

THE LAST WEEK OF THE LORD JESUS ON EARTH

IVr. Jesus' Final Day of Public Teaching (cont.)

Jesus Proclaims Truth (Part 18 cont. Second Evening c. 6:15 P.M.)

Wed, 12th Nisán (Apr. 1): Persecution of the Prophets (cont.) 8b

Mt. 23:29-33

Introduction: We have been considering the lessons which The Lord Jesus Christ taught along the way to and in The Temple on Wednesday two days before His Crucifixion

A. Lessons Taught on the Way to The Temple (c. 5:50 to 7:20 A.M.).

On their way to The Temple, Jesus taught His disciples Lessons on Faith, Prayer, and Forgiveness.

B. His Ministry in The Temple (c. 7:30 A.M. to c. 6:00 P.M.).

After Jesus entered The Temple early in early morning, the religious leaders inquired of Him about His authority. He challenged them by answering with a question of His own about John the Baptizer. After refusing to answer His question, Jesus told parables and began teaching lessons in eight categories.

1. The Lesson on Faithful Service (c. 9:00 A.M.).

This parable indicated that there are two kinds disobedience: Blatant Resistant Disobedience and Reserved Disobedience which is implied consent to do what the father ordered but failed to comply. Both kinds result in eternal punishment in The Lake of Fire.

2. The Lesson on Fatal Wrath (c. 10:00 A.M.) - Two Parables:

a. The Parable of the Housemaster and the Fruit of his Vineyard.

This parable teaches that all people shall be called into account for complete obedience to all four of The Lord Jesus Christ's Commands and thereby render to Him the fruits of their work of discipleship. But failure to render the fruits of the vineyard to The Housemaster results in **Fatal Wrath of Eternal Destruction**.

b. The Parable of the Wedding Feast (c. 11:00 A.M.).

This parable teaches that failure to respond to the invitation to The Wedding Feast and wear the provided Wedding clothing results in **Fatal Wrath** by being cast into outer darkness, suffering in anguish forever with weeping and gnashing of teeth in The Lake of Fire.

3. The Lesson on Financial Responsibility (c. 1:00 P.M.).

Jesus responded to the question by the delegation of spies composed of Pharisees and Herodians with a question followed by a tax coin which He turned into a visual aid to teach The Truth that it is equally important in the eyes of The God to render to each authority over us that which rightfully belongs to each.

4. The Lesson on Future Living (c. 2:00 P.M.).

This lesson teaches that The God expects every human to live in the light of life after death and the resurrection which follows. Every human must face The Judgment Throne of The God. There is on the one hand The Resurrection of Absolute Life in union with The Lord Jesus Christ and for all others the resurrection for judging to Eternal Damnation. We must live so as to avoid that tremendous eternal cost and to face life after death.

5. The Lesson on False Religion (c. 2:45 P.M.).

This Lesson on False Religion covers four segments: Futile Resolve, Faulty Reflection on Scripture, Fallible Recognition, and Fatal Rebuke.

a. The Reproof of Futile Resolve.

A lawyer-scribe challenged Jesus with the question, Which sort of commandment in The Law is great and first of all? His answer

demonstrated That The God expects all to sovereignly prefer The Godhead **FIRST** in all things and put all that concerns Him **FIRST** before all earthly desires and ambition!

b. The Reproof of Faulty Rendering of Scripture (c. 3:00 P.M.).

Jesus dealt with four areas of Faulty Rendering of Truth which needed to be reproofed and corrected: the resurrection, the impact and priority of The Law and the priority of love; Theology, especially Christology; and which Commandment of The Law was great.

In dealing with the matter if Christology, He explained the two meanings of 'Lord' and the two aspects of His Sonship. The Lord Jesus Christ is David's Lord and Supreme Master and at the same time He also is Jehovah 'LORD,' David's Redeemer, The Second Person of The Godhead.

6. **The Lesson on Reproof of Fallible Recognition** (c. 3:45 P.M.).

Then in mid First evening (c. 3:45 P.M.), The Lord Jesus warned the crowds and His disciples against three serious categories in which the Pharisees used to obtain special recognition and avid attention: Lives Inconsistent with their Teachings, Insolent Appearance, and Intentness that their Status Be Honored. Although all these things may not be present at the same time, many of them are present in the lives of constituents and proponents of various religions of today, even in those who claim to be Christian, which things were condemned by The Lord.

7. **The Lesson of Reproof by Fatal Rebuke** (c. 4:00-6: P.M.).

Later Wednesday afternoon The Lord Jesus pronounced eight woes upon hypocrites, scribes, and Pharisees for being engaged in eight areas of damnable deeds increasing the severity and intensity of Woe that The Lord Jesus Christ pronounced upon these religious Pharisees and all religious people who are guilty of the same sins. All shall receive this same condemnation to The **Géh-ehnnah** according to the severity of their works, thus degrees of punishment in The Lake of Fire.

a. The First Woe! Prohibitive Oppression (c. 4:00 P.M.).

The first Woe that The Lord pronounced upon the hypocritical scribes and Pharisees before the face of His disciples was because of their prohibitive oppression upon the people to keep them from committing trust unto Him by shutting off the way to The Kingdom of The Heavens by constantly proclaiming the substitution of 'works,' instead of emphasizing 'repentance and faith,' which The God requires.

So it is today, the same condemnation awaits all who refuse to enter themselves and/or seek to bar or hold back those who attempt to enter The Kingdom by whatever Satanic means, especially false teaching particularly proclaiming the substitution of 'good works' in the place of repentance and faith to obtain Salvation.

b. The Second Woe! Pretentious Praying (c. 4:15 P.M.).

There are two reasons for which this woe was pronounced:

(1) For Devouring that which Belonged to Widows;

The accusative plural of *οικία* (oikéeah) means 'dwellings' with the metonymical meaning of 'household, goods, property, and means.' It was not just houses of the widows that the scribes and Pharisees were devouring but also their means of livelihood as well

Two ways that the scribes and Pharisees could be accused to be the so-called devourers of the widows was to be Appointed as Executors of a recently deceased husband's estate and to be Honored at Sumptuous Feasts. They also persisted in using their religion to increase their own coffers while decreasing those of the widows, thus profiting financially from their religion and their religious teaching.

(2) For Pretentious Praying.

It was also noted that what the scribes and Pharisees were praying are not prayers but nothing more than long sessions of prattle in a sanctimonious tone to themselves in public to be heard and revered. False preachers, false teachers, and false pastors that are in their profession for the money under false pretenses have their lot cast with historic scribes, Pharisees, and false prophets under the curse and woe pronounced by The Lord Jesus Himself.

c. The Third Woe! Persevering Proselytizing c. 4:30 P.M. (Mt. 23:15).

The hypocritical scribes and Pharisees were persistently persevering in proselytizing to make Pharisee Jews that follow their doctrine and practices. This helps us to understand the difference between a truly regenerated disciple-saint of Christ and not just a proselyte-disciple.

d-g. The Fourth to Seventh **Woes** come under The Category of Inconsistency in four areas.

d. The Fourth Woe! Inconsistency in Conformity to The Scriptures in Relation to Swearing with an Oath c. 4:45 P.M. (Mt. 23:16-22).

The Lord Jesus continued to upbraid the hypocrites, scribes, and Pharisees, titling them blind guides and morons, literally meaning 'foolish- or stupid-thinkers' because they sought to evade consequences in swearing and to cover up their prevaricating with an invalid, stupid assertion of distinction as the basis for an oath. They instituted their oral precept regarding proper legal responsibility to their aged parents and declared whatever their parents may be benefited by them, A consecrated gift! Also He declared The God's rejection of a consecrated gift if the offerer has caused offense to a brother and refuses to reconcile.

e. The Fifth Woe! Inconsistency in Stewardship in Relation to Tithing c. 5:00 P.M. (Mt. 23:23,24).

This Woe was pronounced because of the Pharisees inconsistency in stewardship, especially in regard to tithing. In some areas they went beyond The Law by meticulously tithing minute matters and abandoning due consideration of heavier matters more meaningful and bringing greater judgment, namely 'The judging,' the context of His teaching throughout the day, 'the mercy,' and 'The faith' which is The Faith of The Lord Jesus Christ Himself, which Faith He was about to demonstrate beginning in two days. It is not just your faith nor my faith, but our faith in The Faith of The Lord Jesus Christ. Faith embraces all the great doctrines of Salvation and **All** Scripture.

f. The Sixth Woe! Inconsistency in Ceremonial Cleansing c. 5:15 P.M. (Mt. 23:25,26).

Jesus pronounced this Woe because of the Pharisees inconsistent blind regard for ceremonial cleansing, while giving greater concern for the outer aspect of living than the inner aspect. This was evidenced by the extreme meticulous regard for washing eating and drinking vessels and their hands that convey food and drink to the mouth. In order to be ceremonially clean they gave greater regard for oral precepts that were delivered by humans and were added to The Commandments, Statutes, and Judgments of The God rather than giving the greater regard for The God-given Commandments themselves.

These Pharisee-hypocrites made a fair show in the flesh openly to appear to be something they were not. But in reality they were completely the opposite to what they seemed to appear. And The Lord Jesus exposed them for what they were, blind guides pretending

to know and seeking to lead blind ones to the same **Géh-ehnnah** to which they are unknowingly going because they will not obey the plain teaching of Scripture. They persistently prefer what they have learned of themselves and from their false teachers to Scripture Truth.

g. The Seventh Woe! Inconsistency in Seemingly Righteous Living c. 5:30 P.M. (Mt. 23:27,28).

The seventh Woe deals with another aspect of the same hypocrisy, ceremonial cleansing, which they hope will, but never can, cleanse the defiled heart. So it is a far more important matter involving a more serious condition and an exceedingly desperate defilement. It was pronounced because the hypocritical Pharisees were living inconsistently with their pretense. They sought to appear righteous and lawful to humans to portray their righteousness and prove that they are abiding by The Law, yet within they were full of unrighteousness, unlawfulness, and hypocrisy. Jesus declared it to be hypocrisy and lawlessness in The God's sight. Then He used a vivid illustration to depict their sham. Inside they were filled to capacity with uncleanness illustrated with "abundance of decayed bones of dead and buried people" because a dead bone ceremonially defiles all that comes into contact with it. They were well aware of what was written by Moses in The Law and the long process and requirements for purification for everyone who became defiled and unclean.

They twisted The Word of The God by making It inconclusive and needing their explanation in order to properly fulfill It. To them It was insufficient or incorrect and unworkable in life in their time until The Messiah comes! Thus The Day of Judging will reveal their true standing as they are condemned to The **Géh-ehnnah** forever. It is a very serious sin to declare The Truth declared in The God's Word to be unworkable or 'doesn't work'!

h. The Final Pronouncement of The Eighth and Final Woe! Persecution of The Lord's Prophets c. 6:00 P.M. (Mt. 23:29-33).

The Lord Jesus had been teaching all day for twelve and a half hours, eleven hours in The Temple. He began c. 6:00 P.M. to pronounce His eighth woe upon the Pharisees for persecuting the prophets. He posed seven factors to them: Undeniable Proof, Ungodly Posterity, Unanswerable Proposition, Unavoidable Predicament, Unexpected Prospect, Unmindful of The God's Purpose, and Unforeseeable Penalty. However, since this portion covers more Truth that can be properly treated in one lesson it was divided into three parts.

(1) Undeniable Proof is the first of these seven factors (Mt. 23:29-31).

The Lord Jesus stated two facts of undeniable proof as to why these hypocrites, scribes, and Pharisees were the murderers of the prophets and righteous ones and would be judged with the same murderers and receive the same condemnation to The **Géh-ehnnah** (v. 33).

Firstly, these hypocrites were the murderers of the prophets and righteous ones and would be judged with them and receive the same condemnation to The **Géh-ehnnah**. They were currently involved in building burial places, tombs, luxurious mausoleums, and renovating and adorning (whitewashing) memorial graves of their martyred prophets and righteous men which their ancestral fathers murdered. They claimed that if they were existing in those days they would not have been partakers with the fathers in shedding the blood of the prophets, but they were lying. Jesus said that it was not true. Rather the burial places were being built

out of pride, pretense, hypocrisy to deliver themselves from guilt. **Secondly**, According to The Lord Jesus these buildings were not motivated nor influenced by honor or respect for the prophets and righteous ones, nor for repentance regarding their ancestral national sins. Rather they were being built to deliver themselves from the guilt being passed on by The God stated in The Law. The Pharisees' claim was a sham that was testifying against themselves. In fact their present intent to kill The One speaking to them at that time was further proof of what He said. These two facts provide undeniable proof of what He said,

(2) Ungodly Posterity (Mt. 23:31,32).

The second reason for pronouncing the eighth woe upon the hypocritical Pharisees was that they verbally testified that they were the sons of the fathers who murdered the prophets. In less than three hours the chief priests, scribes, and elders took council together to decide how to kill Jesus. Shortly thereafter the chief priests bargained with Judas **Eeskahreeōtays** (Iscariōt) to deliver-over Jesus to them for thirty shekels of silver. Jesus knew their minds and their intention to do exactly as their fathers did though they claimed to be different and would not be like their fathers.

Then Jesus made a most interesting statement loaded with Truth to enlighten the hearts of His obedient listeners that day and those who would read it for centuries thereafter. “And you& yourselves fully fill the measure of your& fathers.” Evidently The God measures out judgment according to the measure of iniquity and He has a full point of patience at which time it is reached, He pours out His judgment in wrath. It is like filling a small vessel with liquid that is full to the brim, the slightest bit more, when added, will cause it to spill over.

The Godhead had been very patient for a long time upon His people Israel. But at this time (in A.D. 33) when Jesus castigated the hypocritical Pharisees and scribes, because they intended to crucify The Christ, when they do so they shall fully fill up the measure of iniquity upon the nation. Judgment was not fully completed upon the nation until A.D. 70 when Titus destroyed The Temple and thus hindered the ability of The Jews to continue practicing The Law ceremonially in Jerusalem. However in essence The Old Testament Law was fully fulfilled by The Lord Jesus Christ Who instituted and enacted The New and Better Covenant, thus not only negating The Law (Eph. 2:15) but also consummating The New Covenant with His Blood.

The religious, Pharisaical, and legalistic Jews were still persecuting The Lord Jesus Christ through persecuting His disciples and followers (2 Thes. 2:14-16) when Paul wrote to the Thessalonians in A.D. 51 and the Pharisaical Jews kept at it long after the destruction of The Temple and the city of Jerusalem (A.D. 70). At which time and event the judgment for the sins of the leaders and the people of Judaism was meted out by The God of theirs and the ceremonial Law was unable to be performed.

(3) Unanswerable Proposition (Mt. 23:33).

Then The Lord Jesus posed an unanswerable question as the third reason for pronouncing the eighth woe upon the Pharisees.

“³³O serpents, O generation of vipers, how can you& successfully flee away from the judgment to The **Géh-ehnnah?**” (Mt. 23:33 APT).

The noun 'serpent' when used to describe a person means "a subtle, malicious, . . . dangerously fascinating person" (Webster's New International Dictionary, 1925). Likewise a 'viper' is a dangerous, treacherous . . . malignant person (ibid). The venom of the viper produces a severe and serious condition but is usually not immediately fatal. Satan's sting of sin however **is** fatal and inescapable and has bitten every human being, poisoning all with deadly venom, inducing spiritual death now and eternal death (separation from The God) eventually.

The **Géh-ehnnah** is a term taken from the valley of Géh-ehnnah outside the city of Jerusalem, where young people, particularly young children were offered in sacrifice in fiery death to Moloch the national god of the Ammonites and the ashes were left scattered. The **Géh-ehnnah** is the term used by The Lord Jesus Christ to refer to The Lake of Fire and Brimstone (burning sulphur).

The question The Lord Jesus posed to those Pharisees left them dumbfounded and unable to answer. No doubt He paused for them to give an answer before He proceeded to present the fourth reason for pronouncing the eighth woe upon them. But they did not interrupt Him as some did earlier in the day.

(4) Unavoidable Predicament (Mt. 23:34,35).

"³⁴Because-of this, lo! Myself, [gnomic present] I-send [with commission] to [the face of] you &, prophets and wise-ones+ and scribes. And out-of them &you-shall-kill and &you-shall-crucify and out-of them &you-shall-scourge [severely flail] in-your & /synagogues and &you-shall-persecute them [away] from city unto city ³⁵so-that all righteous blood spilled-out upon the Earth come upon you &, from the blood-of-the-righteous [Gen. 4:8] **Abehl** until the blood of [two in The Bible: 2 Chr. 24:20-22 and Zech. 1:1] **Zahkhahrécahs**, son of-**Bahrah-kheahs** [Zech. 1:1], whom &you-murdered between The Holy-Place+ [of The Temple] and the altar (Mt. 23:34,35).

Because these are the ones who fully filled the measure of the their fathers' iniquity, they cannot successfully escape the judgment in The **Géh-ehnnah**, that their rejected Messiah, The Lord Jesus Christ Himself sends to the face of the prophets and wise-ones and scribes (writers of Holy Spirit-directed Scriptures). And this generation of Pharisees and their proselyte-disciples will kill, crucify, scourge in their synagogues, and persecute (including imprisoning) those whom He Himself sends and by doing so they seal their Eternal Condemnation. And in fact, in just three months these things did come to pass as He said beginning in mid Sivan (early June) A.D. 33 and continuing for at least 35 years through early June A.D. 68 or possibly 4-5 more years when the last of the disciple-prophets were martyred. Thus all righteous blood ever spilled-out upon the Earth come upon them for acting as Jesus prophesied. At the same time the completing act of negating the covenant was accomplished with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple, consequently making it impossible to comply with The Ceremonial statutes and judgments of The Law. However down through the centuries since, disciple-saints in union with The Lord Jesus Christ and His True Church have been martyred or imprisoned and tortured for standing firm for The Lord Jesus Christ and The Truth of The Gospel.

Since these Pharisees were righteously judged by The Lord Jesus Christ as murderers of The Messiah and since all humans are sinners

(Rom. 3:23), and since The Lord Jesus Christ suffered for the sins of all humans (1 Pet. 3:18) all sinners are responsible for His crucifixion and are in the predicament of being sentenced to spend Eternity suffering the intense heat and darkness in The Lake of Fire and Burning Sulphur is unavoidable for all who are determinedly opposed or refuse to repent and abandon Sin and sins and commit persistent personal trust in faith to The Lord Jesus Christ forever.

(5) Unescapable Prospect (Mt. 23:36).

“³⁶Amen, I-am-saying to-you&, All these-things shall-arrive upon this /generation.” (Mt. 23:36 APT).

Since they themselves were fully filling the measure of the sins of their fathers, the earthly judgment to destruction, plunder and poverty arrived upon **their** generation in due time (by 70 A.D.) for all these things as The Lord Jesus prophesied above. But more serious is The Final Judging and Eternal Condemnation to The Lake of Fire according to their works at The Great White Throne Judgment awaiting to take place at the end of Time.

At this point we shall suspend our study for today and resume it again next week.

Conclusion:

Today, we resumed our study of the teaching of The Lord Jesus Christ during Wednesday, 12 Nisán (April 1), A.D. 33. We noted the exposition of the greater part of the eighth Woe which included: Undeniable Proof, Ungodly Posterity, Unanswerable Proposition, and Unescapable Prospect. We resumed the study with the third factor: Unanswerable Proposition -- in which He asked the unanswerable question: “How can you successfully flee away from The Judgment to The **Géh-ehnnah?**” because there is no escape for those who ignore, neglect, or reject The God’s offer of Salvation and Eternal life.

The fourth factor is the Unavoidable Predicament which every human as well as these hypocritical Pharisees, who are determinedly opposed or refuse to repent and abandon Sin and sins and commit persistent personal trust in faith to The Lord Jesus Christ, must inevitably face, that is to be judged and sentenced to spend Eternity suffering the intense heat and darkness in The Lake of Fire and Burning Sulphur forever.

The fifth factor of the eighth Woe was the Unescapable Prospect facing the first century generation, earthly judgment upon Israel for all their iniquity as an omen of the coming final Eternal Condemnation.

The sixth factor of the eighth Woe is Unmindful of The God’s Purpose to gather up under His wings for protection to save them from the impending judgment. They would not accept Him as The Messiah for Whom they have been taught to look and have been anticipating to come and yet determinedly willed not to recognize that The One standing before them as That One. But they were determinedly willing not to come.

Finally the seventh factor of the eighth Woe is Unforeseeable Penalty which is the final result to Israelis primarily, but also to professing but unregenerated and unrighteous so-called Christians is that Israel’s house (the whole nation representing each one’s physical body) is abandoned to you desolate (deprived of inhabitants).

Since all the above listed facts are true, the consequences of neglecting or rejecting or ignoring them produce the unforeseeable future, which is not considered by most people, especially those who are pharisaical and claim to be right but unrighteous, who are unwilling to consider and respond to The Truth, persistently study The God’s Word properly, and persistently respond to what It says and requires.

Application: What will you do beginning **today** to be absolutely certain that you are cleansed from Sin and hypocrisy and carefully consider and persistently promptly respond to The Truth, to what It says and requires?

Dr. Fred Wittman

For next week: Read and meditate upon: Jesus' Final Day of Public Teaching (Second Evening c. 6:30 P.M.): **The Lesson on Faithful Giving** (Mt. 23: 36-39; Mk. 12:41-44; Lk. 21:1-3).