

THE LAST WEEK OF THE LORD JESUS ON EARTH

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

Jesus Proclaims Truth (Part 19 cont. Second Evening c. 6:15 P.M.) Wed., 12th Nisán (Apr. 1): Persecution of the Prophets (concl.) and Lesson on Faithful Giving 8c Mt. 23:36-39; Mk. 12:41-44; Lk. 21:1-4

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, while He was teaching and evangelizing, 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, both of which 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**--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. 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.)--teaches that failure to respond to the invitation to The Wedding Feast and wear the provided Wedding clothing results in **Fatal Wrath** in The **Géh-ehnnah**.

3. **The Lesson on Financial Responsibility** (c. 1:00 P.M.)--teaches 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.)--teaches that The God expects every human to live in the light of life after death and the resurrection which follows in which every human must face The Judgment Throne of The God either unto Absolute Life with The Lord Jesus Christ or unto 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.)--covers four segments:

a. The Reproof of Futile Resolve to recognize that the great and ⁰first of all commandments is to love and sovereignly prefer The God **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.)--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.

6. **The Lesson on Reproof of Fallible Recognition** (c. 3:45 P.M.)--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. 4:00-6:00 P.M.)-- This reproof contains 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 and 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.)--because of oppressing upon the people to keep them from committing trust unto Him by shutting off the way to The Kingdom of The Heavens through constant proclamation of the substitution of 'works,' instead of emphasizing 'repentance and faith,' which The God requires.

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, not just houses of the widows that the scribes and Pharisees were devouring but also their means of livelihood as well by being appointed as executors of a recently deceased husband's estate and being honored at Sumptuous Feasts. Thus they persisted in using their religion and religious teaching to increase their own coffers while decreasing those of the widows, thus profiting financially from their religion.

(2) For Pretentious Praying--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 scribes, Pharisees, and false prophets under this curse.

c. The Third Woe! Persevering Proselytizing (c. 4:30 P.M.)--persistently making 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. The Fourth Woe! Inconsistency in Conformity to The Scriptures in Relation to Swearing with an Oath (c. 4:45 P.M.)--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! The God's rejection of a consecrated gift if the offerer has caused offense to a brother and refuses to reconcile was declared by The Lord Jesus.

e. The Fifth Woe! Inconsistency in Stewardship in Relation to Tithing (c. 5:00 P.M.)--especially because of how they tithed. 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 mercy,' and 'The faith which is The Faith of The Lord Jesus Christ.

f. The Sixth Woe! Inconsistency in Ceremonial Cleansing (c. 5:15 P.M.)--because of the Pharisees inconsistent blind regard for ceremonial cleansing, while giving greater concern for the outer aspect of living than the inner aspect. 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. 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.)--a far more important matter, involving a more serious condition and a more exceedingly desperate defilement than the seventh Woe. This deals with another aspect of the same hypocrisy, ceremonial cleansing, which they hope will, but never can, cleanse the defiled heart. 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 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. But 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! It is a very serious sin to declare The Truth declared in The God’s Word to be unworkable or ‘doesn’t work’! Therefore by saying this The Word of The God is added to or changed, thus insuring Eternity barred from The New Jerusalem forever (Rev. 22:18:19; Deut. 4:2; Eccl. 3:14).
- 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 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, The Lord Jesus stated undeniable proof of why the hypocrites, scribes, and Pharisees were the murderers of the prophets and righteous ones and would be judged with them and receive the same condemnation to The **Géh-ehnnah**. These Pharisees were currently involved in building burial places, tombs, luxurious mausoleums, and renovating and adorning (whitewashing) memorial graves in respect for their martyred

prophets and righteous men which their ancestral fathers murdered and 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, and 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 The Lord Jesus exposed by berating those standing before Him. He indicated that such claim was **not** true, but in fact it 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 their impending doom.

(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 (Pharisees), and elders took council together to decide how to kill Jesus. Shortly thereafter the chief priests bargained with Judas **Eskahreeōtays** (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 He 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. However this 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.

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).

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 Epistles). And this generation of Pharisees and their proselyte-disciples will kill, crucify, scourge in their synagogues, and persecute (including imprisoning) them 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 thus 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 is unavoidable.

Now we shall resume our study of the seven factors.

(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 of The City Jerusalem and The Temple, 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 was the the final judging and eternal condemnation to The Lake of Fire according to their works at The Great White Throne judgment awaiting the end of Time.

(6) Unmindful of The God’s Purpose (Mt. 23:37).

“³⁷O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who^ kill the prophets and pelt-with-stones^[-in-order-to-kill] the-ones^{+[perfect passive substance participle]} having-been-sent^[with commission] to^[the face of] her, how-often did-I-determinedly-will-to-gather-up-together the children of-yours[§], in-which-manner a-hen gathers-up-together the &brood-ones of-herself under-her-wings, and&you-determinedly-would not!” (Mt.23:37 APT).

The Lord Jesus quoted these verses c. four months before this day in Kislev (early December) A.D. 32 with an intercalary month (Adar II) between. This was recorded by Luke (13:34,35). Jesus was on His journey for His second visit to Jerusalem in His final year of ministry to attend the eight-day Festival (Feast) of Dedication (Hanukkah). At that time He stated that it is not fitting that a prophet should perish out away from Jerusalem, then quoted this passage.

There are none so blind as those who determinedly will not to see! These blind Pharisees would not listen neither would they heed to Truth and would not listen to reason like so many people today. Although The Lord Jesus attempted to persuade the Israelites to gather under His wings for protection 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 would not recognize The One standing before them as That One, but were determinedly willing not to come. They that have been blinded by Satan. They do not understand and cannot see The Light, therefore they are unmindful of The God’s purpose and will not acknowledge what He spoke to be Truth, The Whole Truth, and nothing but The Truth.

(7) Unforeseeable Penalty (Mt. 23:38,39).

“³⁸Lo! the house of-yours& is abandoned to-you& desolate. ³⁹For I-am-saying to-you&, &You-shall-positively- not -behold Me from this-present-time until ever you& say, The-One⁺ coming-in ⁰Lord’s name^[perfect passive] stands-extolled!!” (Mt.23:38,39 APT).

The final result to Israelis and professing but unregenerated and unrighteous so-called Christians is summed up in this brief statement, “Your house is abandoned to you desolate (deprived-of-inhabitants).” Instead they all shall be existing forever in the outer darkness sentenced to The Lake of Fire and Brimstone with Satan and his angels whom they served as bondslaves (Rev. 12:9; 11-15).

Since all the above listed facts are true, the consequences of neglecting or rejecting 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 and persistently study The God’s Word properly and persistently respond to what It says and requires.

8. The Lesson on Faithful Stewardship (Mk. 12:41-43; Lk. 21:1-4).

Then c. 6:20 P.M. before departing from the Temple, Jesus sat down directly across from the guarded treasury named *γαζοφυλάκιον* (gahzohfuláhkeohn). This designation is a compound word consisting of two nouns: *γάζα* (gáhzah) meaning ‘a royal treasure’ and *φυλακή* ‘fulahkáy’ meaning ‘protective guard(house) or watch.’ It was guarded by a Levite or priest most likely of the Temple Custody or guard (2 Chron. 23:4). It was located in the court of the women, which was generally the meeting location for worshippers to gather.

According to several reliable sources there were thirteen trumpet-shaped boxes placed alongside colonnade pillars with inscriptions indicating the designation of use of each were receptacles for love-offerings, gifts above their required tithes. There He sat in the only place in The Temple that it was lawful sit. This position that The Lord Jesus took so as to observe how the people were casting in their offerings of copper money for the sacrifices to be offered to The God, which was given in addition to their tithes of more than 33 percent. An impoverished widow caught His attention. He used her sacrifice of two mites to teach His disciples a lesson on Faithful Giving.

Just two mites, the smallest Jewish coin worth $1/100^{\text{th}}$ of a cent, eight mites are equal to one cent, $1/4$ day’s pay equaled her whole livelihood. Thus The Lord Jesus said that her sacrificial giving was more than all those who gave because they gave out of abundance, but she out of her deficiency. This was a gift, not toward the salary of the priests and Levites, nor toward the upkeep of the Temple, but most likely toward the sacrifices to be offered to The God. Her sacrificial offering was not to gain attention to herself nor to her poverty nor to impress anyone, yet she impressed The Lord Jesus who was watching unnoticed.

How does your stewardship and mine line up with the observation that Jesus made of this situation? Do you or I give above the tithe out of love for The Lord Jesus Christ and His Father? Or do you or I have difficulty bringing oneself to give the tithe (10 %) on a regular basis.

I am reminded of a listener to our daily half-hour radio broadcasts many years ago. She wrote to tell me how much she appreciated the teaching and that she wanted to send a good gift. But apologized that she could not spare any money at this time. BUT! she asked me to pray for her. She had placed her name in a highly rewarding sweepstakes program and if she won she would send ten percent of the award. Needless to say neither did I pray for her to win nor did we ever receive a gift from her. However, I did pray that The Lord would work in her heart so that she would learn the true meaning of stewardship and give to The God the tithe of what she had and was receiving at His gracious hand first before expecting The God to bless her financially.

Yes, it is vitally important to govern our stewardship properly and faithfully give Him the tithe and then generously give to Him love gifts for all His wonderful blessings. Too many people work stewardship the way that this lady did. The True God does not use gimmicks, raffles, sweepstakes, gambling games, or gifts offered for donations to get the necessary funds to operate His Church and His Gospel outreach. Since so much of our lives depends on money and everything seems to hinge on money, “It’s all about the money!” therefore how we handle our finances and the portion that the God claims affects our stewardship in the other six areas of accountability for which we shall be judged. Yes, stewardship involves much more than money with our

finances, but also covers the totality of life, Truth taught, time, talents, tasks, and talk. But how we handle our finances will govern how we handle these.

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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 eighth Woe which included: Undeniable Proof, Ungodly Posterity, Unanswerable Proposition, Unescapable Prospect, Unavoidable Predicament, Unmindful of The God's Purpose, and Unforeseeable Penalty. We resumed the study with the fifth factor: Unescapable Prospect -- in which He the unanswerable question: "How can you successfully flee away from The Judgment to The **Géh-ehnnah?**" was considered. The dangerous, treacherous, malignant Pharisees were dumbfounded and did not have an answer for Him.

The sixth factor of the eighth Woe is Unmindful of The God's Purpose to gather them 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 for Whom they have been anticipating to come and yet they would not recognize The One standing before them as That One, but were determinedly willing not to come.

Finally the seventh factor of the eighth Woe is Unforeseeable Penalty in 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 and factors are true, the consequences of neglecting or rejecting these shall 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 and persistently study The God's Word properly and persistently respond to what It says and requires.

Finally to finish The Ministry of The Lord Jesus' teaching in The Temple on Wednesday, we observed His Lesson on Faithful Stewardship. He observed a poor indigent widow casting her entire livelihood of two mites equal to 1/4 of a cent or 1/4 of a day's pay into The trumpet-shaped box near one of the colonnade pillars. He claimed that she gave more than all the others who gave. She proved The God to be faithful in caring for her needs. Won't you do the same and prove Him to be faithful to you?

Application: What will you do beginning **today** to be absolutely certain that your stewardship will prove to be faithful when you and I stand before the judgment throne of The God?

Dr. Fred Wittman

For next week: Read and meditate upon: Jesus' Final Day of Public Teaching (7:30 A.M.-6:30 P.M.): Review The Teaching in The Temple on Wednesday (Mt. 21:23-23:39; Mk. 11:27-12:44; Lk. 20:1-21:4).