

Matthew 17:24 to End. Christ Pays Tribute.

by Favell Lee Mortimer

Jesus pays the tribute to demonstrate his power and to comfort his people, showing that He is aware of and can direct even the smallest details of our lives.

Topics: "Divine Providence", "Faith Strengthened"

Description

Favell Lee Mortimer preaches on the miraculous provision of Jesus for the temple tax, showcasing His divine attributes of Omniscience and Omnipotence. By directing Peter to find a shekel in the mouth of a fish, Jesus not only paid the tribute for Himself and Peter but also demonstrated His care and provision for His disciples, strengthening their faith for future trials. This miracle serves as a reminder that God's intimate knowledge and control extend even to the smallest details of our lives, assuring believers of His constant presence, provision, and protection.

Transcript

We now find our blessed Lord returned to his own city, Capernaum, and to the house where he generally lodged. The collectors of tribute-money called at that lowly abode, and seeing Peter near it, asked him whether his Master would pay the sum required of him. This tribute was not to be paid to Caesar, the emperor, but to the priests, for the sacrifices of the temple. Every person above twenty years of age was required to pay yearly half a shekel, or about one shilling and threepence of our money. The Lord Jesus, as the Son of God, might have excused himself from paying this tribute for the service of his own Father, because kings do not demand taxes from their own children--yet he would not use this privilege, because he knew that it would be made a matter of accusation against him. The world would have misunderstood his motives. They would have suspected him of indifference to the service of the temple. He knew this was an occasion on which to exercise his miraculous powers. His divine attributes now shone forth in a most glorious manner. He displayed his Omniscience, for he described the circumstances of a certain fish then swimming in the lake of Gennesaret. He showed his Omnipotence, for he caused that very fish to come to Peter's hook. He showed also his love for his disciple; as the piece of money found in the fish was a whole shekel, (in value about half-a-crown,) and would suffice to pay Peter's tribute as well as his Master's.

This miracle was calculated to strengthen the apostle's weak faith under approaching trials. It was evident that He, who knew all about an insignificant fish, must foresee the manner of his own death; it was evident that He, who could direct the movements of that little animal in the depths of the sea, could escape from his own enemies, if he pleased to exert his Almighty power.

And surely this miracle must be a comfort to all God's people. The most minute circumstances concerning ourselves are seen by that eye which discerned the little fish in the water--the smallest incidents in our lives are ordered by that hand which brought the fish to Peter's hook. Why then should we fear? What evil can betide us, if we belong to Christ, and trust in him? We know not what a day may bring forth; but He does. We may (like him) be reduced to our last piece of money, but he can supply us with more at the needful moment. How can any be so unwise, as not to seek the favor of the Governor of the whole universe? What a privilege it is to belong to his family! What a comfort to be under his fatherly care!

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