



## Act Five: Kingdom Judgment The King Comes Twice

Hypocrisy

Matthew 23: 1 – 39

Act 5 is about Kingdom Judgment;-

→ Warning judgment for all who reject God's Messiah – portrayed by the swaying of Judas Iscariot's body hanging on the tree.

→ Bloody judgment borne for our sake – suffering of Messiah hanging on Calvary.

Act 5 either way is a story about death and judgment;-

→ Judgment can be ours as we die without Christ

→ Or it can be Christ's as he dies in our place.

→ **Someone will be judged for our sin and we need to choose before the play is over.**

- Jesus calls a series of woes upon the Pharisees, who represented Israel at its worst hence speaking to Israel as a whole.
- Jesus is very clear that Jewish leaders are heading to hell unless they repent → showing emptiness and lifelessness of religion.

The word which dominates Jesus' attack on the Pharisees is *hypokrites=hypocrite*. Jesus uses the word seven times in chapter 23.

- Jesus main charge is that Pharisees are pretenders → good at telling others what to do but poor at doing it themselves.
- Majored on externals to substitute for internals.
- Jesus warns that God was not fooled because he sees the heart.
  
- All too easy for church leaders to puff up selves with titles and to preach a list of rules and regulations which have no power to help those who listen.
- Easy for Christians to turn the Gospel into a list of rules and to turn its call into something less than Revolution.
  - ❖ Hypocritical self-righteousness can easily replace passion for purity.
  - ❖ Debates about doctrine can easily replace radical calling towards '*justice, mercy and faithfulness*'.
  
- Let's repent of seeking leadership as a stepping stone to praise; and of letting the trappings of religion smother the Revolution of love; of spiritual play-acting which destroys Christian community; and of the apathetic compromise which resists the alarm-bell sounded by God's prophets.
- Hypocrisy is hypocrisy and God is not a respecter of persons.
- Jesus pleads that we turn back to him and he can gather us under his wings → changing us from inside out.

The King Comes Twice  
Matthew 24:1 – 51

The reason the Jews didn't recognize Jesus as Messiah is that the Old Testament describes him in two different guises which they could not reconcile.

- In Psalm 2; he is a mighty King
- In Psalm 22; he is '*a worm and not a man, scorned by men, and despised by the people*'.
  
- In Isaiah 53; he is the Suffering Servant, '*led like a lamb to the slaughter*'.
- In Isaiah 63; he is a mighty warrior clad in royal robes and stained with the blood of the enemies.

Therefore the Jews could not understand it and so ignored it. How could one man fit both descriptions? They ignored the suffering servant and made the Messiah less than he was.

They failed to understand because the Messiah would actually come *twice*.

**1<sup>st</sup>** as the Suffering Servant, hiding his royal power in the unimpressive body of a manual labourer from Galilee.

- *He would be rejected and crucified so that 'the writings of the prophets might be fulfilled'.*

**2<sup>nd</sup>** as the Mighty King, proving it to those who would listen through his miracles and his teaching, calling for voluntary surrender.

The second time he comes visibly and undisguised; gathering those who had already volunteered.

- This second coming would mark the harvest-day he described in 13:40-43, coming with such power and glory that nations of the earth would mourn their disastrous mistake.

The Final judgment would be prefigured by the utter destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD. This chapter begins with talk of Jerusalem and then the disciples ask about '*the end of age*', which becomes the context in the rest of the chapter.

Jesus says the end of age is a 'long time' in which some churches will grow cool and apathetic, while others will maintain their beacon-fires and spread the message throughout all nations of the earth.

- Jesus warns that these churches will be hated, yet they will be fruitful and victorious.
- Jesus also warns that those who willingly embrace his Kingdom Revolution must expect fierce resistance from the former regime.
- They must simply serve, sow and sacrifice in face of all opposition, because they know their King is coming back.

**All the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the LORD, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him, for dominion belongs to the LORD and he rules over the nations.**

**Psalms 22:27-28**

Parables of Judgment  
Matthew 25:1 – 46

Looking at three parable in Matthew 25:

- At first glance, they seem to say we are saved by being ready; active and generous  
→ surprising as heart of Gospel is that we are saved by grace through faith.

This is not Christ judging the world and saving church. But Christ judging his church and separating true followers from fakes.

1. The ten bridesmaids all look the same until the bridegroom comes and pronounces judgments.
2. The three servants all look faithful until the master returns and calls them to account.
3. The flock graze together until the shepherd divides the sheep from the goats.

The foolish bridesmaids, the lazy servant and the self-centered goats all name Jesus as their Lord, but when the Son of Man returns, their hearts will be exposed.

- Bridegroom shuts the five *foolish bridesmaids* out because he never knew them, i.e. 'borrow' Christian experience through association.
- Their lack of diligent preparation is the external symptom of an internal problem.
- The master does not throw the lazy servant into 'the outer darkness' because he is lazy but his laziness is another external symptom of the same internal problem.
- The servant has a false view of his master.
- If the servant doesn't work with what has been given, it shows that they don't know the master at all.
- The Son of Man does not throw the goats into hell because they failed to help those in need.
- It's not only how they treated the *poor* but specifically how they treated the brothers.
- Need to turn strangers into brothers → love people in the context of a local church.

❖ Christian faith is not just 'Jesus and me'.

- True believers show love for the Shepherd by feeding his sheep → sharing their homes, tables, closets and visiting → visiting prisons is not just for unbelievers but for believers, therefore much more risky.
- When we love others, Jesus treats it as loving him personally → those who don't love can't enter heaven, as part of hypocrites and fakes.

❖ Jesus created hell for Satan and demons not humankind → we belong in heaven but we first need to surrender to the Gospel.

- These parables are aimed at us → privately told by Jesus to disciples, therefore as warning to church goers.

❖ Examine yourself!

- Rejoice if you are a wise bridesmaid, a faithful servant, and a sheep.
- Jesus promises that the Kingdom was prepared for you from the very creation of the world.

**God's Kingdom Judgment is not just for those outside of the Church.  
It is for all those who join her community but resist her radical calling.**