

Matthew 23-02-12b

We resume our study now in the four Gospels, looking at these trials of the Lord Jesus and what their significance is to us. It is of course, a record of injustice, of violence perpetrated against the Lord Jesus and the indignities that are inflicted on him and his response. He is our example.

If we take up our cross and follow him, we want to work on developing this level of insight, of objectivity, of self-control, of reliance on the Holy Spirit, of being composed and recognizing that there are bigger issues at stake than answering a false accusation, answering a question that is designed to implicate us and force us into a position we are not ourselves pushing or forcing. And it's a wonderful example to dwell on. And the response that Jesus gives when he is put under oath, quote unquote, by this fake high priest.

If you ever want to exercise, we're not going to go into it, but look at the situation by which Annas and then Caiaphas come into this office. There's no excuse for it in the law of Moses. It's entirely political.

It's totally illegitimate. And they put themselves in the position of charging the legitimate Messiah with blasphemy when they themselves have built their entire house on shifting sand. Be that as it may, are you the Christ, the son of the blessed? Listen, Jesus said, I am.

And you will see the son of man sitting at the right hand of the power and coming with the clouds of heaven. This is such an unexpected reply. Jesus changes the subject and it's a great technique.

It's a great strategy. What is the issue? Jesus doesn't enter into their game and he does not play by their rules. Jesus doesn't say, I am.

You can just scratch that out. He says in reply, are you the Christ, the son of the blessed? You will see the son of man sitting at the right hand of the power that you have just tried to invoke by way of an oath and coming with the clouds of heaven. There are so many things to observe here.

Let's begin with, you will see. That's the first part of the answer. I am isn't there and isn't there.

You will see. Now, who are these people? These are Old Testament Jews in the Old Testament age. Do they accept or reject Jesus Christ? They are in the process of executing him because they do not believe he is the Messiah.

They cannot accept that truth, right? These men, every single one of them will be dead within a few decades at most. All of them are dead now. At the second coming, how are

they possibly going to see the son of man at all, much less sitting at the right hand of the power or coming on clouds of glory? How will these individuals see that? In our traditional understanding of resurrections and judgments, what do we believe? I was taught in my dispensational Baptist Sunday school class who were good, solid Bible thumping, pre-mill, pre-trib rapture types that we're going to go up in the rapture.

The tribulation is going to take place. Then at the second coming, the Lord Jesus will descend. He will plant his feet on the Mount of Olives, which is closely associated with geological fault lines in the holy land, quote unquote.

And that mountain is going to split and he is going to deal with those who have assembled for Armageddon. He is going to end that opposition and he is going to start up the millennial kingdom. That is coming on the clouds of heaven.

That is starting at the right hand of the power, starting in heaven and coming down. This is a description of the second coming, which ends the tribulation and begins the millennium. So my question to you is how are these rank unbelievers guilty of the body and blood of the Lord actively, falsely, hypocritically killing him on this day? How are they going to see these events? You will see is how he begins his answer.

How is that possible? Well, it's an interesting survey to go around and see if you can even get anybody to recognize the question much less supply an answer. I will offer you my thought. I wouldn't die for this.

We will all find out one day. We will be observers of these events. And if we needed to know, it would be more clear, but I will tell you my current understanding of this, which is Daniel 12, one and two.

Keep your finger here. I was looking at Mark. Mark, go back to the book of Daniel chapter 12.

I've got a pretty good crease in my Bible at Daniel for obvious reasons. After a description of army movements and conflict in chapter 11, the King of the South shall attack. The King of the North will come against him and up in verse 40 of 11 and so on.

They will enter the glorious land in 41. Countries will be overthrown. Some will escape from his hand.

Edom, Moab and the prominent people of Ammon stretch out his hand against all the countries. The land of Egypt shall not escape. He'll have power, treasures of gold and silver, et cetera.

News from the East and the North shall trouble him. He shall go out with a great fury to destroy and annihilate many in 1144 of Daniel. And he shall plant the tents of his palace between the seas and the glorious holy mountain.

Yet he shall come to his end and no one will help him. Chapter 12, remembering there are no chapter divisions in the original book of Daniel. There are no verse annotations in the original book of Daniel.

He shall come to his end. No one will help him. At that time, Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands over the sons of your people.

Watch is not there, he stands over. That involves many capacities, not just surveillance. Stand watch over the sons, or not watch, the great prince who stands over the sons of your people.

And there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that time. And at that time, your people shall be delivered. Everyone who is found written in the book.

Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt. Notice there are two types of people raised when Michael, the prince of Israel stands up. Some of them awake to everlasting life.

Others to everlasting shame and contempt, specifically to shame and everlasting contempt. Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament and those who turn many to righteousness like the stars forever and ever. Daniel shut up the words, seal the book.

My belief is that the reason Jesus tells these heinous, criminal, hypocritical fakers that they are going to see him sitting at the right hand of the majesty on high, the power, the blessed, the almighty God, and we'll see him coming on the clouds of heaven is that they will participate in that resurrection at the beginning of the millennial kingdom. It is extremely difficult to make this fit into Revelation chapter 20, where if you say, well, they rejected Jesus, they are unbelievers. And so they are not to be resurrected until the great white throne.

The rest of the dead live not until the thousand years are complete. The problem with that is if they are not raised until the resurrection of unbelievers at the conclusion of the millennium and at the inception of the kingdom of the father, the new heaven and the new earth, the problem there is Jesus said, you will see the son of man coming on the clouds of heaven. There is no such coming described after the millennial kingdom.

The coming of the son of man, which is a specific title that relates the Messiah to Israel is at the beginning of the millennium. So for these individuals to see it, what does it tell you? You say, it's not fair that people didn't have the full revelation of Christ. Those who dropped in the wilderness, all of the old Testament saints, those who lived in the patriarchal days, they never had the chance.

They believed in God. Do these men believe in the God of Israel? Do the Pharisees

believe there is a God in Israel? Do the Sadducees, do the chief priests, do the elders of the people, do they believe that God spoke to Moses on Sinai? Yes, they do. As a general principle, these men are old Testament believers.

They are rank, evil, polluting hypocrites. But so were the people that dropped in the wilderness who were delivered under the blood of the Passover lamb and crossed the Red Sea by the mighty hand of God, saw the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, grumbled against God. They didn't doubt that there was a God.

They disagreed with his plan. They disagreed with his timing. They disagreed with his provision.

They didn't like manna. They wanted leeks and garlicks. They didn't like manna.

They wanted quail. They didn't like an invisible God. They wanted a God they could see.

So you have the golden calf, et cetera. And many of them died, what you might call the sin unto death, not because they didn't believe in the God of Israel, but because they rebelled against his plan and purpose, his timing, his provision, his ordinances, his statutes. And this continues all down through the history of national Israel.

These people believe in God. And as I have quoted innumerable times, what is the criteria for Old Testament salvation? I was told in Sunday school, there's none other name under heaven whereby we must be saved. Therefore, everybody that's ever lived is only saved by believing in a personal savior named Jesus Christ.

That's not what the Bible says. The Bible says in Hebrews 11, which is the roster of Old Testament saints who by faith prevailed and became examples. It begins in verse six, without faith it is impossible to please him.

He that comes to God must believe that he is, do these men believe that God is? Yes. And that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him. Do they believe that God will reward them if they diligently seek? Yes.

The question is, what kind of seeking are you doing? Why are you seeking? If you ask any of these individuals, superintending at the three trials of Jesus on this night and the next morning, there's not a one of them that would deny that there is in fact a real God of Israel and that he rewards those who seek him. They would not disagree. The problem comes in how they go about implementing their faith.

And they do it by works. They do it by hypocrisy. They do it by legalism.

They do it by comparing themselves to the abject sinners in the streets and saying, Lord, I thank you that I am not like other men. Remember Jesus talking about the two men praying? Lord, I thank you that I'm not like other men because I know you're going to

reward me because I am seeking you through what I give and how I act and how long I pray and the pretense that I put up in front of people. Oh Lord, I thank you that I'm not like other men.

And Jesus said, there's the other man who is beating his breast and saying, Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner. Because you say we see, Jesus told the Pharisees, your sin remains. He doesn't say you're unbelievers and you're headed for the burning lake of brimstone and sulfur.

Because you say we see, you are mired in sin and it is a sin from which you cannot escape. These men, the people of Israel who believed in the God of Israel, in my view, are going to be raised at the beginning of the millennium. They are going to populate the world because when it comes time to pass under the rod and enter the millennial land of Israel, the rod is going to pop them in the forehead and say, not you, not you Caiaphas, not you Annas, not you Simon the Pharisee, not you, not you, not you.

All of you members of the Sanhedrin past and present, not you, except, oh look, here's Joseph of Arimathea, come on in, here's Nicodemus, come on in. There will be a sorting and they will populate the nations of the world and for a thousand years, there is going to be the presence of the Holy Spirit that was lacking in this age. He was available by request, but he was not a ubiquitous presence.

He is going to be. What does the Old Testament prophecy say? I will pour out my spirit on all flesh. Your young men will see visions.

Your old men will dream dreams. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Sons and daughters, that had to be a shocker back when that prophecy was delivered.

Daughters are going to prophesy? Yes, so there will be 1,000 years that leaves these individuals, whether it is the thousands that dropped in the desert under Moses, whether it is those who failed in the days of Joshua, whether it is those of the Southern Kingdom or the Northern Kingdom for the next 500 years after David and Solomon who failed, who were judged by God, who were given warning after warning, prophet after prophet, captivity, return from captivity, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, as prophets, they're going to get a chance with the presence and power of the Holy Spirit poured out to make their choices. Now they are just as capable, just as culpable as we. Now the Lord Jesus' work is visible.

His name is known. His atoning sacrifice is complete. And it is retrospect for them just as it is retrospect for us.

And my old Sunday school teacher turns out to be right that their ultimate salvation is going to be based on what think ye of Christ. They will see Him sitting at the right hand of power. They will see Him coming on the clouds of glory.

And now they will be totally without excuse. It's not the blindness of sin. It's not the lack of information.

It won't even be a matter of faith in the millennial kingdom. Faith is what you can't see. They will see everything.

And this is the basis of the indictment. Jesus says here, you will see. Show us a sign that we may believe.

The day is coming when you are going to see everything that makes you culpable, accountable, and responsible. Just like Satan, just like the one third of angels that followed him with full knowledge of God, heaven, the sun, the spirit, and reject it all. Rejection is not based in ignorance.

It's not based in lack of perception. The millennial kingdom is going to sift Israel like wheat. The wheat will be gathered into the barn.

The chaff is going to be burned and destroyed in unquenchable fire. If you throw chaff into the fire and come back a few hours later, how much of the chaff is left? Can you just light some chaff and now you've got a stove that'll burn la'olam? When you put chaff in the fire, there's a flash and it's gone. Chaff is a lousy fuel.

They didn't bag up chaff and send it to people's homes because it's a flash fire. It's like a weed fire. It's like a grass fire.

Chaff is basically the same composition in terms of cellulose, et cetera, as grass. And grass makes a terrible fuel for keeping you warm because it doesn't last. It is immediately incinerated and disappears.

So, Jesus says, you want to talk about the power in heaven? You want to talk about the blessed? You want to talk about the most high? All terms that the high priest Caiaphas uses in trying to get Jesus to implicate himself with a quote unquote blasphemous statement. Jesus says, you will see the son of man sitting at the right hand of the power. He's not going to be down here enduring people to swear by heaven.

He'll be sitting at the right hand of God. And you will see him coming with the clouds of heaven. That's the Messiah.

You will see the son of man. You'll see him coming. There will be no doubt in your mind.

You won't have to ask, are you the Christ? You'll see him coming. If you were so disposed, you would recognize him now. When are you going to absolutely recognize him? This same Jesus is going to return and your resurrected, resuscitated Old Testament saint body is going to see it.

And as soon as you have seen it, you're going to be turned around and sent to

Zimbabwe and Rhodesia and Southeast Asia and Alaska and probably some to Antarctica. As far away from the land of promise, these who thought they were so qualified and would be the righteous and be the approved and be the blessed when the Messiah comes will be the furthest away. And they will be sending their glory around the globe to be received because they will be a part of the far off nations.

They will not fulfill the prophecy when God says, I will gather my scattered people from the nations and bring them into the land. These men are going to be taken from the land and scattered among the nations for the entire millennial period. The opposite of their hope, the opposite of their expectation.

Why? If you don't recognize the son of man when he comes. Remember in John over and over again, Jesus said, you search the scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life. Why would they think that? They believe there's a God and they believe by seeking him in the scriptures, he will bless them.

And yet it is those very scriptures that you are searching that speak of me. If you loved my father, you would love me. If you heeded my father, you would heed me.

But because you reject the father and because you don't find the father when you look at the scriptures because you're looking for something else. You're looking to fulfill an agenda. You're looking to justify your self-gratification and you don't find the father in the scriptures.

That's why you don't recognize me. Jesus says it over and over again. We saw it in the gospel of John.

So what a pregnant statement to make. They are trying to trap Jesus in his words. He indicts them with these words.

You are going to see the son of man sitting at the right hand of the power and coming on clouds of glory. You will see, Jesus says in another place, there's many coming from the North, East, South and West and sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom and you yourselves thrust out. He says it to this same group, these same people, these same types.

You will see the gathering and you will see yourselves thrust out. They have to be raised for that to happen. They have to be resurrected at the beginning of the kingdom sitting down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

This is the kingdom promised to Israel. He doesn't say sitting down with Noah, Enoch and Adam, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the defining patriarchal origins of the nation of Israel. This is the millennial kingdom, Jesus says you will see and you will see yourself thrust way out.

All of the parables of the darkness, which is outside, the weeping, the wailing, the gnashing of teeth. It's all summed up right here. You want evidence? You want proof? You want to come to understand the identity of the son of man? Are you the Christ? You wait and watch.

You're gonna see it to your infinite sorrow, to your incredible chagrin. You're gonna see it and you are gonna weep. You are gonna wail and you're gonna gnash your teeth.

You think you're binding me and indicting me and convicting me and executing me? There is gonna come a day when you will not be able to regret that enough. It's all summed up right here. So in verse 63 here of Mark 14, the high priest tore his clothes and said, what further need do we have of witnesses? They make the leap that Jesus is talking about himself, although he has not said.

That's why crossing out I am is so important. They are twisting his words. It is in fact true, but they have to accept the truth of it in order to indict him under their tradition of what constitutes blasphemy.

You cannot find anything in the Torah, even remotely close to anyone who says he is the Messiah must die. This is purely a pretext that they have made up. Do you find this happening today? Somebody says, well, if you use a wrong term, if you say a wrong word, if you make a certain claim, we will end you.

We will end your public ability to speak. We will take away your employment. We will make you a stain and a pariah and a reject, an outcast.

We will drive you from the camp and force you to cover your face and cry, leper, leper. And it's false. It's a pretext to implement power.

Why are these men afraid of Jesus? His words are powerful and people respond to them. His miracles are expressions of power, power they don't have. And they are losing their grip on the population.

It is a threat to the structure. It's a threat to the existing power that they have enjoyed for so long. Then some began, look at verse 65.

You think about the summation of the law and the prophets. How would you sum up the law and the prophets if you're listening to the Lord Jesus? All the law and prophets are summed up in these two things. Love the Lord, your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and love your neighbor as yourself.

What is the golden rule? Do unto others as you would have others do unto you. This sums up the law and the prophets when it comes to horizontal relationships. Jesus says, there is a day coming where you will see the son of man at the right hand.

You will see him coming on clouds. For this, they all condemned him to be deserving of death. Saying this makes him worthy of death.

You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think? Some began to spit on him, to blindfold him and to beat him. If you identify with the Lord Jesus Christ, if you believe what he said, if you speak his truth, if you represent his truth, you can expect those who consider themselves to be righteous, who consider themselves to be authorities on God, on power, on government, to do more than hail you before the court.

They spit on him. What happens if you get spit on? This is referred to specifically in the days of Moses, from God himself. God tells Moses, Miriam has been bad-mouthing Moses and Mrs. Moses.

And God strikes her with leprosy. Moses intercedes on her behalf. And God says, if she had been spit on, she would be unclean for a week.

She's done a lot worse than that. She is at fault. Being spit upon defiles you.

It is a body fluid like blood that defiles by contact. So they want him to be defiled. He is standing before them undefiled.

So they'll spit on him and that makes him unclean. We judge you to be unclean. Now we're going to make you unclean after the fact.

Then they blindfold him and beat him. Now my question is, why did they blindfold him? If you want to beat someone, why do you want not, you don't want the victim to know who's doing it? Well, why are they having this trial at night? At night in secret, they are blindfolding the people to what they're doing. Now they're going to blindfold the victim to what they're doing.

They think they will surprise him. They think they can inflict injury and he won't know exactly who did it. They say to him, prophesy.

The officers struck him with the palms of their hands. They slap him around and they're jeering and they're goading him. Could Jesus give an entire three-page Wikipedia article on each person that strikes him if he so chose? Does he know exactly who is striking him? Yes, he does.

Yet he utters not a word. Why? There is going to come a time when he is going to sit in judgment on these individuals and he will be able to tell them their name, their occupation, their history. Remember the woman at the well in Samaria? Here is a man who told me everything I ever did.

How did he know that? Because he's the Lord of glory. Revealed to him through the Holy Spirit. Do you not think that when he is no longer veiled in flesh, but is sitting on the

throne of judgment over Israel, that when each of these individuals comes forward of their many crimes and their many sins and their many hypocrisies, this one is going to come up.

I will now answer your question. Who slapped me? You. And this is how many times, and this is where.

You want the answer? You're not getting it in the moment, but you're going to get the answer and you're not going to like it. The indignity, the injustice, and the temptation. Jesus is tempted most strongly at the very beginning of his ministry by Satan, and at the very end of his ministry by those who are just like Satan.

In temperament, in disbelief, in arrogance, in pride, self-indulgence, self-gratification. And yet amazingly, these individuals are going to be raised by God to be given another chance with the presence of the Holy Spirit. It will be interesting to determine what happens at that beginning judgment, passing under the rod, and then what happens at the ending judgment, which is the sheep and goats.

Now you begin to understand the sheep and goats judgment. What did you do to the least of these, my brethren? Were you kind? Were you compassionate? Did you fulfill the golden rule? Did you fulfill the law of love? Love your neighbor as yourself? Love your enemy? Do good to those who hate you? Pray for those who spitefully use you? Or were you self-possessed, self-indulgent? Were you like the rich man who left Lazarus at his gate to be licked by the dogs? It won't be a judgment based on, did you have faith? It will be, you were raised, you were given grace, you were given the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. You had a thousand years to change your mind and to avail yourself.

What did you do? And there are many of these, I would say probably most of them, even with all of that grace, even with that new opportunity, they will not change their mind. They're exactly like the angels in heaven, who it isn't the amount of revelation. It's not the amount of available knowledge of God.

It is the reaction or response to that. And I would bet shekels that most of these individuals will have the same response in the millennium that they're having right here. But what excuse will they have at the judgment? None.

And at the goat's judgment, being thrown into the lake of fire, these are those Jews. Why does it say he will gather the nations before him? Because these Jews have been denied entrance to the land and are in those nations. The nations will be gathered before him and he will separate the sheep from the goats.

And the goats from the nations go into eternal fire. The fire is eternal. Their presence in it is not.

Fire consumes, fire destroys. So interesting. So after this, you have another account in

Mark of Peter's adventures in the courtyard.

But if you turn back to Matthew 26, we pick up because following the account of Peter, you have the third and final trial in the formal Sanhedrin in daylight. Now that they've got what they need in secret and in the darkness, they're going to make their case in the morning, convict him on the basis of this put up evidence, and then they will send him to the Romans. And that will be the third trial and that is where we will pick up next week.

But my encouragement for all of us is to think about the Lord Jesus under this kind of duress, persecution, false accusation, and his self-possession, his self-control, knowing when to speak and when to remain silent. He never gives them a statement on which he can be legitimately convicted of anything. Are you the Christ? You're the one bringing it up.

I'm not wandering around calling myself the Christ. Anything you want to know about what I have said and what I have taught is available from a host of witnesses. The truth that I've taught can be repeated by any number of people.

The falsehoods you're trying to perpetrate, you can't get two people to agree on. This issue of am I the Christ or not, you're bringing that up. You're making an issue out of something I'm not making an issue of.

Jesus told people over and over again, tell no one. It is not the time. There is another purpose.

There is another evaluation of the nation that is going on. And are these people ready to be kingdom people? Are they ready to accept a kingdom from God or not? That's the issue. Making a false issue out of, well, are you the guy? Because making that issue doesn't address their acceptance.

It's Matthew chapter five, Matthew chapter six, Matthew chapter seven. What do you think of that? Well, the Pharisees are irate. Can you believe it over the content of the Sermon on the Mount? That's what gets them in trouble is saying the perversion of the law, you have heard it said, let me tell you what God meant.

This is living under the law. I say, thou shalt not murder. I say, thou shalt not be angry without a cause.

Well, much more on this when we continue next time, we'll close here in order of prayer. Father, thank you for this wonderful fourfold example of the Lord Jesus recorded for us, brought to our hearts by your Holy Spirit. We pray that as we reflect on his behavior in unjust suffering, persecution and hardship through no fault of his own, that we can be encouraged and inspired by his example, that we as his body on this earth can do likewise.

And in so doing, reflect your glory, implement your power and be prepared for your kingdom, which is our goal, our hope, our opportunity for service and function. And that unlike so many in this generation who could not qualify and would not understand and accept what is necessary to dwell in those coming kingdoms, that we will not make that mistake, but understand what your good and acceptable and perfect will is for us as we are transformed by the renewing of our minds and made into people who can serve and function in your presence. We pray these things in Jesus' name, amen.