

**Jesus Predicts His Death and Resurrection Again**  
**Matthew 17:22-23**  
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These two verses are sandwiched between the account of the healing of the boy with epilepsy, leading to Jesus' teaching about the disciples' little faith, and the following story of the miraculous payment of the temple tax. As the disciples' weak faith prevented them from trusting God to cure the epileptic boy, here we see the disciples' weak faith preventing them from understanding the significance of the resurrection of Jesus.

**The prelude (17:22)**

The disciples had been in the district of Caesarea Philippi, which was about twenty-five miles north of the Sea of Galilee. This was the likely setting for the transfiguration of Jesus, on nearby Mount Hermon. So by referencing their gathering in Galilee, this pointed to the journey south. The next section will place them in Galilee in the town of Capernaum (17:24).

Since returning from the mountain with Peter, James and John to rejoin the remaining nine disciples, they would have traveled this distance together. The NIV places them already in Galilee when Jesus spoke these words and some lesser manuscripts say the disciples remained in Galilee.

The ESV and NASB render this prelude best, "*And while they were gathering together in Galilee.*" This implies that these words were spoken as they were concluding their travel from Caesarea Philippi to Galilee. They would remain in Galilee until they departed for Judea in Matthew 19:1.

**The prediction (17:22-23)**

The first clear prediction of Jesus' impending death and resurrection came in Matthew 16:21, "*From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised up on the third day.*" In addition, there have been several allusions to this by Jesus that were much less directly stated (cf. Matthew 9:15; 10:38; 12:40; 17:12).

This second prediction adds more to what Jesus had revealed to this point. Specifically He added that He would be "delivered into the hands of men." This could be understood in one of two ways.

The Greek word for *“is going to be delivered”* (PARADIDOSTHAI) could be understood in a somewhat weaker sense of “would be handed over” or in a stronger sense of “would be betrayed.” Obviously, there is not enough of an immediate context to make a clear determination. However, we do know that Jesus would be betrayed by Judas. Furthermore, forms of this Greek word are used to describe the betrayal of Jesus several times in Matthew 26 alone. So while it may not have been clear to the disciples at this time, it is fair to say that Jesus does reference His pending betrayal.

Also, the verb *“is going to be delivered”* is in the passive voice, indicating that this act of betrayal is not the active cause of the killing of Jesus. This points to God’s sovereign plan in this betrayal, as prophesied in the Old Testament (Zechariah 11:12-13). While Judas was certainly morally culpable for his sin, God ordained the devil to *“put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him”* (John 13:2).

The Son of Man was destined to be delivered into the hands of men. The betrayal of Jesus by Judas to the priests would lead Him to be delivered into a hasty trial before the ruling council, who delivered Him to Pontius Pilate, who sent Him to Herod Antipas, who sent Him back to Pilate, who delivered Him to the mob for potential release, who delivered Him to the Romans for execution. There were certainly many hands of men that conspired to bring about the God-ordained crucifixion of Jesus.

### **The problem (17:23)**

That the disciples were deeply grieved by these words shows their poor faith that Jesus spoke about in Matthew 17:20. They only responded to His words about being killed and not His promise that He would rise on the third day. This is a recurrence of when Jesus first disclosed to them His death and resurrection, where Peter would say “God forbid *it*, Lord! This shall never happen to You” (Matthew 16:22). Jesus then rebuked Peter, but now the disciples had yet to accept the will and the wisdom of God by faith.

### **Conclusion**

As Jesus’ focused His ministry on His disciples, the theme of faith continues. This littleness of their faith to trust God’s will is their problem throughout. Jesus will endeavor to build their faith in the following section, which involves His miraculous provision for their needs.