

Teen Bible Study Notes: Friday, January 11, 2019

Presented by: Sheldon Monson

The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ – Lecture #21

Book and Chapter – Matthew – Chapters 22 (verses 15-all) & 23

MATTHEW 22

Conflict with Pharisees and Herodians

V15 Then the Pharisees went and plotted how they might entangle Him in *His* talk.

Entangle – means “to snare” – like a trapper catching his prey.

V16 And they sent to Him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, “Teacher, we know that you are true, and teach the way of God in truth; nor do You care about anyone, for You do not regard the person of men.

In effect they were saying: “We know that You are true, and teach the way of God in truth – no matter what people think of you.”

The Herodians – their name suggests that they were supporters of the Herodian dynasty in its collaboration with the Roman government. This would put them at the opposite end of the political spectrum from the Pharisees. Yet their common hatred of Christ was great enough that the Pharisees and Herodians joined forces against Him.

V17 Tell us, therefore, what do You think? Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?”

Once again – the Pharisees and Herodians were trying to get Christ to choose a side:

(1) The Herodians – were in collaboration with the Roman government. And **taxes** included an annual tax paid by every Jewish adult to the Roman government.

(2) The Jews – despised paying this tax to their hated oppressors.

V18 But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, “Why do you test Me, *you* hypocrites?”

Test – here means “to solicit to evil.”

Hypocrites – Jesus called the Herodians and Pharisees **hypocrites** because they falsely pretended to have good intentions.

V19 Show Me the tax money.” So they brought Him a denarius,

The *tax money* was a *denarius* – a silver coin with an image of the emperor and the inscription calling him “divine.” The *image and inscription* were repugnant to the Jews because they hated their Roman overlords knew that the emperor was NOT divine.

V20 And He said to them, “Whose image and inscription *is* this?”

V21 They said to Him, “Caesar’s.” And He said to them, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

In responding to His opponents Jesus changed the verb they used from *pay* (verse 17) to *render* – which literally means “to pay back.”

Christ was teaching – that His followers have an obligation to earthly governments and to God. Even though we are strangers and pilgrims on the earth we have a responsibility to obey the law of the land until it becomes sinful to do so (**Romans 13:1-7; I Peter 2:13-17**). When there is a conflict between the two – then we are to follow God (**Acts 4:18-20; Acts 5:29**).

Christ paid taxes and so should we.

V22 When they had heard *these words*, they marveled, and left him and went their way.

Conflict with Sadducees

V23 The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to Him and asked Him, **V24** Saying: “Teacher, Moses said that if a man dies, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife and raise up offspring for his brother.

The law that is the basis for the Sadducees’ question found in – **Deuteronomy 25:5-6**. [*Marriage Duty of the Surviving Brother*]. The practice is called *levirate marriage*.

Deuteronomy 25:5-6: V5 “If brothers dwell together, and one of them dies and has no son, the widow of the dead man shall not be *married* to a stranger outside *the family*; her husband’s brother shall go in to her, take her as his wife, and perform the duty of a husband’s brother to her.

V6 And it shall be *that* the firstborn son which she bears will succeed to the name of his dead brother, that his name may not be blotted out of Israel.”

This law would insure that there would be heirs to carry on the family’s name. Furthermore, a widow with no children to take care of her, would struggle to survive.

V25 Now there were with us seven brothers. The first died after he had married, and having no offspring, left his wife to his brother.

V26 Likewise the second also, and the third, even to the seventh.

V27 Last of all the woman died also.

V28 Therefore, in the resurrection, whose wife of the seven will she be? For they all had her.”

This theological riddle may have been used to confound the Pharisees, however, it did not confound Jesus.

V29 Jesus answered and said to them, “You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.

Jesus corrected them for not believing in the resurrection and in the *power of God* to resurrect.

V30 For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels of God in heaven.

V31 But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying,

V32 *‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob’?* God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.”

V33 And when the multitudes heard *this*, they were astonished at His teaching.

Luke – in his Gospel account gives us an additional detail. Notice:

Luke 20:34-36: V34 “Jesus answered and said to them, ‘The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage.

V35 But those who are counted worthy to attain that age, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage;

V36 **Nor can they die anymore, for they are equal to the angels and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.”**

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – did not receive the “promised land” in their lifetimes. They must be resurrected in order to receive God’s promises in full. They are “asleep” in death now, but will be resurrected and receive eternal life and inherit the Kingdom of God when Christ returns!

The Greatest Commandment

V34 But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together.

V35 Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, saying,

V36 “Teacher, which *is* the great commandment in the law?”

V37 Jesus said to him, “*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.*’

The *heart, soul, and mind* – represent the whole person. Love God with all you’ve got!

V38 This is *the* first and great commandment.

V39 And *the* second is like it: *'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'*

V40 On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."

The Ten Commandments can be divided into two categories: those dealing with love for God (the first four commandments) and those dealing with our responsibilities toward other people (the last six commandments).

The Son of David

V41 While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,

After answering three questions posed by the religious leaders, Jesus turned to the Pharisees with a question of His own. The question had two parts, a first about the identity of the Messiah and a second about the interpretation of Psalm 110.

The answer to Jesus' question about the identity of the Messiah was in a number of Old Testament passages (see **II Samuel 7:12-16; Psalm 89:3-4; Psalm 89:34-36; Isaiah 9:7; Isaiah 16:5; Isaiah 55:3-4**). The Messiah would come from David's royal line.

V42 Saying, "What do you think about the Christ? Whose Son is He?" They said to Him, "*The Son of David.*"

V43 He said to them, "How then does David in the Spirit call Him *'Lord,'* saying:

V44 *'The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool''*?"

V45 If David then calls Him *'Lord,'* how is He his Son?"

Notice: **Psalm 110:1** "The LORD said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right hand, till I make Your enemies Your footstool.'" (Note: Jesus Himself identified David as the writer of this Psalm.)

Psalm 110:1 – is prophetic and uses TWO different Hebrew words for God.

(1) The first, translated **LORD** – is the Hebrew name "Yahweh." **Yahweh** signifies "the ETERNAL ONE, He who was, and is, and is to come.

(2) The second **Lord** – means "Master." David, the great king of Israel, calls one of his offspring "Lord" or "Master" a title for a deity. The implication is that Jesus, the Son of David, is God. He is a descendant of David and was therefore human, but He is also divine.

David was speaking of someone greater than himself – his "Master". Since no ordinary son of David could be greater than him, the reference was to the coming Messiah, God's Son. Jesus Christ currently sits at the right hand of God in His throne in heaven (**Hebrews 10:12-13**).

Hebrews 10:12-13: V12 "But this Man (Jesus Christ), after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God,

V13 From that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.”

V46 And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day on did anyone dare question Him anymore.

Of course the correct answer was: That Jesus Christ was not only a descendant of David, but also the Son of God. The religious leaders of Christ’s day were not about to admit who He really was!

CHAPTER 23

Jesus Characterizes the Pharisees

V1 “Then Jesus spoke to the multitudes and to His disciples,

V2 saying: “The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat.

V3 Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, *that* observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do.

The Pharisees and scribes were familiar with the laws of God, so their instructions were to be followed. However, Jesus warned the people of the Pharisees’ legalism, their tendency to value their own rules and regulations over the Scriptures. They followed their external laws meticulously and appeared to be righteous, and yet their hearts will filled with envy, malice and hatred. Christ commanded the people NOT to imitate their actions!

V4 For they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay *them* on men’s shoulders; but they *themselves* will not move them with one of their fingers.

V5 But all their works they do to be seen by men. They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments.

Phylacteries – were small boxes containing Bible passages that were wore on the forehead or arm. This custom was based on **Exodus 13:9, 16; Deuteronomy 6:8; Deuteronomy 11:18**). However, God intended them put these principles into practice!

Enlarge the borders of their garments – translated “hem” in **Matthew 9:20** – refers to the tassels that were worn on the corners of garments in order to remind the Israelites of God’s laws (see **Numbers 15:38; Deuteronomy 22:12**).

In order to appear especially righteous, some would make their **phylacteries** especially large, and their tassels unusually long! This was one aspect of their hypocrisy.

V6 They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues,

The best places – were the positions of honor at banquets.

The best seats – or “first seats” were a row of seats in the front of the synagogue, facing the congregation.

V7 Greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, ‘Rabbi, Rabbi’.

Greetings – in this context meant more than a casual “Hello.” It was a respectful salutation given to a superior.

V8 But you, do not be called ‘Rabbi’; for One is your Teacher, the Christ, and you are all brethren.

Rabbi – means “teacher.”

V9 Do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven.

Jesus was not teaching that this principle should be applied universally, because these titles are used elsewhere in Scripture with no qualification or admonishment. (For instance: Jesus tells us to “Honor our father and mother” (**Matthew 15:4-5**), and the Apostle Paul said in **Hebrews 12:9**, “Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected *us*, and we paid *them* respect...” Using the word “father” in such cases is not wrong.)

The hypocrites sought these titles for the prestige and power that went with them, and not for the purpose of using the positions to serve others.

On the other hand, addressing a minister by the title “Father” or “Reverend” would be wrong. The use of religious titles, such as “Reverend,” began when the great apostasy set in at the close of the first century. Ministers put themselves “in the place of Christ.” Hence they took upon themselves the attributes and titles of divinity. God’s true ministers have never done so. God alone has a name worthy of reverence. God’s ministers are addressed as “Pastor,” “Elder,” “Evangelist,” “Bishop” or “Apostle.”

V10 And do not be called teachers; for One is your Teacher, the Christ.

V11 But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.

V12 And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Jesus Condemns the Pharisees

V13 But who to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in *yourselves*, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

V14 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you devour widow's houses, and for a pretense make long prayers. Therefore you will receive greater condemnation.

Devour widows houses – they were dependent on peoples gifts for their support, and took advantage of widows who helped feed and support them.

Matthew 6:7 “And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*. For they think they will be heard for their many words.”

The prophets of Baal at Mount Carmel “...called on the name of Baal from morning even till noon, saying, ‘O Baal, hear us!’ But there was not voice; no one answered...and when midday was past, they prophesied until the *time* of the evening sacrifice. But *there was* no voice; no one answered, no one paid attention...” (**II Kings 18:26-29**).

In contrast, Elijah prayed a short but effective and heartfelt prayer that got results!

II Kings 18:36 “And it came to pass, at *the time of* the offering of the *evening* sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, ‘LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You *are* God in Israel and I *am* Your servant, and *that* I have done all these things at Your word.

V37 Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that You *are* the LORD God, and *that* You have turned their hearts back *to You* again.’

V38 Then the fire of the LORD fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that *was* in the trench.”

V15 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel land and sea to win one proselyte, and when he is won, you make him twice as much a son of hell [*Gehenna*] as yourselves.

V16 Woe to you, blind guides, who say, ‘Whoever swears by the temple, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gold of the temple, he is obliged *to perform it*.’

V17 Fools and blind! For which is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifies the gold?

V18 And, “Whoever swears by the altar, it is nothing; but whoever swears by the gift that is on it, he is obliged *to perform it*.’

V19 Fools and blind! For which is greater the gift or the altar that sanctifies the gift?

V20 Therefore he who swears by the altar, swears by it and by all things on it.

V21 He who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it.

V22 And he who swears by heaven, swears by the throne of God and by Him who sits on it.

Jesus was pointing out the absurdity of such teaching, and called the leaders **blind guides**. They were all about the “form” and there just wasn’t much “substance” to what they taught.

V23 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier *matters* of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone.

Mint and anise – were spices.

Cummin – was a tiny fruit.

Jesus was not saying that tithing was done away, or was unimportant as He said – *these you ought to have done*. The scribes and Pharisees were meticulous about tithing tiny seeds, but they neglected the *weightier matters of the law!* Their actions were not governed by *justice, mercy and faith!*

Micah 6:8 “He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?”

The point is that God seeks certain characteristics of true worship from His people. The religious rulers of Christ’s day were unjust, had no interest in mercy, and demonstrated a total lack of faith. We must always be careful not to fall into the same trap they did!

V24 Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!

The Pharisees knew about the laws regarding clean and unclean meats (**Leviticus 11:41-43**), so they would meticulously *strain out* the smallest insect – the *gnat* – with a cloth filter before drinking liquids, especially wine. However, Jesus said they would easily *swallow* a large unclean animal – a *camel*. Jesus was exaggerating a point to illustrate how much the Pharisees had neglected justice, mercy, and faith. As you may recall – he used a similar exaggeration in **Matthew 19:24** to portray the difficulty of a rich man has in entering the kingdom.

V25 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence.

V26 Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.

The inside of the cup – represents ones’ character.

V27 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness.

V28 Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

V29 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous,

V30 And say, ‘If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’

V31 Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets.

V32 Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ *guilt*.

V33 Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?

V34 Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city,

The present tense ***I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes*** – refers to those sent by God to the original first century Church of God. The book of **Acts** testifies to the accuracy of this prediction. Those servants that Christ sent to preach the Gospel, the Good News of the Coming Kingdom of God, were crucified, scourged and persecuted. Many became martyrs!

Notice what Stephen said in **Acts 7:51-52** shortly before he was stoned to death:

Acts 7:51 “*You stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.*”

V52 Which of the prophets did you fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers.”

V35 That on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

Able – was the first person murdered in the Old Testament (**Genesis 4:8**).

Zechariah – was the last. Zechariah’s death is recorded in **II Chronicles 24:20-21** – “So they conspired against him, and at the command of the king they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the LORD.”

Jesus was saying that from the beginning of the Bible to the end, true followers of God had often been treated in this manner.

Zechariah the prophet – is called the ***son of Berechiah*** here and also in **Zechariah 1:1**. In **II Chronicles 24:20** he is called the ***son of Jehoiada***. It is possible that Jehoiada was the grandfather of the murdered Zechariah and Berechiah was his father.

V36 Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Jesus Laments over Jerusalem

V37 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing!

V38 See! Your house is left to you desolate;

V39 For I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!*’”

Jerusalem, Jerusalem – calling a name twice, indicates strong emotion (**Matthew 27:46; II Samuel 18:33; Acts 9:4**).

Hen – the Greek term simply means “bird.” Throughout the Old Testament there are references to God exercising His care for His people in the same way a mother bird cares for her young (**Deuteronomy 32:10-12; Ruth 2:12; Psalm 17:8; Psalm 36:7; Psalm 61:4; Psalm 63:7; Psalm 91:4; Isaiah 31:5; Malachi 4:2**). Many of these references speak of God’s protective wings, under whose shelter the frightened could find refuge.

Psalm 91:2-4: V2 “I will say of the LORD, ‘*He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust.*’

V3 Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler *and* from the perilous pestilence.

V4 He shall cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you shall take refuge...”

Jesus came to His people wanting to give them that same kind of motherly care, but they rejected that care and tender affection again and again!