

Theme: Jesus pronounced final judgment upon the leaders and people of Israel for the willful, persistent refusal to receive God's messengers, culminating in their rejection of Him as their Messianic King.

I. Intro - Extended Cut of Movies

- A. DVD's offer extended cuts of movies
- B. Sometimes these are bad; sometimes really interesting
- C. I love hearing directors explain their thinking in why something was left out or added.
- D. Today an extended cut of Jesus in the Temple!

II. Extended Cut: Matthew 23

- A. These are critical words from Jesus
Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples:
Matthew 23:1
 - 1. They are his final words in the Temple!
 - 2. They are His final words in public ministry!
 - 3. They are spoken for all to hear (crowds and...)!
 - 4. They are very critical of the leaders and people of Israel and pronounce judgment upon Israel
- B. These words help explain the meaning of Jesus' Olivet discourse (Matthew 24/Mark 13/Luke 21)
 - 1. Matthew gives much more detail to prepare the reader because the events will especially affect those living in Israel at that time
 - 2. Because Mark 13 is VERY misunderstood today I wanted to do this extended cut look at Matthew 23

III. Jesus Pronounces Judgment on Israel

- A. Jesus warns about the scribes & Pharisees (vv1-12)
Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples:
Matthew 23:1
 - 1. They wield authority harshly! (v4)
 - 2. They do things to be seen by others (v5)
 - 3. They love titles and honor (vv6-7)
 - 4. We are to do the opposite of this (vv8-12)
- B. Jesus pronounces 7 woes on the scribes & Pharisees (vv13-36)
“Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. Matthew 23:13
 - 1. Jesus pronounces seven woes on them!
 - 2. “Woe to you teachers of the law and Pharisees! You hypocrites!”
 - a. Hypocrite - originally the mask actors wore in Greek plays - it makes you appear to be something you are not (another person, a god, an animal).
 - b. The problem of these leaders was not that they lived in gross hidden sin, but rather that people thought they knew God and what God desired but they did not! They were not what they appeared to be!
 - c. They played the part of shepherds of God's people but were actually shepherds for Satan!
 - 3. Seven - the number of fulness - their judgment day has arrived!

4. The seven woes

- a. vv13 - You keep people from heaven!
- b. vv15 - You make people children of hell!
- c. vv16-22 - You utterly misunderstand what is of real value in oaths and worship!
- d. vv23-24 - You misunderstand what is important in the Law!
- e. vv25-26 - You clean the outside but not the inside!
- f. vv27-28 - You are whitewashed tombs!
- g. vv29-36 - You reject and kill God's messengers!

5. The structure of the 7 woes

Woe	Focus
1 and 2 (vv13, 15)	You keep people out of heaven
3 and 4 (vv16-24)	You focus on minor rules while ignoring the heart of the Law
5 and 6 (vv25-28)	You focus on external appearance rather than internal purity
7 (vv29-36)	You are part of Israel's long history of rejecting and murdering God's messengers!

- a. These woes show their hypocrisy - their entire understanding of what God desires is wrong! Their "mask" looks like those who please God but He is not pleased!
- b. This is an indictment of their entire approach to the faith - the choose legalism and reject the Gospel.

6. The 7th woe is a summation of all the other woes and the history of Israel

- a. It is like the blessing on the 7th day - it doubles on all that has gone before. But this is a double curse rather than a double blessing.

- b. This is not just a recent problem, nor is it simply restricted to the leaders of Israel. It is the culmination of Israel's long history of rejecting God's messengers.

Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers! Matthew 23:32

- c. They fulfill this by rejecting John the Baptist, Jesus, and the apostles and Jesus!

"You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? ³⁴ Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. Matthew 23:33-34

1. Brood of vipers - same language as John (Matt 3:7)
2. This day began with a question about Who authorized and sent Jesus, and Jesus asking them about John the Baptist!
3. They rejected John and let him be killed, and they are plotting to kill Jesus!
4. This will continue in the future as Jesus sends the apostles and early church to them - and they will kill Stephen and others!
5. This is a sustained rebellion and rejection!

7. This generation will be judged for all the slaying of God's messengers throughout history!

And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶ I tell you the truth, all this will come upon this generation. Matthew 23:35-36

- a. Abel to Zechariah - the 1st and last martyrs in the Hebrew Bible - more in After Hours.
- b. This generation will sum up and exceed all of this ugly history by killing God's own Son!

- c. They will be like the vineyard tenants in the parable Jesus told them that morning - they will kill the Owners Son and He will come and destroy them and give the vineyard to others! (Mark 12:1-12)
- d. Jesus is emphatic - the judgment for ALL of this will come during THIS GENERATION - that specific generation.

C. Jesus pronounces judgment upon all Israel (vv37-39)

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.

³⁸Look, your house is left to you desolate. ³⁹ For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.' Matthew 23:37-39

1. Jesus does not pronounce judgment on Israel with glee but rather with sorrow!
2. As the Messiah He has longed to gather and protect Israel like a hen does its chicks - but in this case the chicks try to kill the hen!
3. Just as the generations before refused God, so this generation has refused Jesus the Messiah.
4. Jesus pronounces the house - the Temple and ultimately all Israel - as desolate. The Spirit has departed.
5. It is no longer "God's house" but "your house".
6. As Jesus leaves the Temple so does the covenant Presence of God.
7. Jesus the King promised He absolutely would not return to the house unless the people received Him as Messiah (the same words spoken at the triumphal entry).

8. This is NOT a promise that Israel would do this - in fact, they refused to do this and Jesus did not return.
9. Because Israel refused Jesus as the Messianic King, her fate was sealed - the Temple, city, and nation would be destroyed by the Romans in 70AD.
10. We will look at Jesus' specific prediction of this in Mark 13.

IV. Applying the Word

A. Do I understand this is the changing of the covenant?

1. This was a critical moment that continued through Jesus' teaching in Mark 13 and we need to understand it properly.
2. Jesus is announcing the judgment of national Israel in that generation and then the end of the Old Covenant FOREVER - it will NEVER return.
3. Many evangelicals misunderstand this today and act as if the Old Covenant is still in place and national Israel is still the covenant people of God - but the Church, composed of Jews and Gentiles, is the people of God and the heir of God's covenant.
4. Not understanding this also leads to wild expectations and statements about the end of the world based on a wrong reading of the Olivet discourse (Matthew 24/Mark 13/Luke 21).
5. We will cover this more as we look at Mark 13, which is NOT about our future but rather about the judgment of national Israel and the end of the old covenant.
6. This is why we are taking time to work through this - most evangelicals do not understand this properly.

B. Do I see the danger of religion

1. The people Jesus pronounced woes and judgment upon were VERY religious!
2. The problem was that their religion was utterly false!
3. Their religion was based on legalistic rules rather than inward faith and purity.
4. Their religion turned God's very Law and Word on its head!
5. Their religion led them to be so blind to the truth that they rejected and killed God's Own Son!
6. Their religion did not even need God - they continued all of their rituals for 40 years after God left the building!
7. This is NOT a statement that we should be "spiritual" but not "religious" or that it is ok to "stay away from organized religion" - those are just smokescreens for "I want to do everything my own way with no commitment"
8. Jesus COMMANDS us to be part of a local church, to regularly gather together, to have leaders, and to work to reach the world together - this is NOT an option for a follower of Jesus.
9. But we must do this in a spirit of truly seeking God together, longing to be filled with Spirit and become more like Jesus.
10. Am I more committed to the principles of Christianity than I am to Jesus Himself?
11. Am I experiencing a vibrant walk with Jesus, or is my faith a mental or verbal commitment without the reality of a vibrant experience of His Presence?

C. The Table of the God's Presence

1. We come to this Table not for mere ritual but to experience God's Presence!
2. But to experience His Presence we must be open to the Voice of His Spirit - Who may correct us!
3. Come and experience God's Living Presence!

Extended Cut: Israel's Judgment Day

Matthew 23

September 15, 2024

Communion

2 Corinthians 13:14

Teaching keywords: Christology; Christology; Israel; judgment; Old Covenant

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. May you experience the full blessing of His Presence this week, and may you be a blessing to others. 2 Corinthians 13:14

Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: ² “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³ So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. ⁴ They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. ⁵ “Everything they do is done for men to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long; ⁶ they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; ⁷ they love to be greeted in the marketplaces and to have men call them ‘Rabbi.’ ⁸ “But you are not to be called ‘Rabbi,’ for you have only one Master and you are all brothers. ⁹ And do not call anyone on earth ‘father,’ for you have one Father, and he is in heaven. ¹⁰ Nor are you to be called ‘teacher,’ for you have one Teacher, the Christ. ¹¹ The greatest among you will be your servant. ¹² For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted. ¹³ “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the kingdom of heaven in men’s faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to. ¹⁵ “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are. ¹⁶ “Woe to you, blind guides! You say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ ¹⁷ You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? ¹⁸ You also say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift on it, he is bound by his oath.’ ¹⁹ You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? ²⁰ Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. ²¹ And he who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. ²² And he who swears by heaven swears by God’s throne and by the one who sits on it. ²³ “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices — mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law — justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have

practiced the latter, without neglecting the former. ²⁴ You blind guides! You strain out a gnat but swallow a camel. ²⁵ “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You clean the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. ²⁶ Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. ²⁷ “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You are like whitewashed tombs, which look beautiful on the outside but on the inside are full of dead men’s bones and everything unclean. ²⁸ In the same way, on the outside you appear to people as righteous but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness. ²⁹ “Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You build tombs for the prophets and decorate the graves of the righteous. ³⁰ And you say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our forefathers, we would not have taken part with them in shedding the blood of the prophets.’ ³¹ So you testify against yourselves that you are the descendants of those who murdered the prophets. ³² Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers! ³³ “You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell? ³⁴ Therefore I am sending you prophets and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town. ³⁵ And so upon you will come all the righteous blood that has been shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶ I tell you the truth, all this will come upon this generation. ³⁷ “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing. ³⁸ Look, your house is left to you desolate. ³⁹ For I tell you, you will not see me again until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’” Matthew 23:1-39