover season.
 - Every Israelite that followed God's commandment to eat the Passover Lamb was given life.

HIS EXODUS

- Jesus also departed Jerusalem to lead the people of God out of the Slavery of the Egypt of their time - a restoration of Israel, removing from them the stain of sin giving them the promise of eternal life.
- Jesus departed during the Passover season.
 - Every person that follows Jesus' commandments, including eating the True Passover Lamb would have life, and be raised on the last day.

HIS EXODUS

- Exodus (ἔξοδος)
 - Clearly, the exodus implies leaving a place - Moses from Egypt, and Jesus from Jerusalem.
 - Yet, Moses lives after his Exodus from Egypt.
 - For Jesus, His departure from this world, reflects more precisely his sacrificial death as the Passover Lamb, and leaving this world by His ascension.
 - St Peter uses the same word to describe his death.
see. **2 Ptr 1: 12-15***

HIS EXODUS

- **Accomplish** (πληρόω (plēroō))
 - This word is used in Scripture sometimes to mean accomplish, but also **fulfill** as in (2 Tim 4:5)
 - “As for you [Timothy] , always be steady, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, **fulfill** your ministry.”
- They ... “spoke of His exodus that he was going to **fulfill** in Jerusalem.” Lk 9:31

HIS EXODUS

- **Accomplish or fulfill** (πληρώω (plēroō))
 - **The relevant aspect of** (πληρώω (plēroō)), is the reality that under either definition - **Jesus is in control.**
 - **He intends the result - as one who accomplishes a mission or fulfills** His role to complete a task.
- He is not just a victim of an execution, for He is *both* the Passover sacrifice and High Priest.

THREE TENTS



Mount Tabor

THREE TENTS



Basilica of the Transfiguration

THREE TENTS

- The **Early Church fathers** noted two things regarding St Peter, and his thought that it was ‘good to abide there’ and that he should build three tabernacles for Jesus, Moses and Elijah:
 - **First**, that if Jesus had remained, as Peter suggested, the promise of the exodus from Jerusalem - our salvation - would never have been accomplished.
 - **Second**, Peter was not called to build a tabernacle, “for the Lord ordained thee not the builder of tabernacles, but of the universal Church.”

GOD SPEAKS

- Mt 17:4-6*
- A voice speaks from the heavens, about a son ...
- When else did we see this in Jesus' life?
- Jesus' Baptism - see Lk 3:21-22*
- What is different, about the *symbols* and *words* of the two events?

GOD SPEAKS

- Dove v. Cloud



- Both signify the Holy Spirit
- Now note what the Father says in each case:
 - You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.
 - This is my beloved Son; with whom I am well pleased, listen to Him

GOD SPEAKS

- “This is my beloved Son ... listen to Him.”
Why the Father’s declaration to the Apostles?
 - Context - look at Mt 16:21-28*
[same as Lk 9:22-27]
- Is Jesus really the Messiah? *Suffer and be killed. Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it. But if one loses his life for His sake, will find it.* Some of us standing here will see this?
- *What if Peter is wrong, and He really isn’t the Messiah ...?*
 - ... so God gives a sign!

GOD SPEAKS

- Matthew adds something the other synoptics leave out in Mt 17:6-8:
 - The disciples fell prostrate and were very much afraid
 - Jesus touched them, saying:
 - “Rise, do not be afraid.” They raised their eyes and Jesus was alone.
 - ... *The Father gives a sign, and the Son gives assurance!*



TRANSFIGURATION

- By His transfiguration Jesus strengthens his disciples' faith, revealing a trace of the glory his body will have after the Resurrection. He wants them to realize that his passion will not be the end but rather the route he will take to reach his glorification.
“For a person to go straight along the road, he must have some knowledge of the end—just as an archer will not shoot an arrow straight unless he first sees the target [...]. This is *particularly necessary* if the road is *hard and rough*, the going heavy, and the end delightful.”

(St Thomas Aquinas, Summa theologiae, 3, 45, 1).

TRANSFIGURATION

Never be afraid to ask for a sign

Transfiguration Jesus strengthens his disciples' faith, revealing a trace of the glory his body will have after the Resurrection. He wants them to realize that his passion will not be the end but rather the route he will take to reach his glorification.

“For a person to go straight along the road, he must have some knowledge of the end—just as an archer will not shoot an arrow straight unless he first sees the target [...]. This is *particularly necessary* if the road is *hard and rough*, the going heavy, and the end delightful.”

(St Thomas Aquinas, Summa theologiae, 3, 45, 1).

COMING OF ELIJAH

Mt 17: 9-13*

- On the next day ...
Luke 9:37 (*Spent an entire day on the mountain!*)
- Prophecy of the coming of Elijah



COMING OF ELIJAH

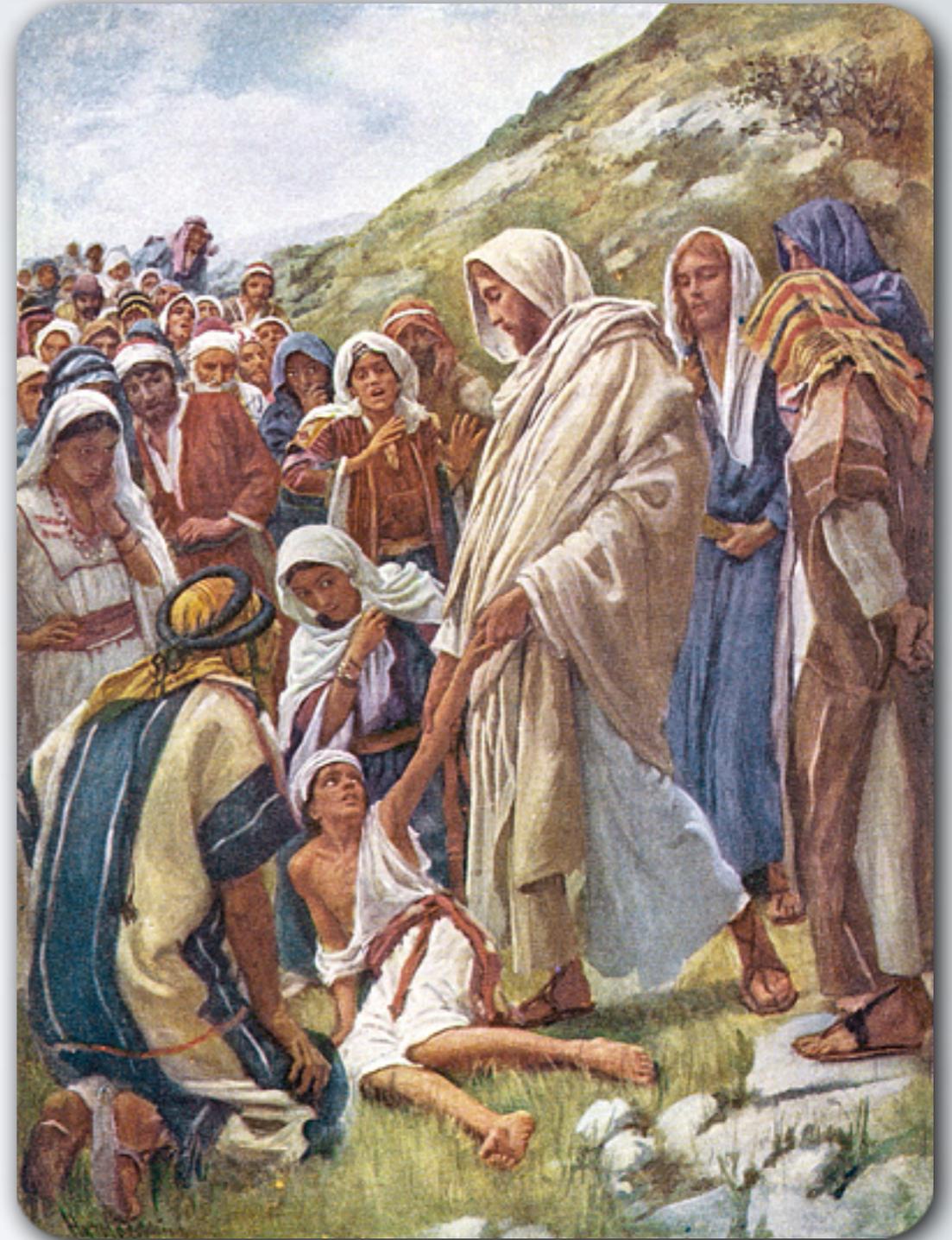


- The Scribes knew of the Prophecy:
 - Mal 3:1-4*
 - Mal 3: 7*
 - Mal 3:22-24*
- Fulfillment in John the Baptist:
 - 2Ki 1:8; Mk 1:6

BOY WITH A DEMON

Mk 9: 14-29

- large crowd - argument between disciples and scribes
- Jesus reaction - O faithless generation ...
- Faith - through prayer



UTTERLY AMAZED

- First, look at Mk 9: 14-15
 - The statement regarding that when the crowd saw Jesus they were “utterly amazed” *What is this about?*
 - “The multitude were so solicitous to see Christ that they saluted him when yet a great way off. Some imagine that the countenance of our Savior, being rendered more beautiful by his transfiguration, attracted the attention and admiration of the people. A Theophany.”
Haydock’s Catholic Bible Commentary

THE ARGUMENT

- What were the scribes arguing about with the disciples?
- Context helpful in Gospel of Luke - Chapter 9
 - The Mission of the Twelve - power and authority over all the demons and to heal the sick.
(Luke 9: 1-2)
 - Recall from where their authority had come.

THE ARGUMENT

- The key to understanding the argument is that these apostles were trying to drive out the demon, under the previous authority given to them by Jesus.
 - The **father** must have heard of the Apostles' success.
 - The **Apostles** would likely feel confident in repeating what they had done just a short while before.
 - The Scribes obviously did not believe that the Apostles could cast out the demon, under what they thought was the authority of a “false Messiah”

FAILURE TO CURE

- Several possibilities, for the Apostles' failure:
 - **Authority** - initially for that prior particular mission, which would be renewed later. **Mk 16: 14-18***
 - **Lack of faith** of the **Apostles**. **Mt 17: 19-21***
 - **Lack of faith** of the **people** who were in the crowd.
Mk 9:19 cf. **Mk 6:4-6***
 - **Confirmation of Jesus** - this demon, would need to be cast out by the Messiah to persuade the scribes.

FAILURE TO CURE

One fact clearly needs to be clearly understood

- The failure of Jesus' disciples to cure the boy was *imputed* to Jesus, such that doubt was fostered that He was *probably not* the expected Messiah.
- Hence, Jesus will have to address this lack of faith in Him by the *father* of the boy *and* the *crowd*.



BOY WITH A DEMON

**Lord
I BELIEVE**

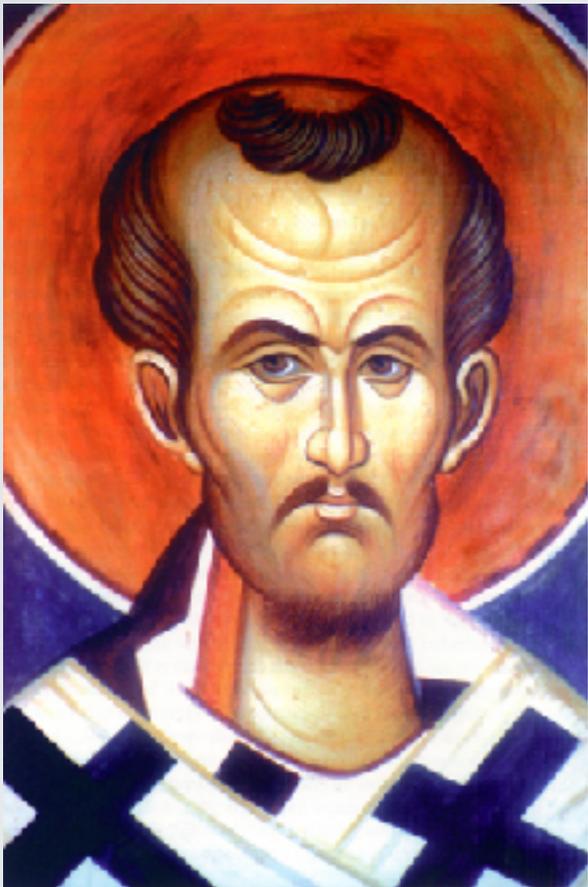
Help my unbelief

Mark 9:24



BOY WITH A DEMON

- Although the father's lack of faith was, in great part, the cause of the disciples not casting out the devil, **the father nevertheless accuses the disciples when he says:** **And I spoke to your disciples that they should cast him out; but they could not.**
- Jesus declares that the father was weak in faith, for Christ says, after the father pleads:
○ faithless generation: and adds, ... **How long will I endure you? Bring him to me.**



St John Chrysostom

BOY WITH A DEMON

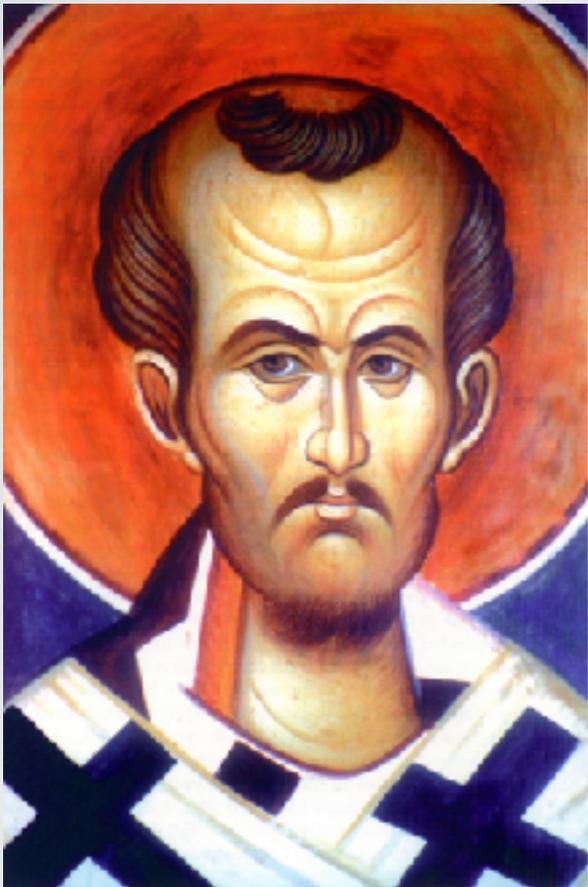
- Wherefore there follows, that the father pleads “If you can ...”
- Jesus answered by putting the burden on the father,
If you can! Everything is possible for one who has faith.
- The father gets it - acknowledges that **he believes but asks for help to believe**, thus confirming a desire for faith coupled with some doubt. *An honest self-assessment.*



St John Chrysostom

BOY WITH A DEMON

- Correlating the conversion of faith by the father to Jesus performing the miracle, St John Chrysostom adds:
- “But this *[the manifestations of the demon before and during the miracle]* the Lord permitted for the sake of the father of the boy, that when he saw the devil leaving his child, the father might be brought to believe that by his own faith, the miracle was wrought.



St John Chrysostom

BOY WITH A DEMON

- Mk9: 22-23 - “but if you can do anything, have compassion on us and help us.”
- In the *Greek* the word used for “can” is:
δύναμι (dynamai): a verb.
dynamai = power in action
- The **ability** to cure, comes from the **power** of faith!



BOY WITH A DEMON

- Mk9: 25 - “Mute and deaf spirit, I command you: Come out of him and never enter him again!”
- **St Mark** records that the spirit who caused deafness, nevertheless heard the voice of Christ, and while it was also a spirit that rendered mute, the spirit came out shouting.
- See the contrast between the *people* who heard Christ but did not have ears to hear, and a *demon* who heard and obeyed even as a fallen angel.

APOSTLE'S FAITH

- “Why could we not drive it [the demon] out?”
- Mark at 9:29 - “This kind can only come out through prayer.”
- Matthew at 17:20 - “Because of your little faith. Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

APOSTLE'S FAITH

Is it prayer or is it faith?

- “Why **Is it prayer or is it faith?** out?”
- Mark at 9:29 - “This kind can only come out through prayer.”
- Matthew at 17:20 - “Because of your little faith. Amen, I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there’ and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you.”

APOSTLE'S FAITH

- Have you ever seen a miracle, where the miracle worker speaks words of faith, or prays for someone and they are immediately healed.
 - My brother Kenny - like the Paralytic
 - Fr Faricy SJ - a Visalia family - to a non believing teenager.
- Charismatic gift of the Holy Spirit given for “mighty deeds” or “healing” as described in 1 Cor 12: 9-10

APOSTLE'S FAITH

- Have you ever seen a miracle
worker speak to someone
and they
- **Do we believe this?**
- My brother Kenny - like the Paralytic
- Fr Faricy SJ - a Visalia family - to a non believing teenager.
- Charismatic gift of the Holy Spirit given for “mighty deeds” or “healing” as described in 1 Cor 12: 9-10

SECOND PREDICTION OF THE PASSION

Luke 9: 43b-45

- While they were amazed ...
- “The Son of Man is to be handed over to men.”

- Mk 9:31 adds: “... and they will kill Him, and three days after his death He will rise.”
- Why might the meaning have been hidden from them, so that they should not understand it?

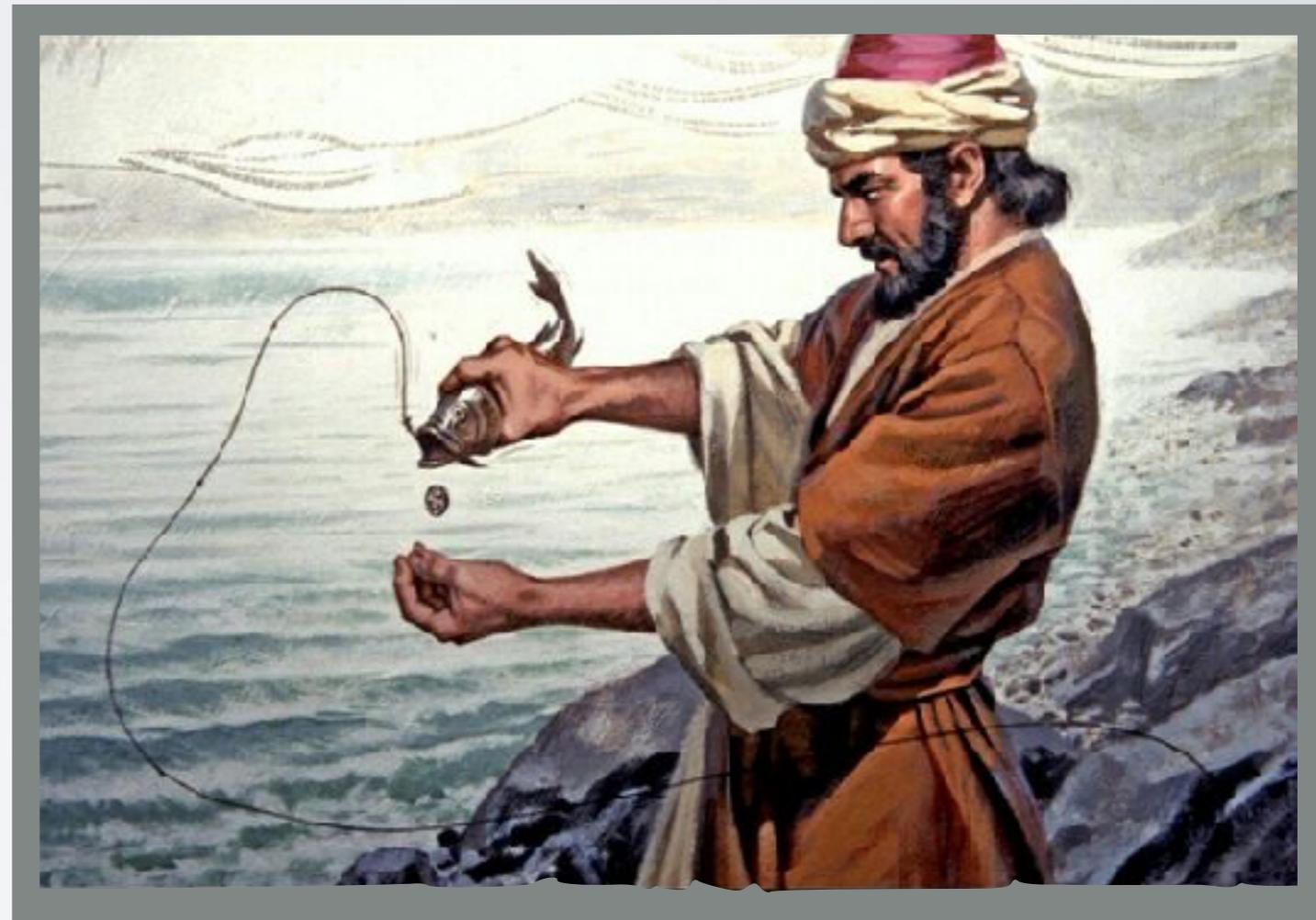


Yom Kippur

PAYMENT OF TEMPLE TAX

Mt 17:24-27

- This passage continues the **emphasis on St Peter** as described by Matthew in Chapters 16, 17 & 18.



PAYMENT OF TEMPLE TAX

- **Matthew's Gospel**
 - **Chapter 16** - Peter's confession of Jesus and First prediction of the Passion.
 - **Chapter 17** - Peter at the Transfiguration and Payment of the Temple Tax
 - **Chapter 18** - Within Context of Ecclesial discourse how many times does Peter have to forgive.

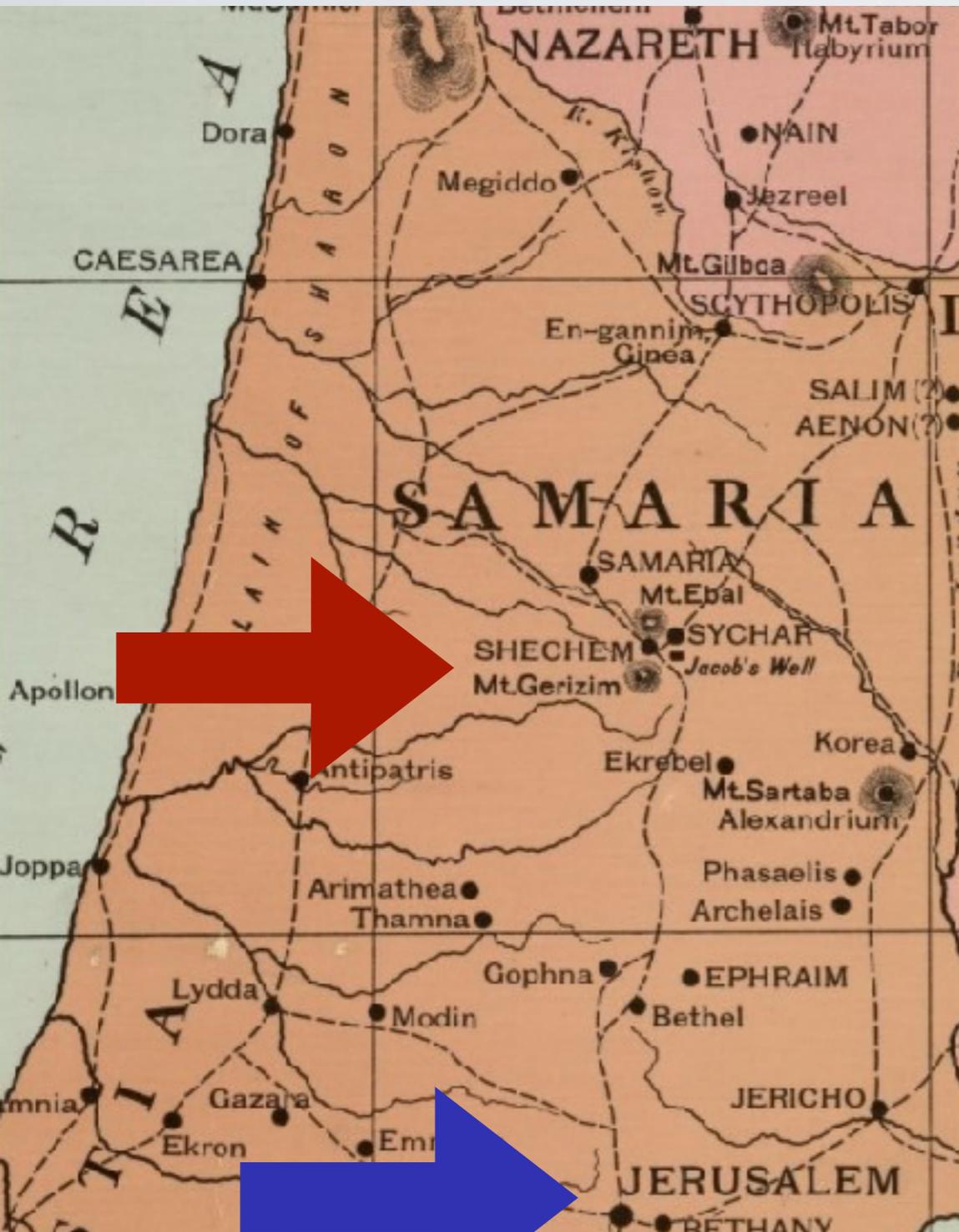
PAYMENT OF TEMPLE TAX



1/2 shekel coin

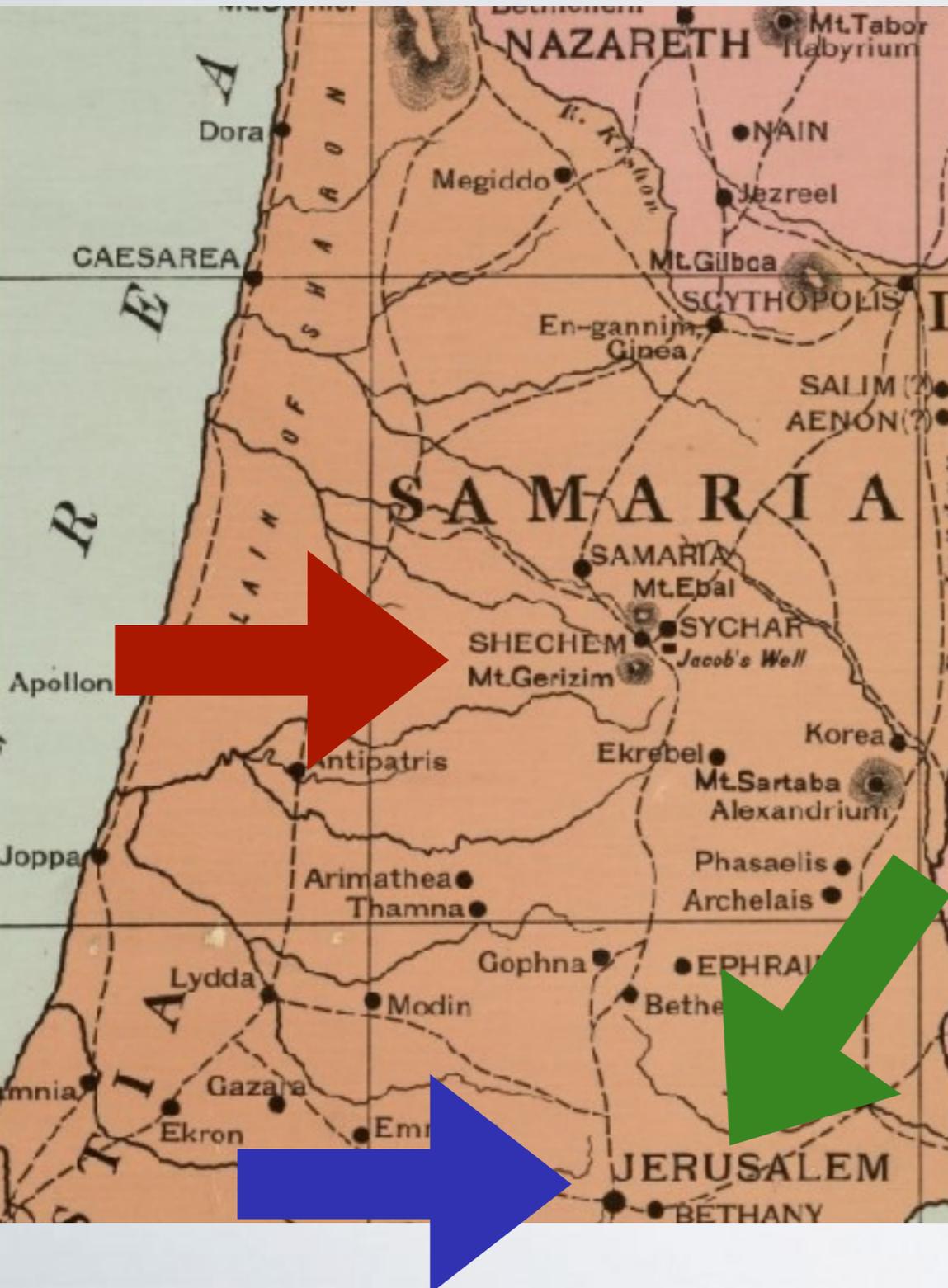
- **Temple Tax**
 - **Annual Tax** - owed by every male who had attained the age of 20 (Ex 30:14). The amount was about a *third of a shekel at the time of the rebuilding of the Temple*, but a half shekel at time of Jesus (a didrachma).
 - This was a contribution to the **maintenance of the Temple**.

PAYMENT OF TEMPLE TAX



- **Historical Context** - The Galileans acknowledged only the Temple in Jerusalem, and therefore paid the Temple Tax to the maintenance of the Jerusalem Temple
- The Samaritans had a “Temple” at **Mt Gerizim** - and they were very resentful that the Galileans would pass from Galilee through Samaria to Judea to go to the Temple, and bypass their own Temple.

PAYMENT OF TEMPLE TAX



- **Historical Context** - The Galileans acknowledged only the Temple in Jerusalem, and therefore paid the Temple Tax to the maintenance of the Jerusalem Temple
- The Samaritans had a “Temple” at **Mt Gerizim** - and they were very resentful that the Galileans would pass from Galilee through Samaria to Judea to go to the Temple, and bypass their own Temple.

PAYMENT OF TEMPLE TAX

- One Commentator observes: We should take note of Jesus' teaching method: after his second announcement of his passion, **his disciples are overwhelmed with grief** (Mt 17:23); here **He lifts Peter's spirits with this friendly little miracle.**

Saint Matthew's Gospel. (2005). (p. 125).
Dublin; New York: Four Courts Press;
Scepter Publishers.



PAYMENT OF TEMPLE TAX

- St Jerome observes that verse 25 reveals that Our Lord knew of the question that had been asked in His absence.
- Most commentators understand that Jesus a son of a King in the flesh and spirit, owed tribute to no one, but given it was right to maintain the Temple, agreed so as to fulfill all righteousness.

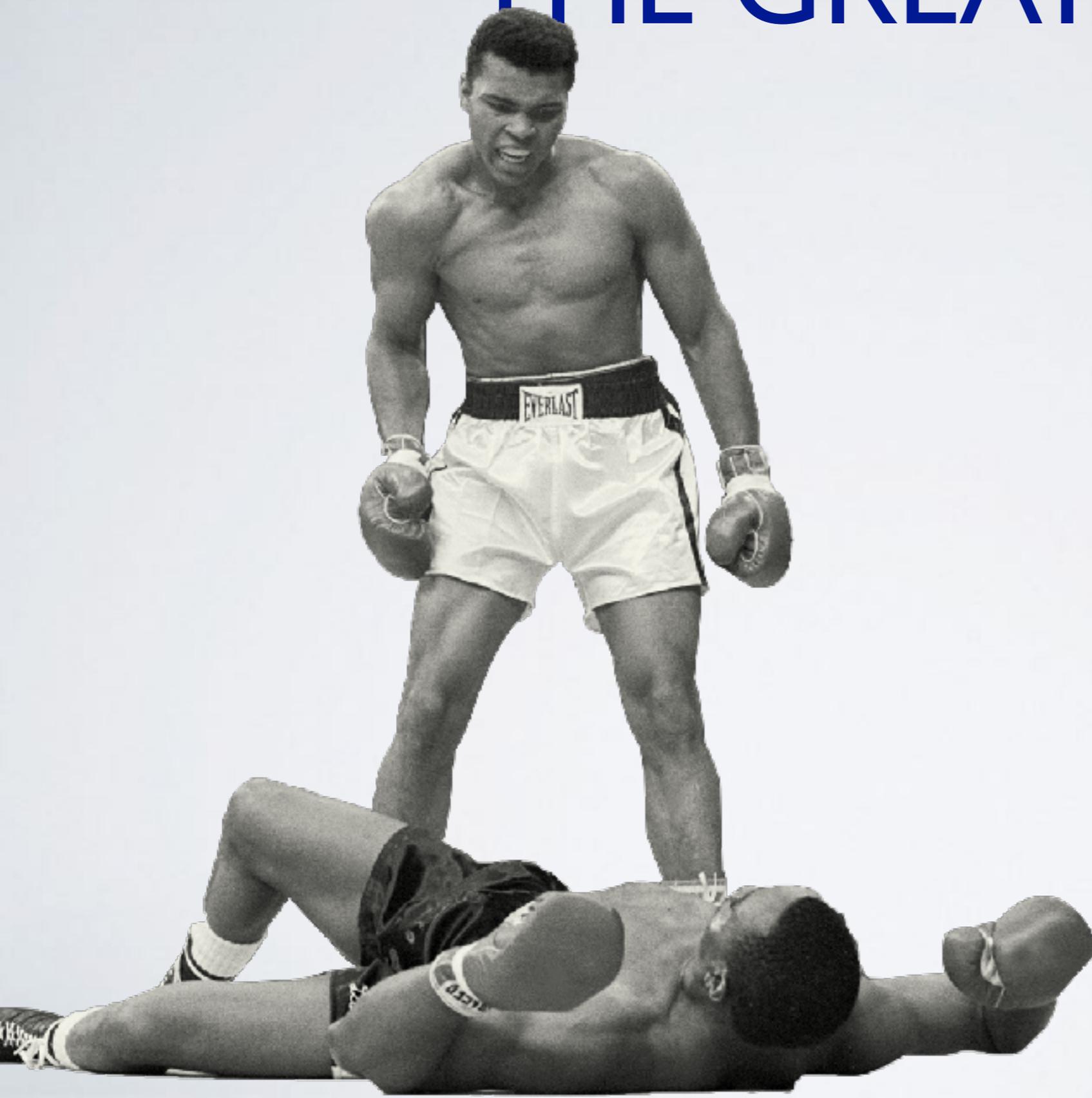


A PRAYER

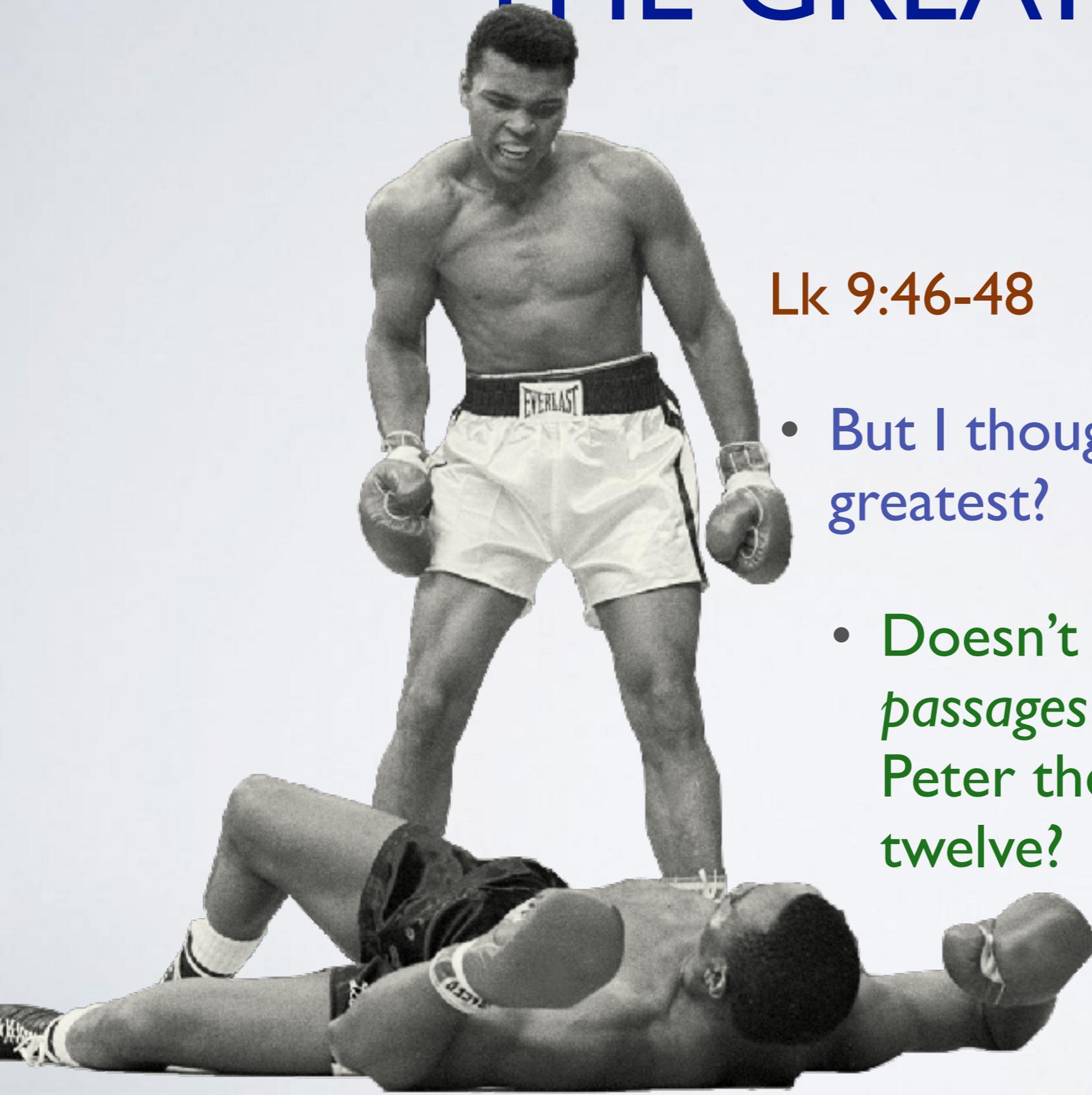
- St Jerome reflects:
- I am at a loss what first to admire in this passage; whether the foreknowledge, or the mighty power of the Saviour. His foreknowledge, in that He knew that a fish had a stater [half shekel] in its mouth, and that that fish should be the first taken; His mighty power, if the stater were created in the fish's mouth at His word, and if by His command that which was to happen was ordered. Christ then, for His eminent love, endured the cross, and paid tribute; how wretched we who are called by the name of Christ, though we do nothing worthy of so great a dignity.

Thomas Aquinas. Catena Aurea: Commentary on the Four Gospels

THE GREATEST



THE GREATEST



Lk 9:46-48

- But I thought Peter was the greatest?
- Doesn't this follow *just a few passages* after Jesus made Peter the greatest among the twelve?



- **Read Mark 9:33-37**
- What is the difference/consistency between the rationale for being the greatest in Luke and Mark?
 - To be the least is to be the servant of all - That is what makes one the greatest.
- **Can you see why Jesus used Children to illustrate this?**

THE GREATEST

- Additionally to receive a *child* is ...
 - To receive *Jesus*. To receive Jesus ...
 - Is to receive the *Father*.
- **Why?**

Jesus is The Way to the father. John 14:6.
- Like a child, Jesus was the least born in a manger and emptied himself to become like us, taking the form of a slave. He became the servant of all, even of his Apostles, washing their feet at the last supper.
[Lk 2:7; Phil 2:7; Jn 13:1-9]

THE GREATEST

- Does Jesus think Children are a gift?
 - More than that, they can be the path to God the Father. They become an opportunity for adults to live as they should.
- Children necessarily require adults to empty themselves and think outside of themselves, to serve their children and take care of their needs.
- What *might* Jesus *think* when it comes to Abortion?



THE GREATEST



- **The Didache** - Also known as “The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.”
- A first century catechism/how to document from Apostolic times.
- It contains the traditional teaching of the Apostles and was written while St John was still alive.

THE GREATEST

- **Didache 2:2** Thou shalt do no murder, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not corrupt boys, thou shalt not commit fornication, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not deal in magic, thou shalt do no sorcery, **thou shalt not murder a child by abortion nor kill them when born,** thou shalt not covet thy neighbors goods, ...



THE GREATEST

- **Didache 2:2** Thou shalt do no

Why was a teaching against
Abortion necessary?

The Jews would never abort a child

thou shalt not deal in magic, thou shalt do no sorcery, **thou shalt not murder a child by abortion nor kill them when born**, thou shalt not covet thy neighbors goods, ...



TEMPTATION TO SIN

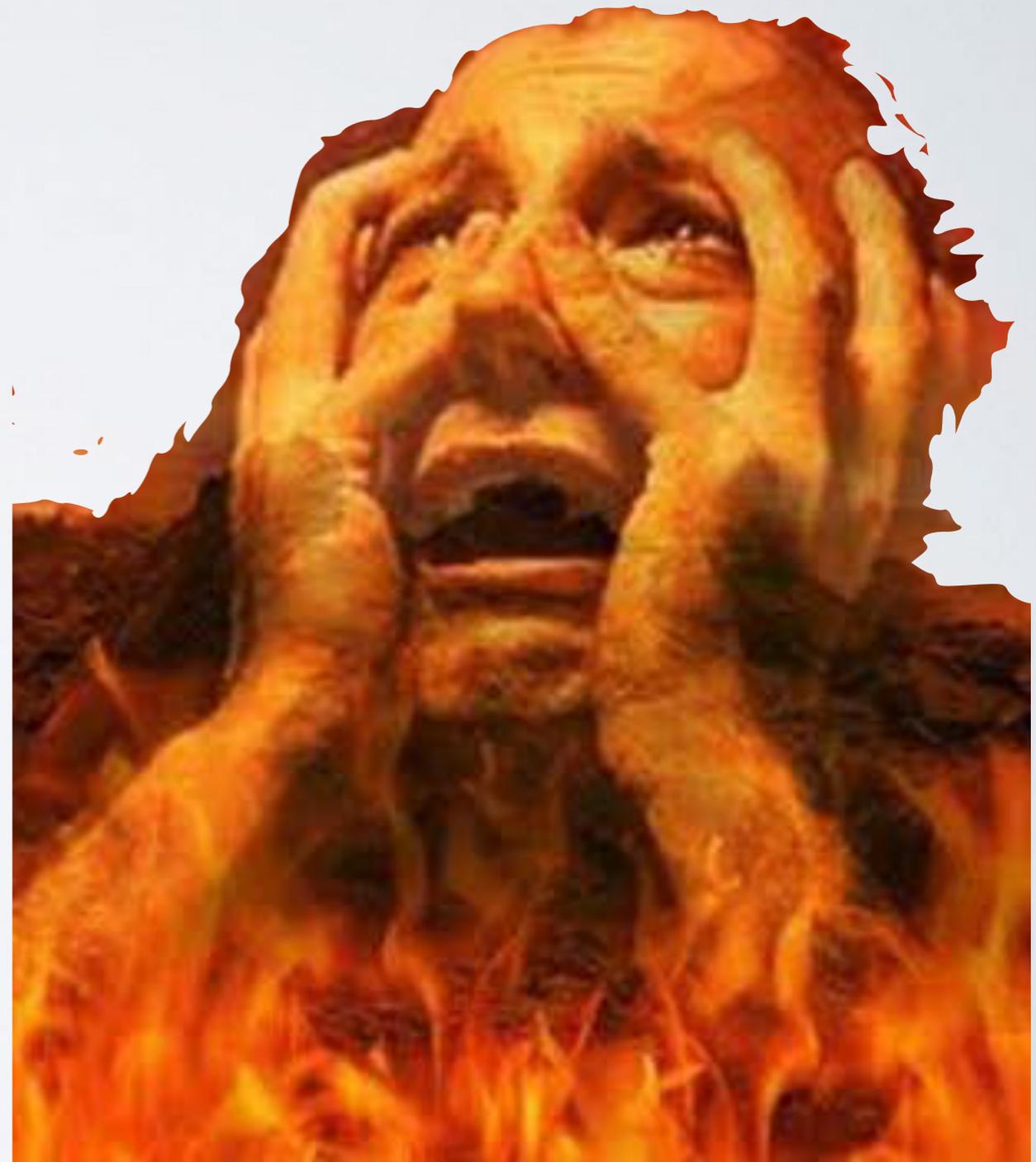


Read
Mt 18:6-9

- The millstone teaching

TEMPTATION TO SIN

- Powerful passage preached in Capernaum (Mt 17:24).
- Note how St Matthew follows the theme of Children, articulated about who is the greatest - with this ***eternal condemnation of those who cause children to sin.***







TEMPTATION TO SIN

- “... *little ones who believe in me to sin ...*”
 - The subject of the injury is an innocent child who comes to faith, perhaps under the proper guidance of parents,
 - who then is the victim of another who intentionally causes these children to sin.
- This is a specific injury being imposed on a believer child. This is an injury that challenges the faith of the child or obedience of faith for that child. [Rom 1:5]

TEMPTATION TO SIN

- “... *little ones* who believe in me to sin ...”
- Are the little ones limited only to children?
 - St Paul expands on this concept when he writes the Corinthians about eating meat sacrificed to idols.
 - See I Cor 8:7-13* - Who are the “little ones”
 - Those with a weak conscience - those who would have difficulty resisting the temptation - are to be treated as you would treat Christ.

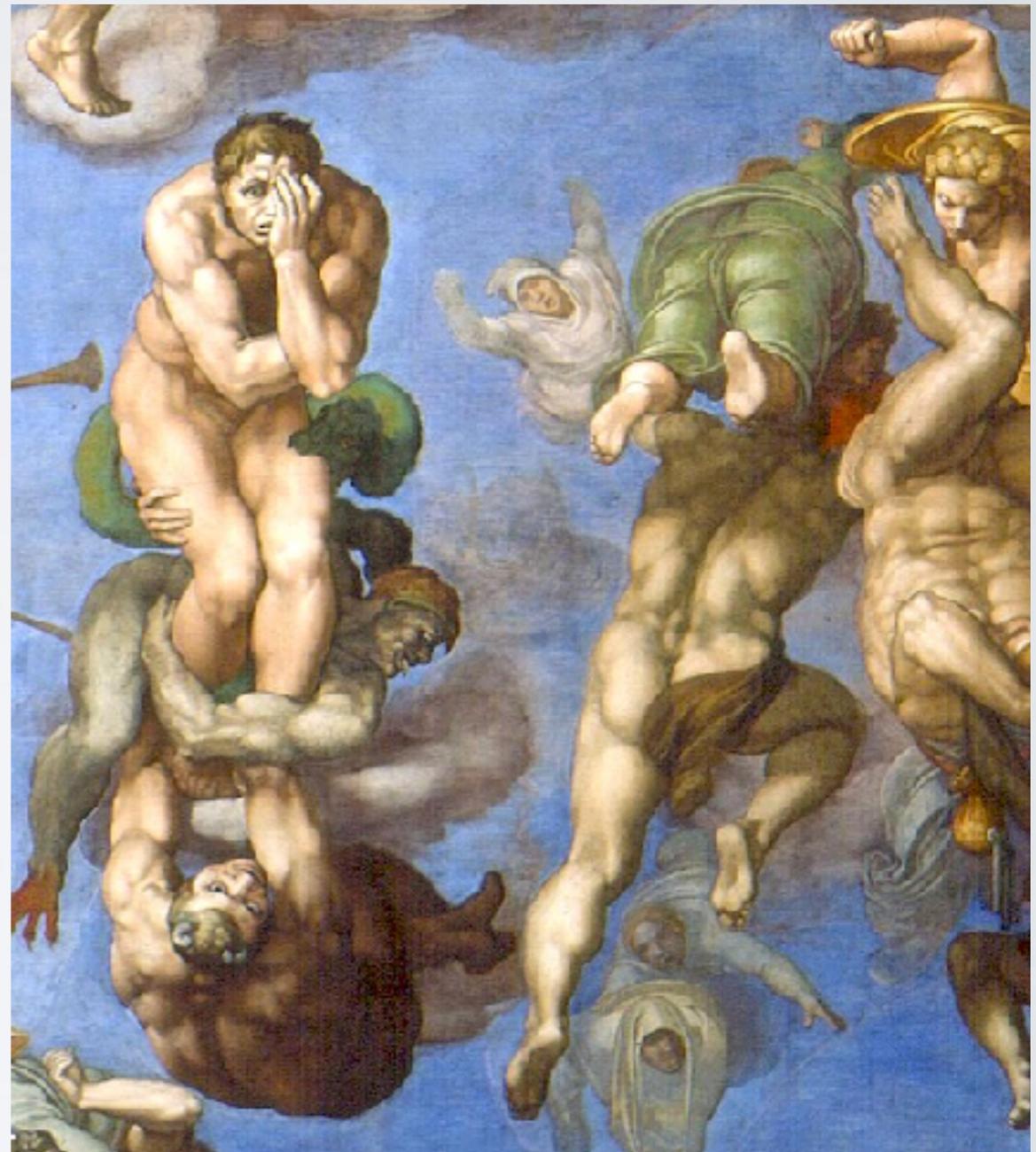
TEMPTATION TO SIN

- What is the punishment for sinning against a marginalized or weak person - a *child* or one with a *weak* conscience?
 - Gehenna. (Hell)
 - “... better to enter into life maimed or crippled than with two hands or feet be thrown into eternal fire.”
 - cut off hand - strong statement for avoiding sin

TEMPTATION TO SIN

Michelangelo's portrayal of the final judgment seems to capture the final despair of someone destined for the eternal fire of Gehenna.

- Reflect on I Cor 8:9*.
Why is the person condemned?
- Was that person "saved?"



LOST SHEEP



Mt 18: 10-14*

The Parable
of the
Lost Sheep

LOST SHEEP

- Again the little ones are the theme
 - These little ones, in context, refer specifically to **children.**
 - Note that Jesus confirms we have guardian angels, more than one perhaps
 - These angels have access to God the Father directly!

LOST SHE

- Again the little ones are the the
- These little ones, in context
children.
- Note that Jesus confirms
angels, more than one per
- **These angels have access to
directly!**



My Guardian Angel

LOST SHEEP

- What are the angels doing for the despised child in the presence of God the Father?
 - Seeking Justice? Seeking protection for the child?
- Note the children do not need to ask their angels to **intercede**, because the angels do so based on their task of being stewards of the little ones.
- Can you imagine having angels interceding before God regarding your conduct against children?

LOST SHEEP

- The Father's reaction is to leave 99 sheep to after the one lost sheep.
- “If a man has a 100 sheep, and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the 99 in the hills and go in search of the stray?” v.14
- Sometimes we miss the obvious! The answer is NO. No shepherd in his right mind, would leave 99 unattended in the hills *vulnerable to wolves and other predators* to go after ONE lost sheep?



LOST SHEEP

What is the point of the comparison then?

- “If a man has a 100 sheep, and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the 99 in the hills and go in search of the stray?” v.14
- **Sometimes we miss the obvious!**
The answer is NO. No shepherd in his right mind, would leave 99 unattended in the hills *vulnerable to wolves and other predators* to go after ONE lost sheep?



NO

LOST SHEEP

- God the Father's will is not limited by being Prudent. His mercy and perfect will, obligate a different result.
 - **“... it is not the will of the heavenly Father that one of these little ones be lost.” Mt 18:14**
- Does this give us some confidence that God will treat unbaptized infants and aborted children with sufficient Mercy that it will exceed even our best expectations?
 - We must trust God for He is merciful and kind.

CHILDREN AGAIN

- **See also Mt 10:40-42***
- If we give even a cup of water to a child, *because we are disciples of Jesus*, our Father in Heaven sees it.
- What is the consequence of doing so?
 - He will surely not lose his reward. *Insurance policy*
 - Notice it does not say he will surely receive a reward. As disciples we are already destined for a reward. Treating children kindly is the subject of **a promise not to lose heaven.**

BROTHER WHO SINS



Mt 18: 15-18

- Reconciliation
- Excommunication

ECCLÉSIAL DISCOURSE

- The Gospel of Matthew contains 5 narratives and 5 discourses. The Discourses are:
 - The **Sermon on the Mount**, Mt 5-7
 - The **Missionary Discourse** which contains the conditions of Apostleship, Mt 10
 - The **Parable Discourse**, which contains the Kingdom Parables, Mt 13
 - The **Ecclesial Discourse**, rules for the church, Mt 18,
 - The **Eschatological Discourse** of Matthew 24

ECCLÉSIAL DISCOURSE

- The Ecclesial **Narrative** begins in Chapter 16, with the appointment of the Vizier.
 - The Kingdom of Heaven is revealed to have a **Divine** component by virtue of its **builder** (*ousia- to be*), and
 - The Kingdom of Heaven has a **human** component, by virtue of its members and a **Hierarchy** borrowed from the David Kingdom consisting of 12 ministers including a Vizier.
- **Divine and at the same time fully human, the Church duplicates the natures and body of her founder.**

ECCLÉSIAL DISCOURSE

- The Ecclesial **Narrative** continues with the prediction of the Passion of Christ and that his **disciples will likewise have to deny themselves, pick up their own crosses**, suffer and perhaps be called to lose their life for him. Mt 16
- The Transfiguration of Ch 17 then gives the disciples a **glimpse of the glory they will have** and assures them that this cross is God's plan fulfilled. **The sign of the plan is the testimony of Moses and Elijah - who confirm Jesus' ministry even as the Father speaks.**

BROTHER WHO SINS

- So **how** does one handle a Brother who sins against you?

- Counsel and obtain his concurrence - Done.

- Note the gentle correction is **done in private**.

- “tell him his fault between you and him alone.” v.15



BROTHER WHO SINS

- If he listens, you have won over your Brother.

Fraternal Correction

- In this context, who is your Brother?
- People who are disciples, and subscribe to the authority of the Church.
- Context matters - This is an ***ecclesial*** discourse.



But is there an expressed DUTY to COUNSEL a brother who sins against you, or is it acceptable to just let it go?



What might have been the rule in the Old Covenant before the Church?

Consequences for the Sinner Ez 18: 20-28*

Consequences for not Counseling Ez 3: 17-21*



BROTHER WHO SINS



- “Our Lord admonishes us not to overlook one another’s faults, yet not so as seeking for matter of blame, but watching what you may amend.
- For our rebuke should be in love, not eager to wound, but anxious to amend. If you pass it by, you become worse than he. He by doing you a wrong hath done himself a great hurt; and you ... are more to blame for your silence than he for his ill words to you.”

St Augustine (Serm. 82. 1.)

BROTHER WHO SINS

- It is to be noted, that onewhile (*on the one hand*) the Lord brings the offender to him whom he has offended; as when he says, If thou remember that thy brother has anything against thee, go, be reconciled to thy brother: (Mat. 5:23.)
- otherwhiles (*on the other hand*) He bids him that has suffered the wrong to forgive his neighbor; as where he says, Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. (Mat. 6:12.)



Chrysostom

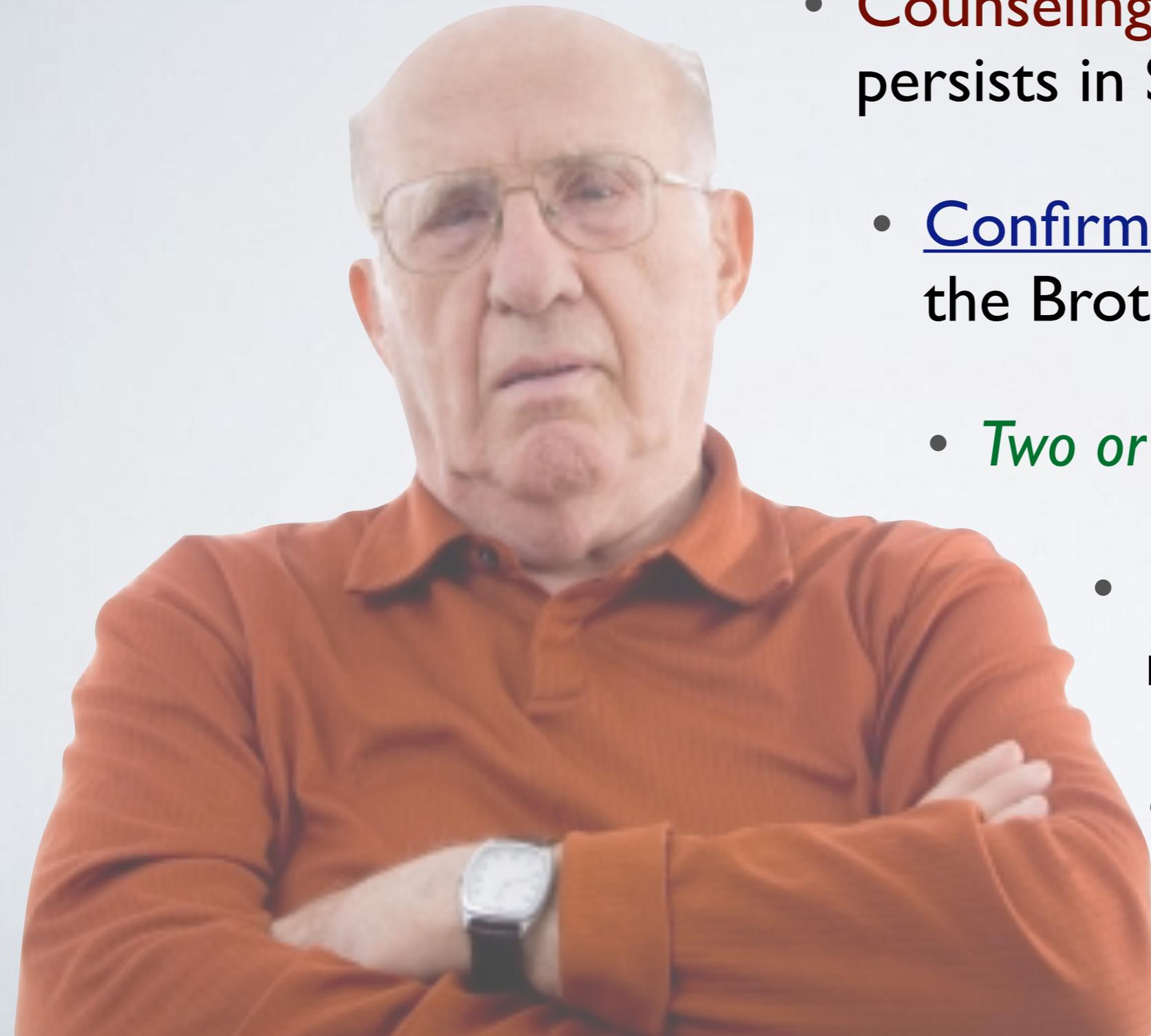
BROTHER WHO SINS

- Here He has devised yet another method, for **He brings him who has been grieved to him that grieved him**, and therefore says, If thy brother sin against thee; for because he that did the wrong would not readily come to make amends, because of his shame,
- He draws to him that has suffered the wrong; ...**with the very purpose of correcting what was done amiss.**
(Mt 18:15.)



BROTHER WHO SINS

- **Counseling failed** and Brother persists in Sin - now what?
- Confirm with Testimony that the Brother is unrepentant.
- *Two or Three Witnesses.*
- Tell him again of the need to reconcile.
- IF doesn't listen **take it to the Church**



BROTHER WHO SINS

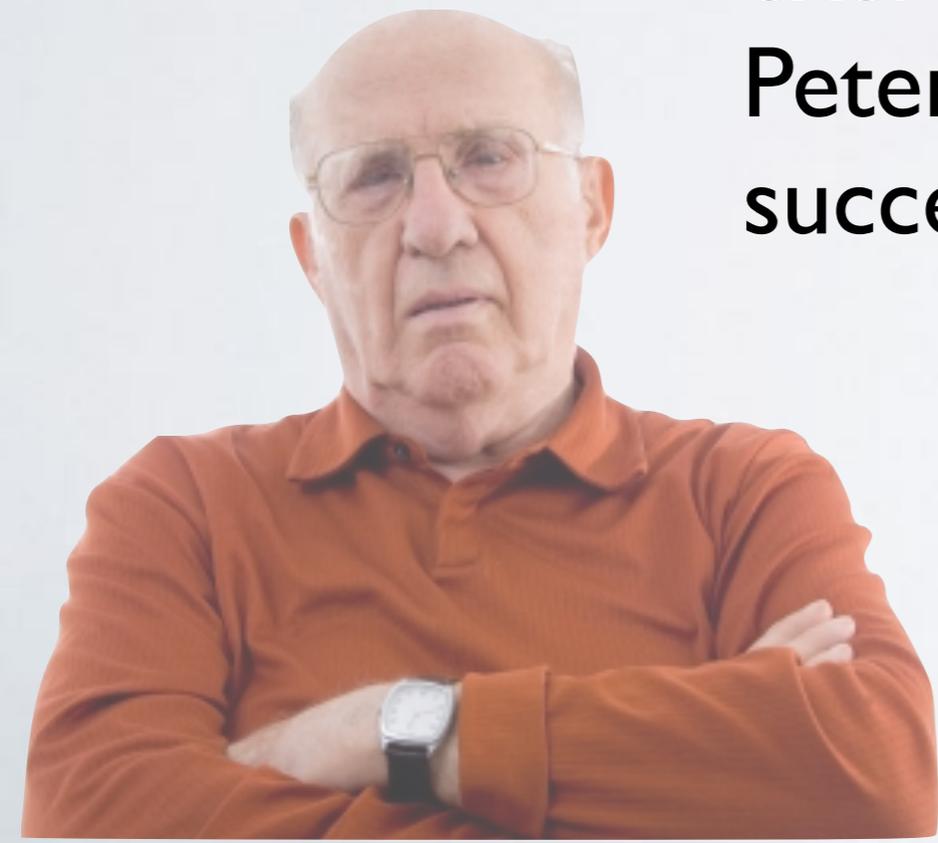
- Confirm with Testimony - Hopefully to obtain reconciliation and change of heart from the offender, but also,
 - Establishing **evidence** for possible adjudication by the Church!
 - But **Who** will eventually *adjudicate* the wrong? Thoughts?



BROTHER WHO SINS

- This verse needs to be understood in connection with the authority previously promised to Peter (cf. Mt 16:13–19):
 - It is the **hierarchy of the Church that exercises this power** given by Christ to Peter, to the apostles and their lawful successors—the Pope and the bishops.

*Saint Matthew's Gospel. (2005). (pp. 129–130).
Dublin; New York: Four Courts Press; Scepter Publishers.*



BROTHER WHO SINS

- How do we know its the Apostles (and their successors) who will adjudicate?

- Hint: Mt 18:18 and Mt 16:19

- How do we know that **Bishops** are the successors of the Apostles?

- Hint: Acts 1: 15-26*



BROTHER WHO SINS

- How do we know its the Apostles (and their successors) who will adjudicate?

- Hint: Mt 18:18 and Mt 16:19

- How do we know that **Bishops** are the successors of the Apostles?

- Hint: Acts 1: 15-26*

- *Episkope* (LXX) (*Bishoprick* KJV)



WITNESSES

- “Take with thee one or two more,”
- both for the purpose of aiding to induce him to enter into sentiments of true repentance, so that their joint authority may prevail upon him, the more effectually, to amend his life, which is implied in the words, “if he will not hear thee;”
- and also, that there might be a sufficient number of witnesses to give evidence to the Church of its charity and his obstinacy.

MacEvilly, J. (1898). An Exposition of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark (p. 328).

WITNESSES

See Dt 17:6

- “The testimony of two or three witnesses is required for putting a person to death; no one shall be put to death on the testimony of only one witness.”
 - Why might Jesus have required the same number of witnesses as when someone is to be put to death?
 - Jesus is clearly referring to fraternal correction related to **grave sin that leads to spiritual death** - hence the need for the same number of witnesses for the adjudication by the church.

EXCOMMUNICATION

- “If he refuses to listen **EVEN** to the Church, then treat him as you would a Gentile or a Tax Collector.”
- What does this mean?

What is the purpose of the Church when it excommunicates an individual?

ST PAUL & CORINTH

- **Read I Cor 5:1-8***
 - What was St Paul's dealing with a **trivial or serious** matter?
 - What was St Paul's **stated purpose as an Apostle in excommunicating the person** who was sinning?
 - Did St Paul understand he had **authority** to interfere in the affairs of Corinth?
 - If so, what authority was St Paul appealing to?

ST PAUL & CORINTH

- Notice St Paul was adjudicating the sin of one individual and of a community.
- **First, as to the sinner - “It is widely reported ...”**
There was ample evidence of more than 3 persons - since the whole community was aware
 - St Paul was convinced of the guilt of the sinner, and of the gravity of the sin - a man living with his father’s wife! (not even pagans!)

ST PAUL & CORINTH

- **Second, as to the community** - The Church at Corinth had ignored the command of Jesus in Mt 18.
- Apparently not only had **no one counseled the sinner**, they had **not delivered the sinner to the Church** as Jesus had commanded for adjudication.
- St Paul sees the **scandal as yeast** that leavens the entire dough. A scandal that can ruin the local church.

ST PAUL & CORINTH

- St Paul then proceeds to inform the community that **ignoring this sin leads to an improper celebration of the Eucharistic feast**, by which malice and wickedness has been put away.
 - So what is the connection between removing the sinner and then celebrating the Paschal Feast without wickedness?
 - That the removal of the sinner from the community (Ex-Communication) allows their Mass to be properly celebrated thereafter.

ST PAUL & CORINTH



ST PAUL & CORINTH

- This passage supports the long-standing practice of Apostolic origin that:
 - Bishops have an affirmative duty to prevent **scandal** in their diocese, so that the Eucharistic can be properly celebrated.
 - This requires Episcopal supervision of outside Priests and Speakers (**Letter of Suitability**), as well as supervision of priests and laity within diocese.



WHERE TWO ARE ...



- Mt 18: 19-20*
- Context - Context!
Thoughts?
- **Who** is Jesus speaking **to**, and
- **What** is the **context** of the passage?

WHERE TWO ARE ...



- Speaking to **Apostles - I say to YOU**
- Context - The fact that they must decide how handle the case of an obstinate sinner.
- What the Apostles hold bound on Earth will be held bound in **Heaven**
- **THEREFORE** ——— Again, I say to **you** if two of **you agree** on Earth, after **praying**, it will be **granted** by Heavenly Father. [confidence in a decision]

WHERE TWO ARE ...



- Verse 20 explains why verse 19 is true.
- Christ is always present where any two persons are gathered in His name.
- In the Hierarchy of the church, He further blesses them with heavenly support when their office requires them to hold bound or loosen - *so long as not acting alone or without prayer, but submitting to God's will - God guides.*

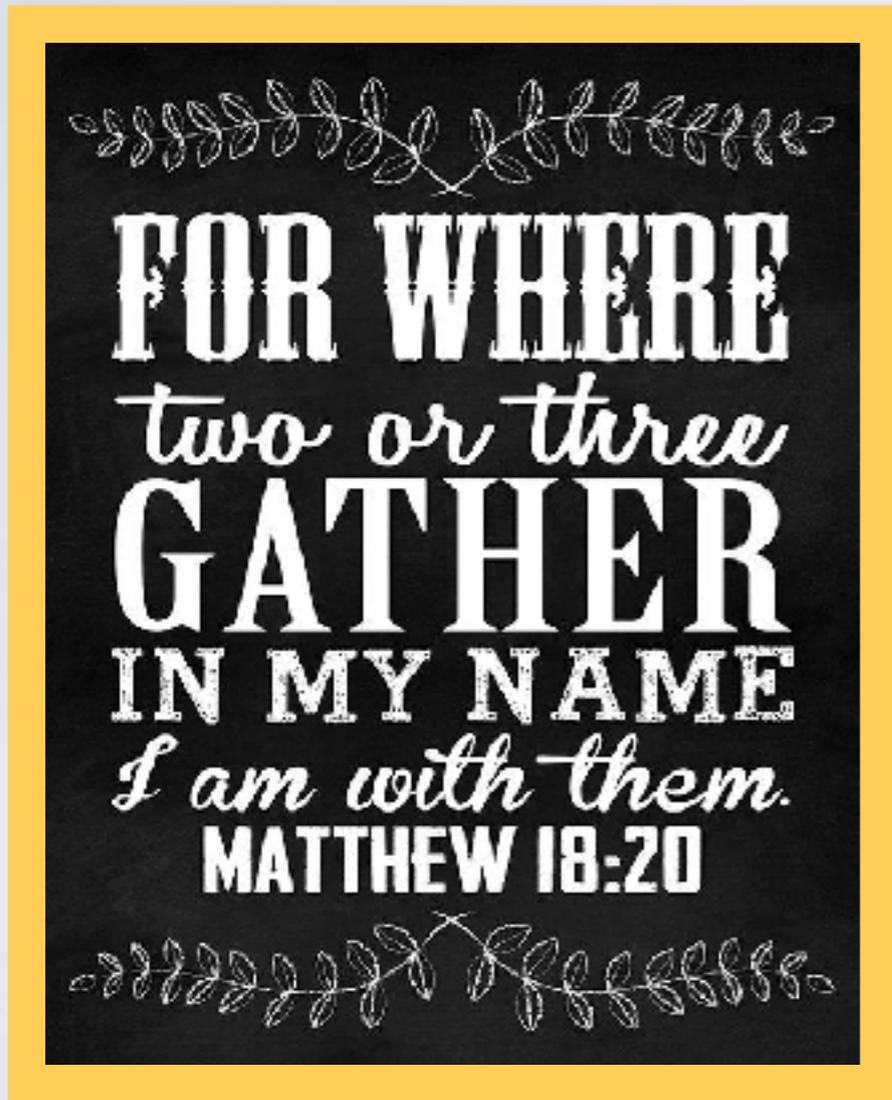
WHERE TWO ARE ...



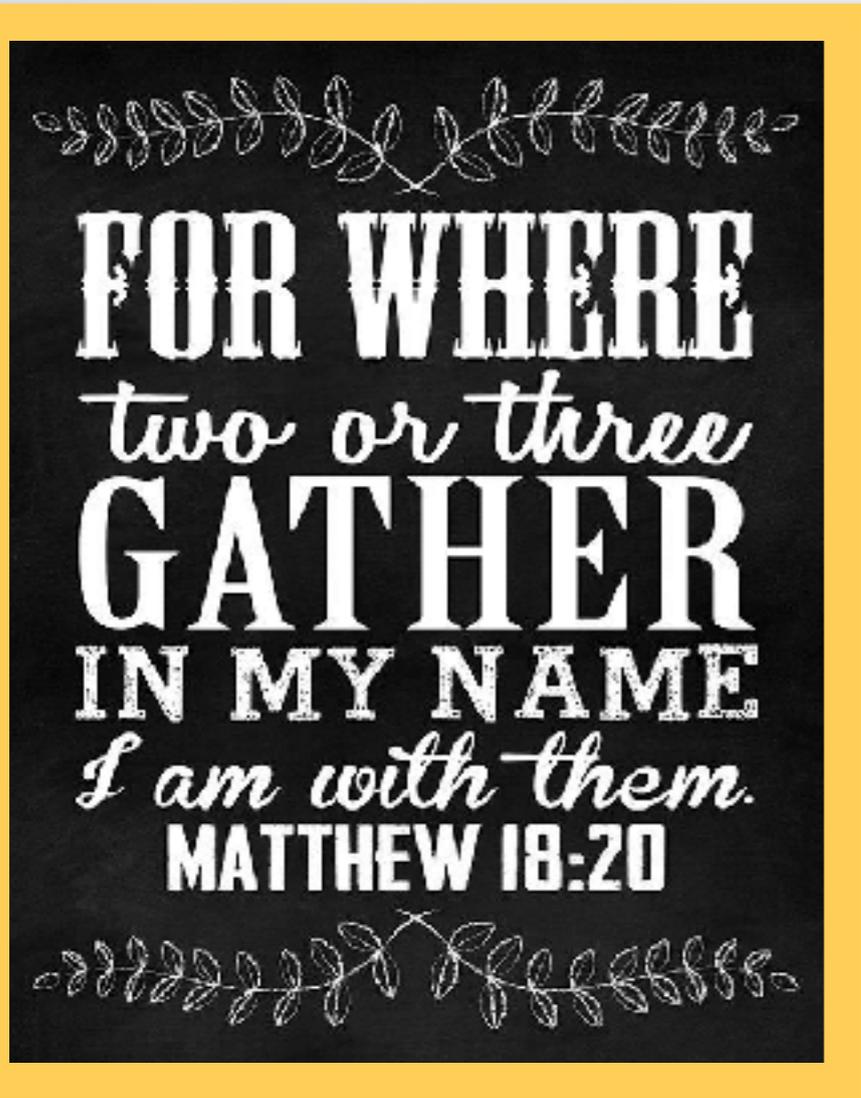
- In short - if we believe that Christ is present when any two of us are gathered in His name,
- how much more will He be present when two of His Apostles are in agreement and in prayer over the judgment of an individual.

WHERE TWO ARE ...

- Mt 18:20 tells us the strength of Communal Prayer.
- The **Mass** - is our greatest and most efficacious communal prayer - for it is the prayer of Christ's body to the Father, in the manner the Son requested.
- Validates our instinct that when many pray, God is more inclined to answer. cf Acts* 12:5; 2:42; 1:14



WHERE TWO ARE ...



- “From these words, we learn how superior is public to private prayer. The efficacy of the former is attributed to the presence of Christ in those assemblies.
- The Father, for his Son’s sake, will grant petitions thus offered.”

Haydock, G. L. (1859). Haydock’s Catholic Bible Commentary

WHERE TWO ARE ...

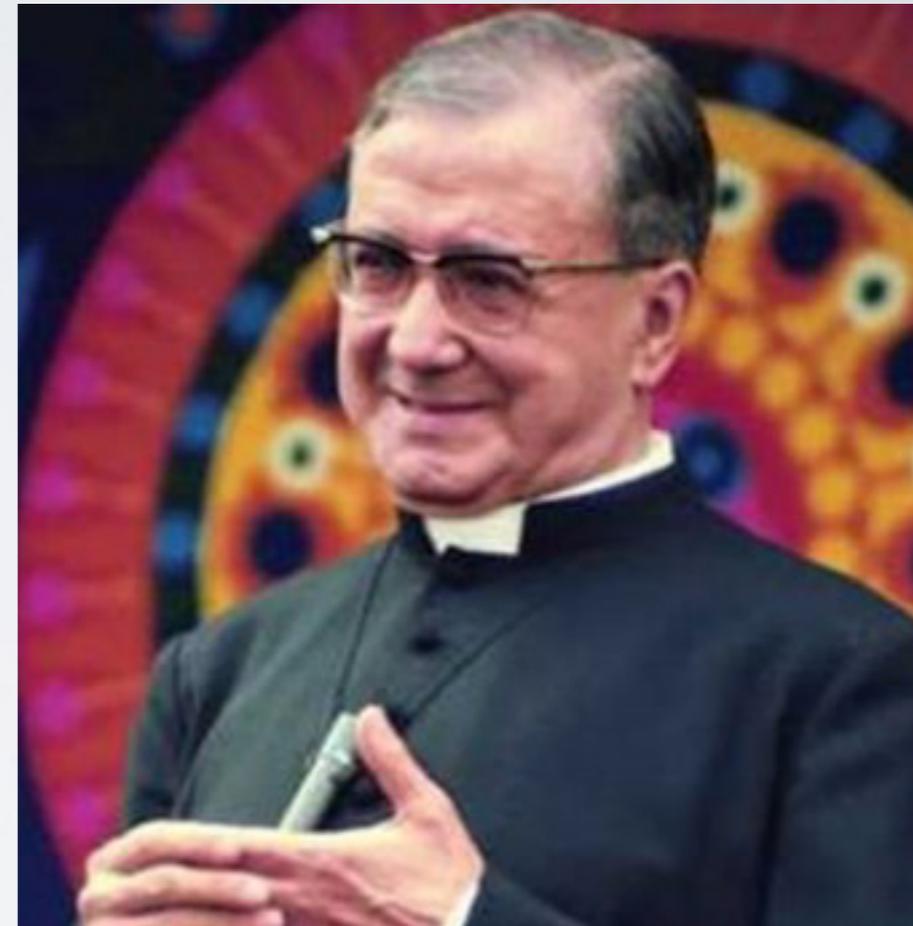
From these words, some derive an argument, a *minori ad majus*, in favor of the infallibility of Ecumenical Councils.

If, where a few are assembled in the name and by the authority of Christ, He promises that special assistance, necessary for the due effect of their prayers and deliberations, - how much more will He not be present in the midst of the rulers of His Church, assembled by His authority, deliberating on matters of the vastest moment in General Councils.

MacEvilly, J. (1898). An Exposition of the Gospels Matthew and Mark

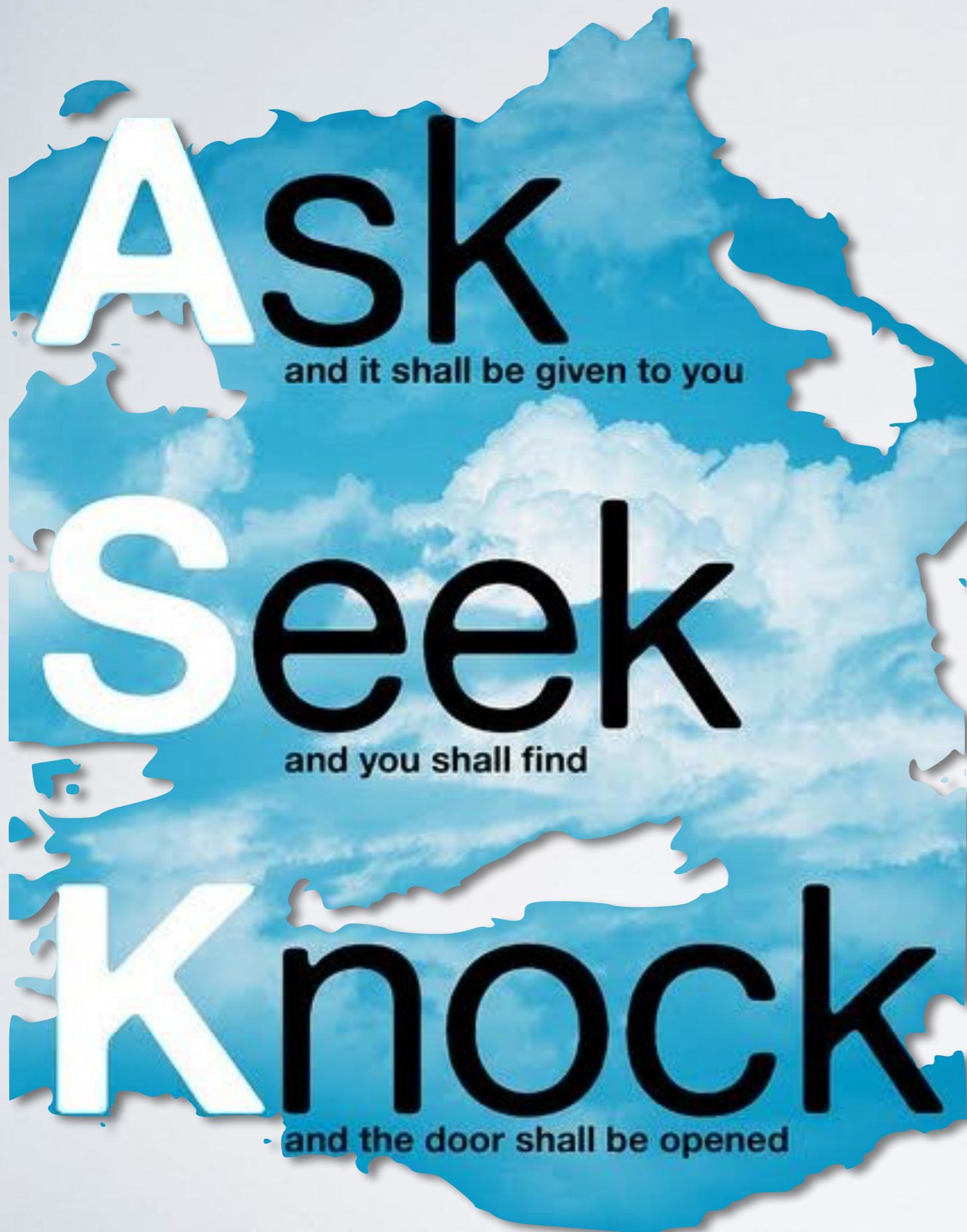
WHERE TWO ARE ...

There are religious practices—few, short, daily “that have always been lived in Christian families and which I think are marvelous—grace at meals, morning and night prayers, the family rosary. Customs vary from place to place, but I think one should always encourage some acts of piety which the family can do together in a simple and natural fashion.”



founder Opus Dei

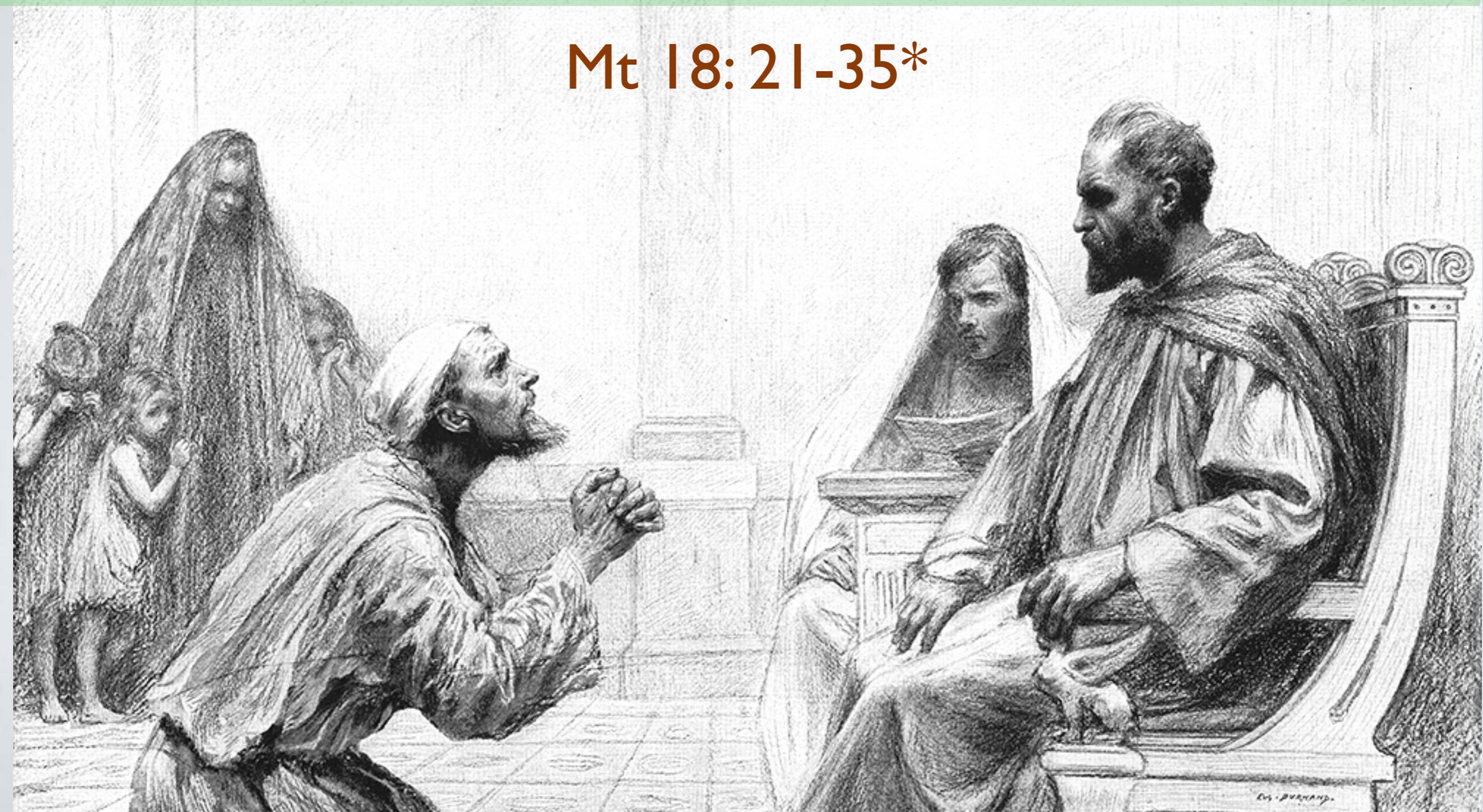
St Josemaría Escrivá - Conversations, 103.



- Yet, let us not forget that solitary prayer is also efficacious.
- See Mt 7:7-8

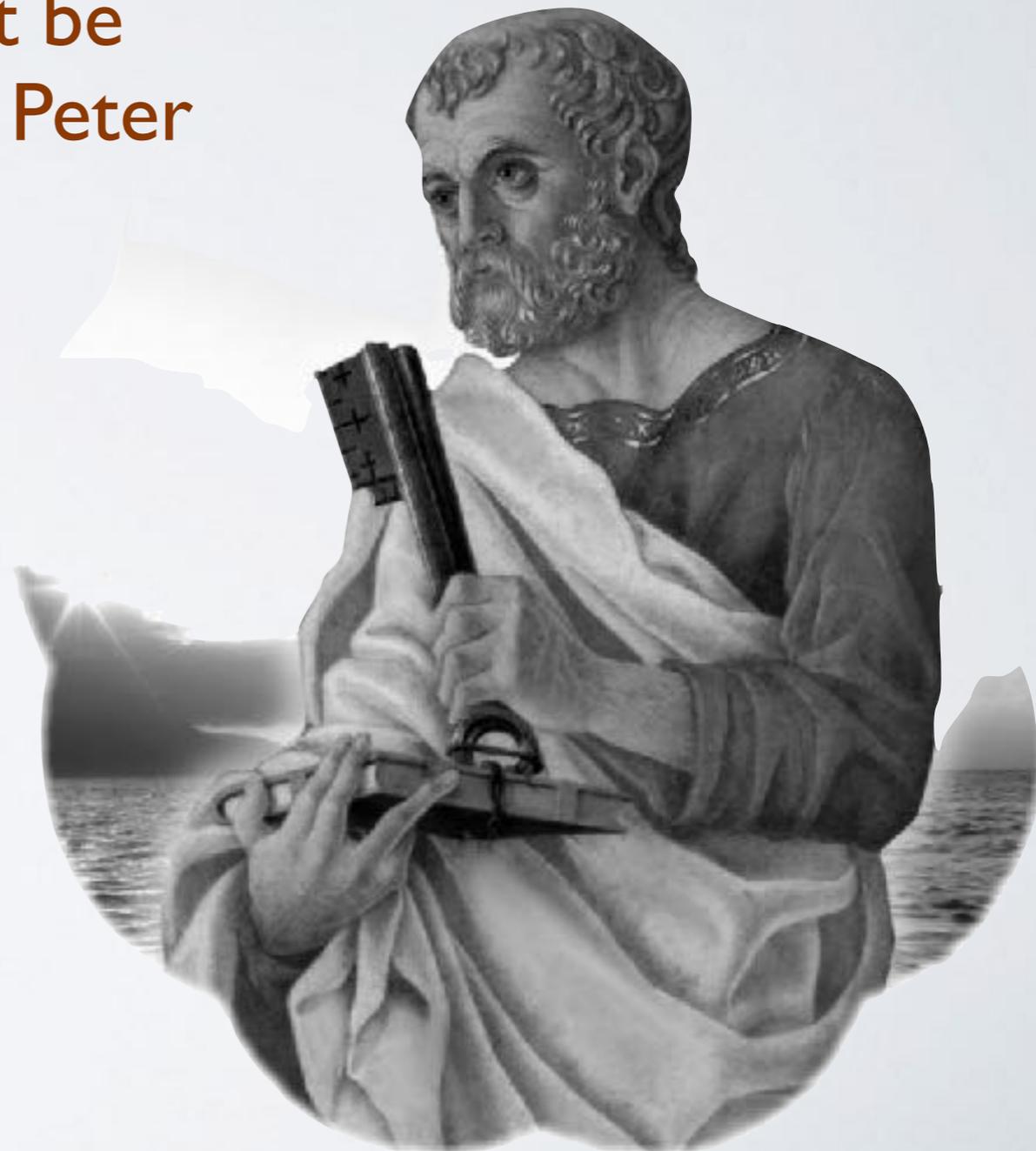
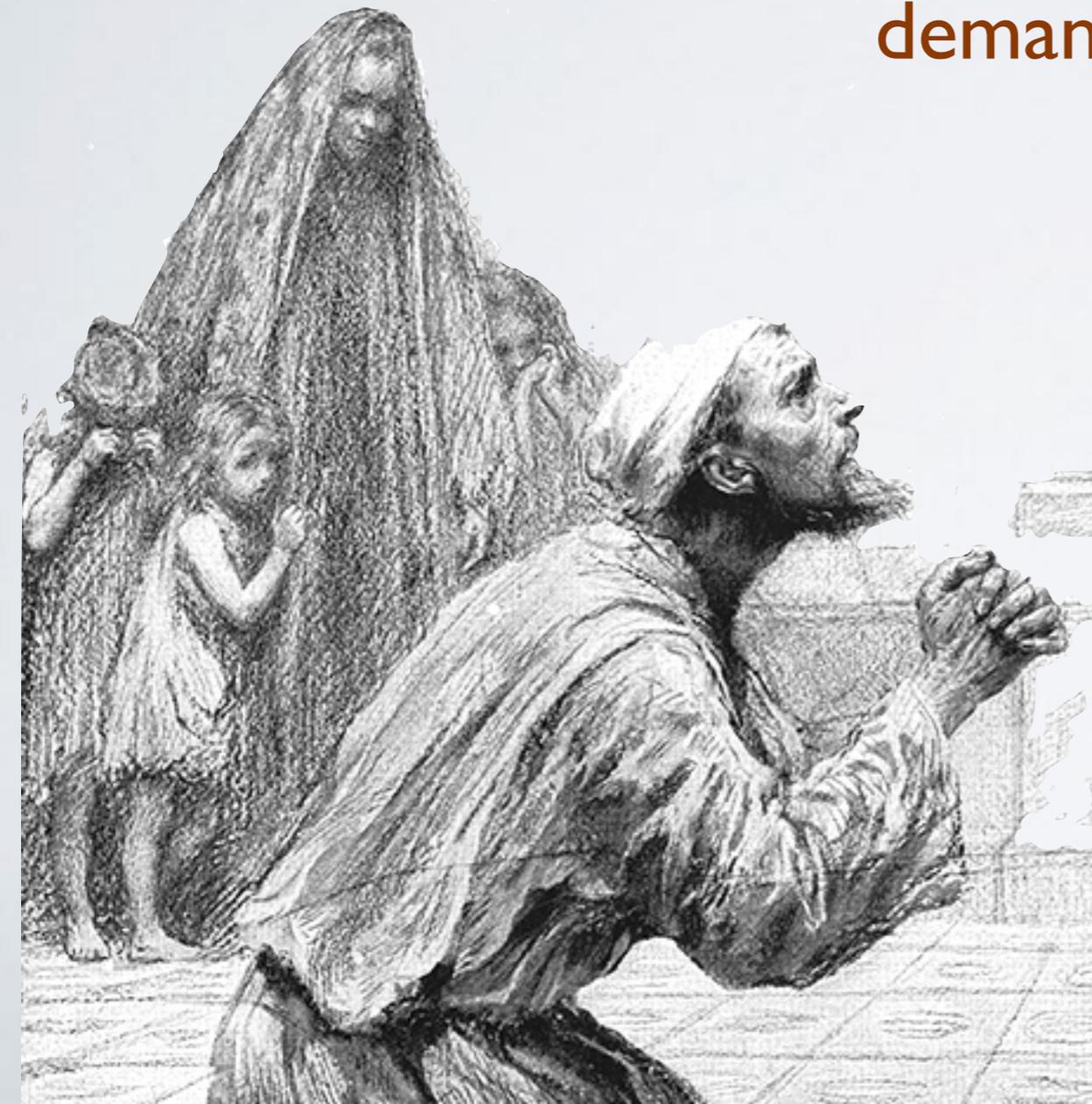
UNFORGIVING SERVANT

Mt 18: 21-35*



PETRINE STANDARD

What might be demanded of Peter



PETRINE STANDARD

- **CONTEXT** - Let us not forget we are in the Ecclesial Discourse. — rules for the church.
- see Luke 17: 3-4* for the general standard of forgiveness.
- Who is he talking to? Disciples
- How often must they forgive? 7 times a day

PETRINE STANDARD

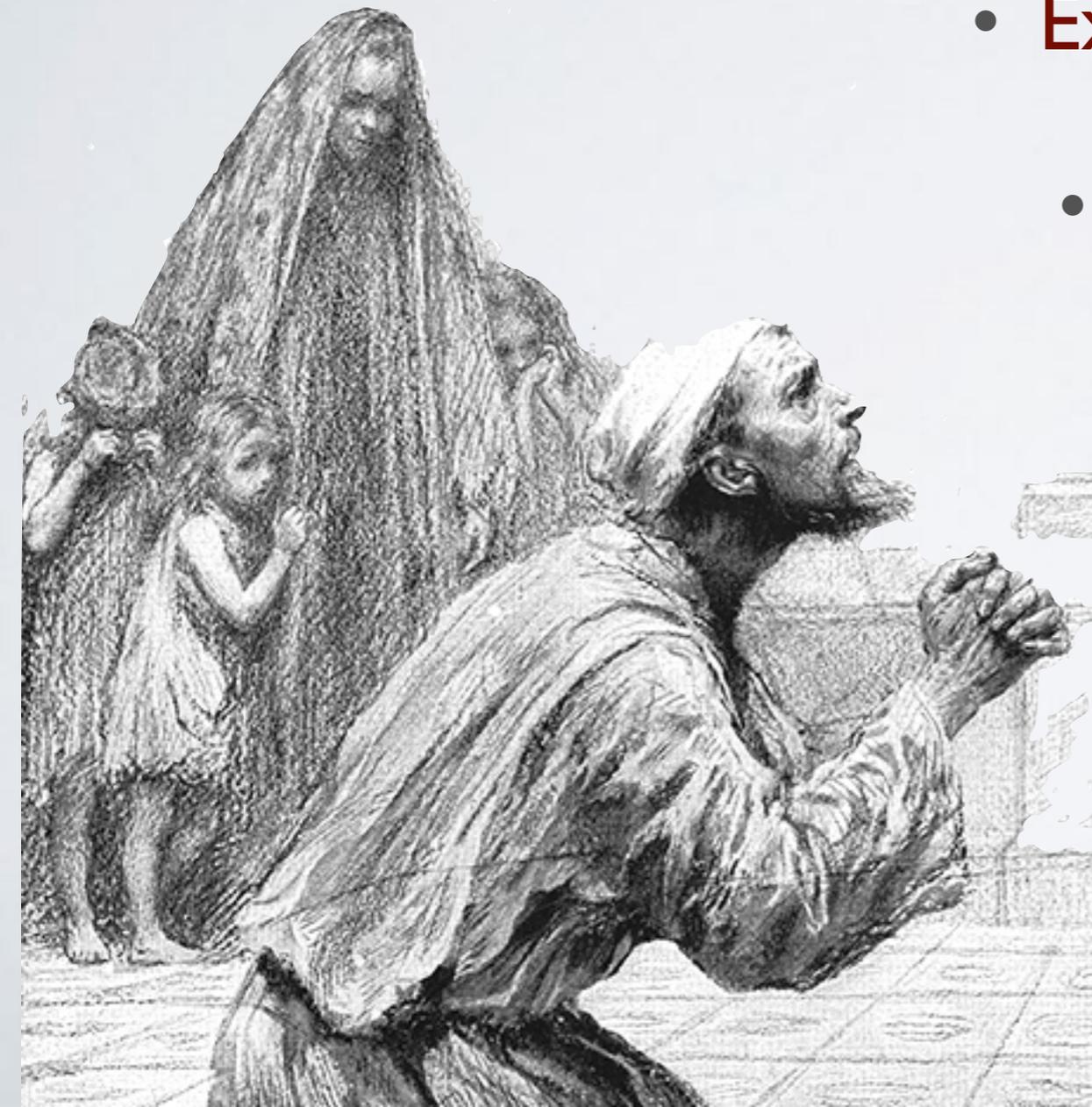
- PRESENT CONTEXT - Who specifically approaches Jesus? **Peter**
- Peter has some doubt - Jesus just said his followers must forgive **seven times**.
- The church, Jesus has just said, must deal with obstinate sinners by treating them as a Gentile or Tax collector. There, the salvation of the sinner is at stake.
 - But is there a **different** standard for Peter?

PETRINE STANDARD



- some say: Maybe so!
- Jesus answered: I say to **you**, not **seven** times - but **seventy seven** times.
- Jesus was aware of the 7 standard, for He had taught it!
- That is why the kingdom of Heaven is likened to a king ... (note the **Kingdom** language - **church** language - follows.

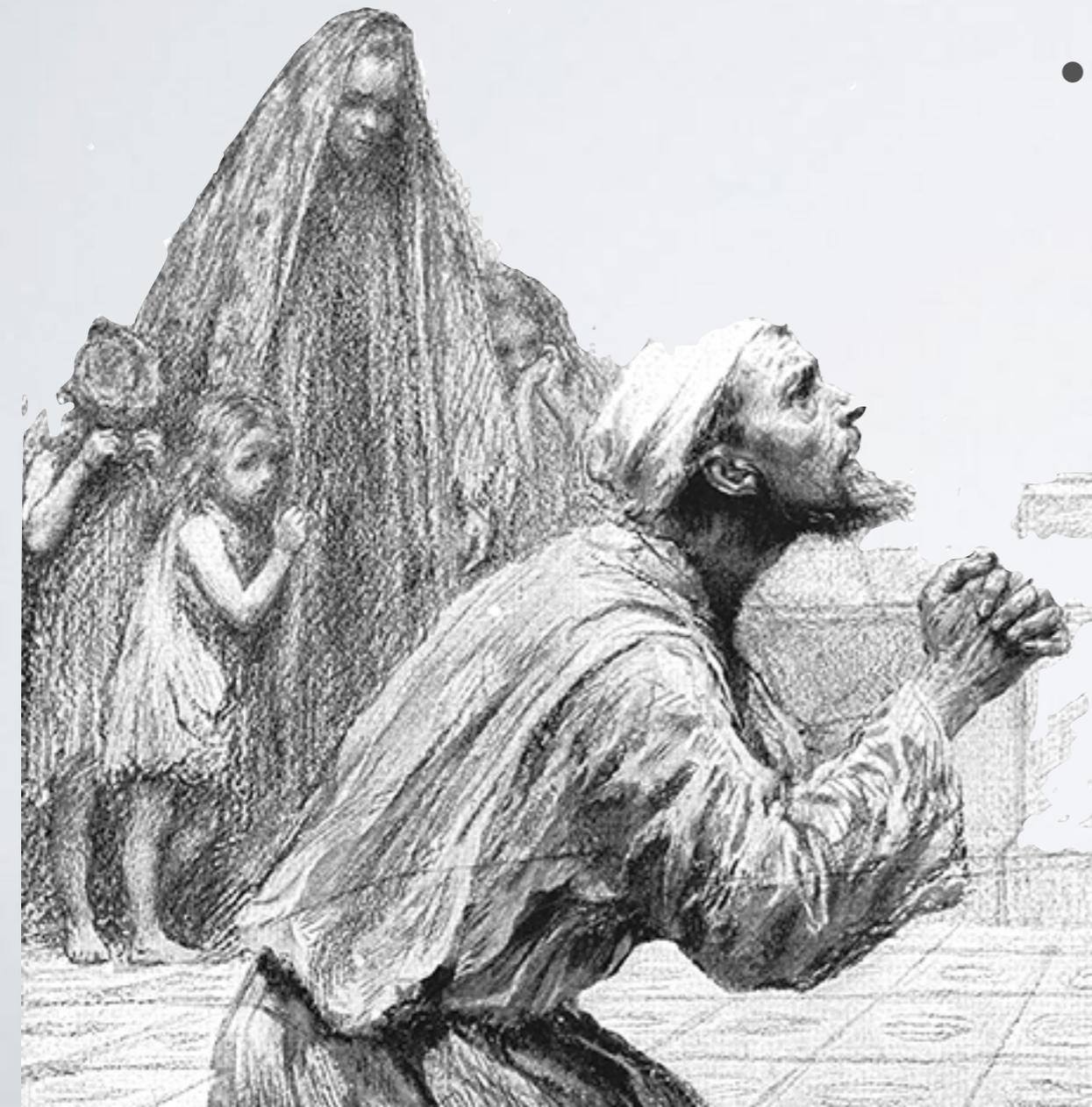
UNFORGIVING SERVANT



- Examining the details:
 - What does the 'debt owed' signify?
 - *Sin*
 - What does forgiveness of the debt signify?
 - *Forgiveness of the sin*

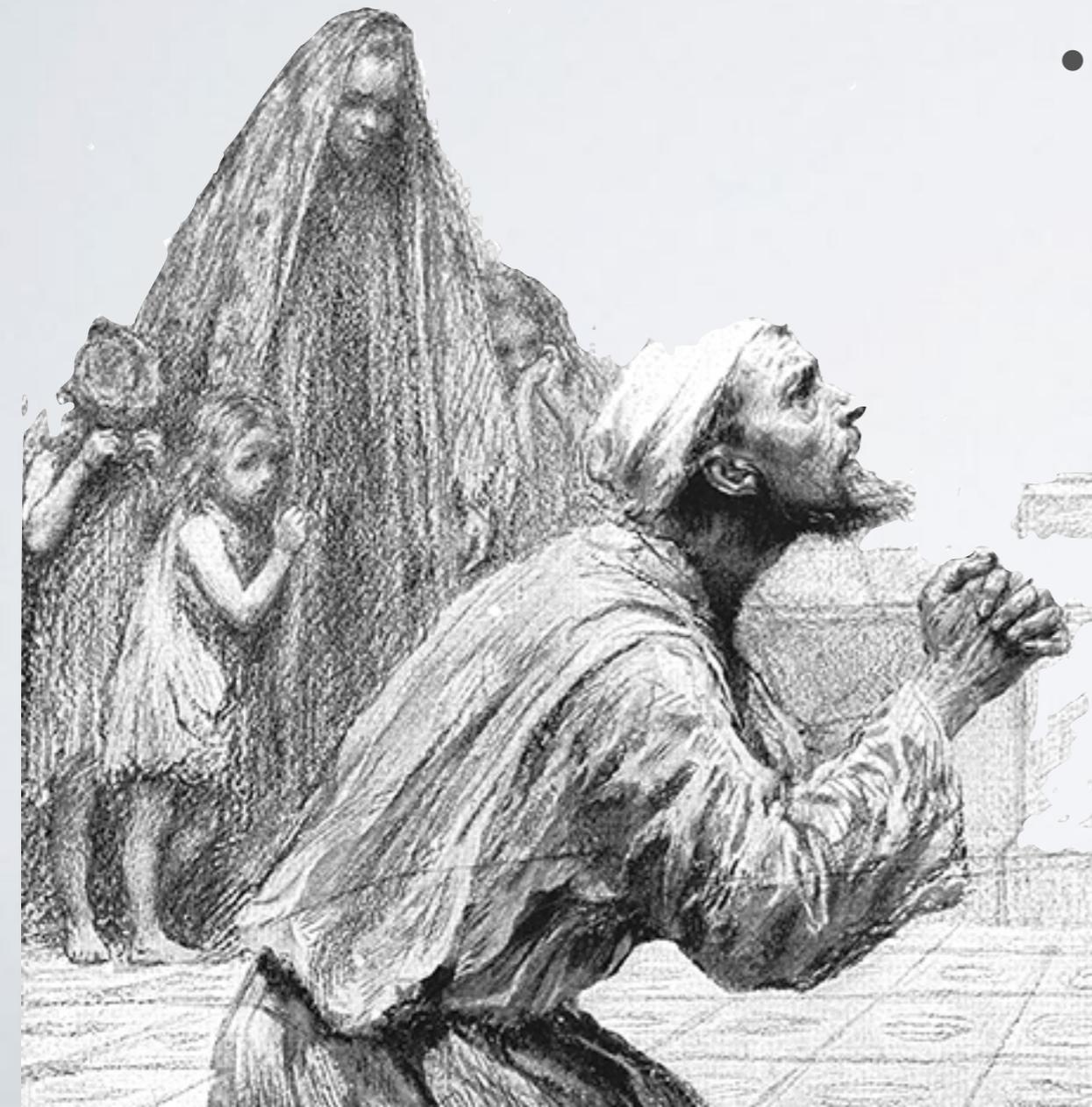
UNFORGIVING SERVANT

- The Debt language is significant
 - Huge Amount - is a dynamic translation.
 - The literal translation is:
10,000 talents
 - How much is just one talent?
 - 6,000 denarii
St John Chrysostom teaches:
1 denarius = 1 day of work



UNFORGIVING SERVANT

- The Debtor owed the equivalent of:
 - $10,000 \times 6,000 = 60,000,000$ days of labor.
 - Assuming he worked 6 days a week, this would mean he owed **only 191,693 years** of work!
 - The point is the debt could not be paid - and even selling the man and his family did not put a dent on what was owed.



UNFORGIVING SERVANT

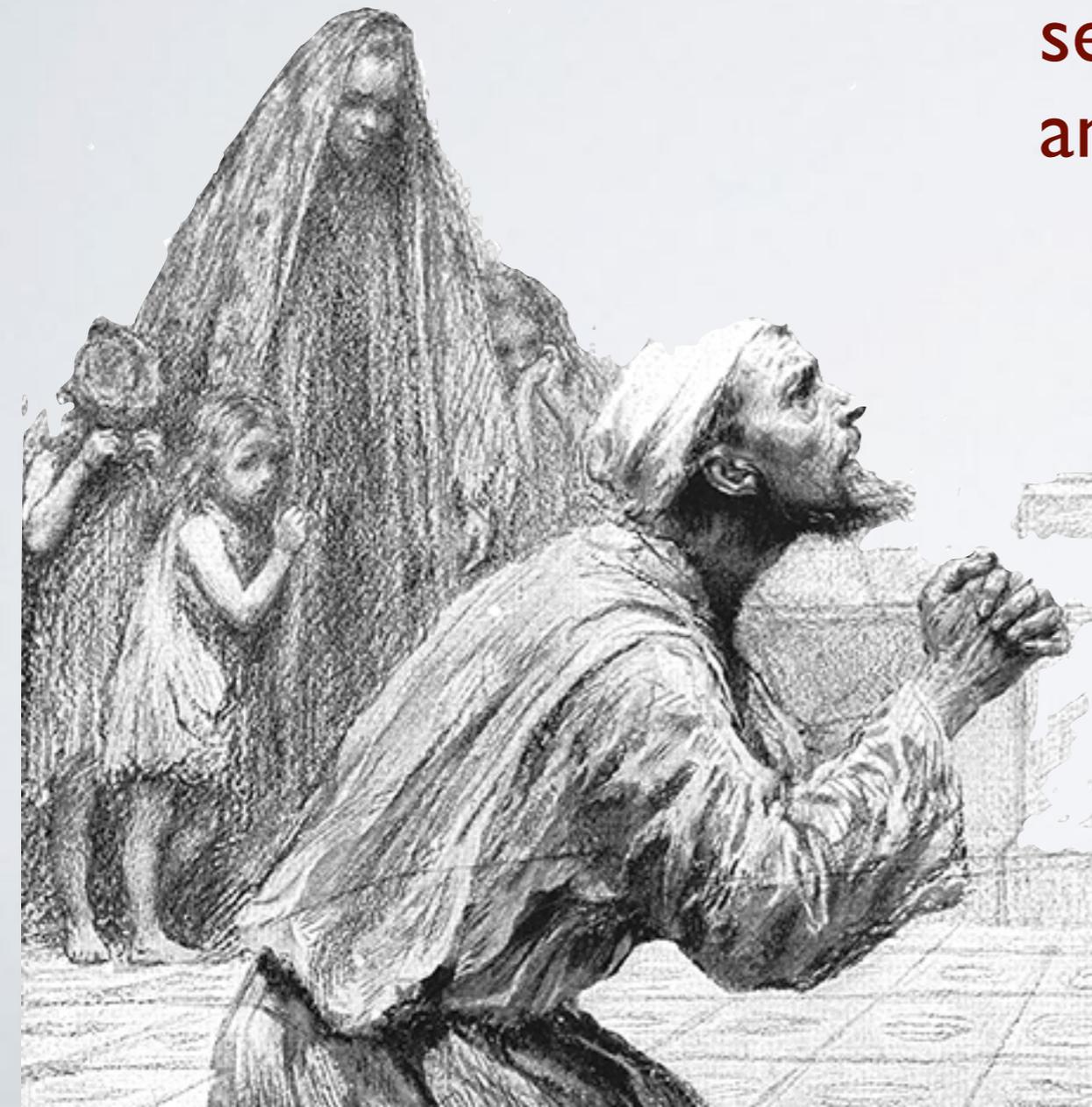
- The Debtor pleads:
 - “Be patient with me, and I will pay you back in full.”
 - Could the Debtor ever pay?
 - Of course, not.
 - Moved with compassion, the master forgave the loan.
 - The Master was *merciful*.



UNFORGIVING SERVANT

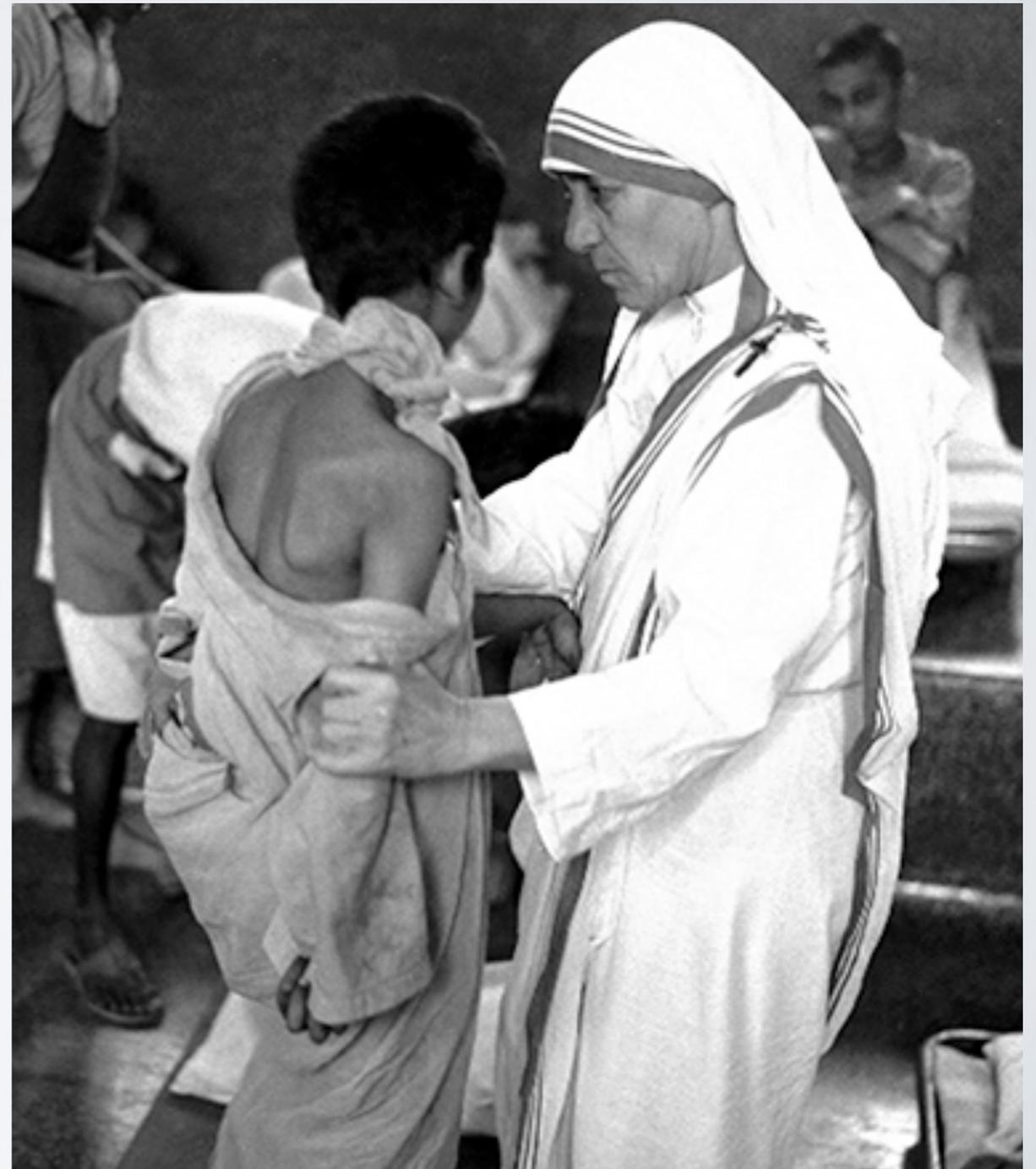
- The debt owed to the forgiven servant was a “much smaller amount.”
 - Literally, only 100 denarii.
 - less than *three* months wages.
 - Yet, the forgiven servant had the other debtor put in prison until he paid the debt.

★ Justice versus Mercy



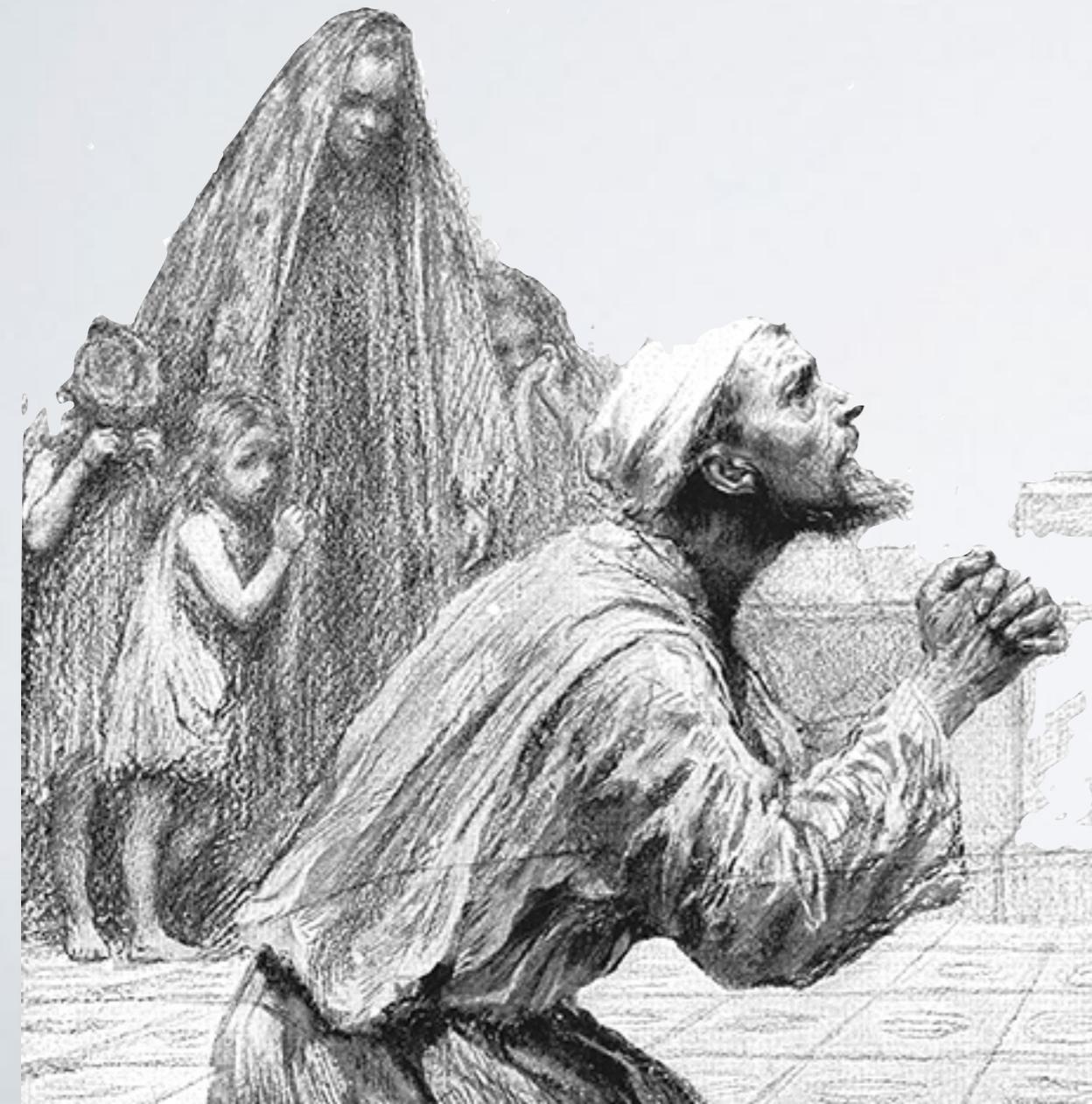
UNFORGIVING SERVANT

- Theme of mercy on the Sermon on the Mount.
 - **Be Merciful** just as your Father is Merciful. (Lk 6:36)
 - Blessed are the **Merciful** for they shall be **shown Mercy**. (Mt 5:7)
- Theme of unforgiveness in the Sermon on the Mount.
Sir 28:1-5, Mt 6:12, 14-15



UNFORGIVING SERVANT

- So what does the Master do with the forgiven servant, who does not then forgive?
 - puts him in Prison *until* he pays the whole debt.



UNFORGIVING SERVANT

- So what does the Master do with the forgiven servant, who does not then forgive?
 - puts him in Prison *until* he pays the whole debt.
 - The implication is that he will be in Prison for eternity!

UNFORGIVING SERVANT



UNFORGIVING SERVANT

- Will God revoke in the future, some forgiveness that He has given us *now*, because of a *future* act of ours?
 - See Mt 18: 32-35*
 - **What does this mean?**
- God will not revoke. He will punish (*perhaps eternally*) those who don't forgive, because its a condition for obtaining God's forgiveness.



UNFORGIVING SERVANT

- St Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, points out:
 - If someone sins **against you**, who are part of the Body of Christ, then he sins **against Christ**.
 - Since **Christ is merciful and forgives repentant sinners**, how can you, *another* member of the same Body of Christ, not forgive - As Paul says: Christ can not be divided.
 - Hence, you *cannot* remain part of His Body, if you do not forgive one who, *forgiven by Christ*, pleads to you for your forgiveness.



UNFORGIVING SERVANT

- St John Chrysostom makes another amazing observation, if one looks at the sins, based on who is offended:
- Note there are two debts in the parable:
 - **Servant to Master and Servant to Servant.**
 - **Sins against God (Master)** are infinite and not able to be paid by man apart from the Mercy of God.
 - **Sins between Men** are by definition and comparison always minor - always within our power to forgive.

ANOTHER EXORCIST

Lk 9: 49-50*

- John **sees** an exorcist
 - who casts out in Jesus name
- John **tries to prevent**
 - *because* he does NOT follow in our company
- “Do not prevent, for whoever is NOT against you is for you.”



ANOTHER EXORCIST

- But see Lk 11:23* [Lk 11:14-23]
 - “Whoever is NOT with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me, scatters.”
- Again, lets look at Lk 9:50
 - “Do not prevent, for whoever is NOT against you is for you.”



ANOTHER EXORCIST

	Not against			
Lk 9:50	FOR	Not with	AGAINST	
Lk 11:23	FOR	Not with	AGAINST	
	FOR	Not with	AGAINST	

How do we reconcile these two passages of
Luke 9:50 and Luke 11:23?

ANOTHER EXORCIST

- In Lk 9 - *the exorcist case*, the person is acting in the name of Jesus and advancing His kingdom, by expelling demons.
- In Lk 11 - *the accusation case*, alleges that Jesus works by **Beelzebul**, and thus is not advancing His kingdom, and not expelling demons, but cooperating with them.
- In the first case, the exorcist is with Jesus, in the second the accuser is against Jesus.



LUKAN TRAVEL NARRATIVE

- This Narrative is unique to St Luke's Gospel - spanning 10 chapters of his Gospel
- He will preach many parables and final teachings, that are uniquely recorded in Luke alone.
- The LTN follows His Transfiguration, *a final goodbye to His ministry in Galilee* - including a cursing of the three towns in which He did most of his miracles.
- Jesus resolutely proceeds to His death in Jerusalem.

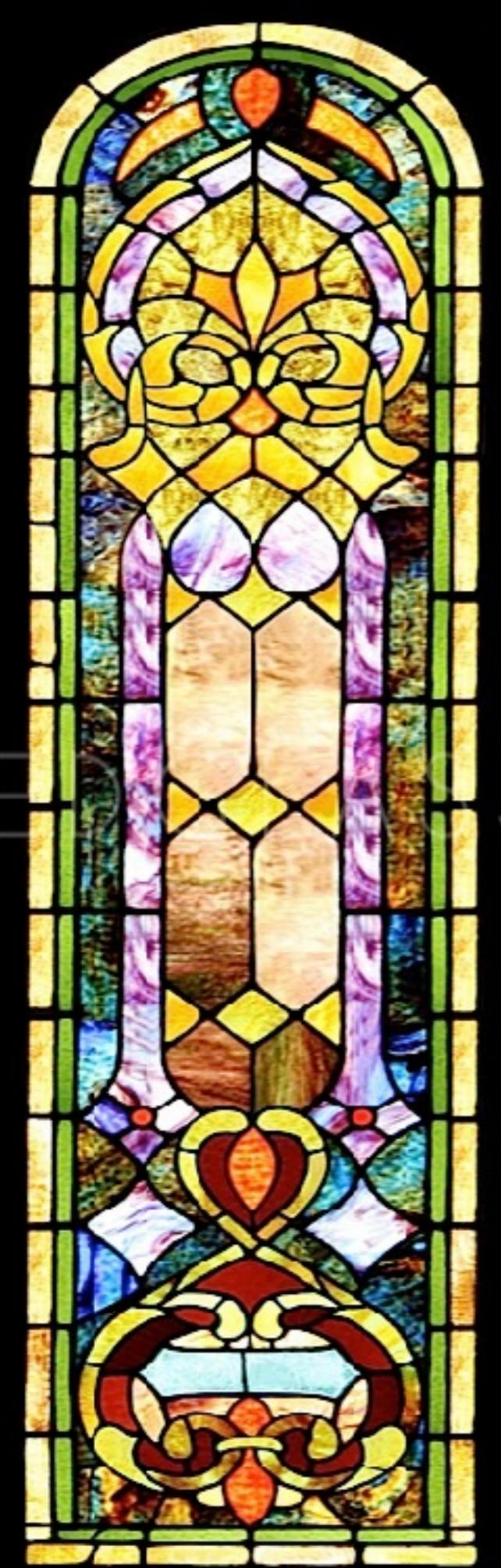
LUKAN TRAVEL NARRATIVE



LUKAN TRAVEL NARRATIVE

- St Luke also documents some unique accounts in his infancy narrative.
- The LTN ends with His triumphant entry into Jerusalem.
 - ... but much will happen before then.





THE GOSPELS

A Scholarly Biblical Study

