

Matthew 21:23-22:14 The Examination of the King Part 1

At the Baptism of Jesus – John the Baptist stood in the Jordan river as Jesus approached – Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

A) It was an appropriate title for Jesus as He was coming to be the final lamb that would NEED TO BE SLAIN.

B) Every year millions of people would come from all over Israel and the middle east to celebrate Passover.

C) That annual Holiday in Israel where the Jewish people remembered their deliverance from Egypt after 400 years of slavery.

D) The Lord sent an Angel of death to Egypt – and He was going to kill the Firstborn of every household.

E) The only families that would be spared would be the ones who put the blood of a lamb that was sacrificed – on the door post of their homes

1) On those homes the Angel of Death would PASSOVER –

F) Hence that is where the name came from.
PASSOVER

So Every year – Jewish believers would come to Jerusalem to celebrate.

A) 100's of 1000's of lambs would be slain! – And every single lamb would be inspected – it had to be a lamb without blemish.

B) Now we have seen in our Sunday studies that Jesus road into the city – triumphal entry
1) Cleansed the temple – cursed a fig tree –

C) Now he is coming into the temple courts – where he is going to be inspected by the religious leaders

D) Make a note of who is doing the inspecting:

So first of all we are going to see the: The Sanhedrin

A) This group was made up of chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of Israel

B) These were 71 men whose job it was to protect the law and oversee all of Judaism.

1) Anyone who was having authority of the Jews it was their job to inspect such a man.

C) So they are the group examining Jesus in our passage tonight

D) Next week we'll look at two other groups of leaders in Israel who come together to question Jesus

The Herodians – Ch.22:15

A) They wanted submission to Rome; they favored their taxes and control of the Roman Empire.

B) Their name comes from their allegiance to the Roman appointed governor of Israel at this time –
1) Herod and his family.

C) Now teamed up with THEM were The Pharisees

They couldn't have been more different from the Herodians

A) They wanted nothing to do with Rome, Roman Taxes, or Roman oppression.

B) And they couldn't stand Herod and his family –
1) the Pharisees considered Herod to be a usurper of the throne of David because he was an Idumean.

C) Interesting how enemies become friends in their efforts to come against Jesus -

Finally next week we are going to meet the Sadducees and scribes

A) The Sadducees were the liberal scholars of the day and the scribes were the experts in the Jewish law.

B) So this whole group of religious and political leaders comes to start examining Jesus.
1) Come at him from every angle.

C) But in reality: Jesus is going to turn the tables so to speak

1) and it will be they, the religious leaders who end up on trial.

So the first group is the Sanhedrin
#1 A Question about His Authority

23 Now when He came into the temple, the **chief priests and the elders** of the people **The Sanhedrin** confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, “By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?”

Jesus answered their question with a question:

24 But Jesus answered and said to them, “I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things:

25 The baptism of John—where was it from? From heaven or from men?” **Jesus had caught these guys on the horns of a dilemma, and they knew it.**

And they reasoned among themselves, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ He will say to us, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’ 26 But if we say, ‘From men,’ we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet.”

The people loved JOHN

A)He was poor like them, from a rural background like them –

B)he told it straight to the religious leaders – he ate bugs, he was like a super hero.

1)Knowing how the people felt about John they said we can’t say he was from man

Realizing they were backed into a corner, “We do not know.” And He said to them, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

A)This was not an evasion on Jesus’ part.. He is not being evasive here.

B)It was a brilliant exposure of the leaders’ moral bankruptcy.

1)They were asking by what authority Jesus was doing what he did, asserting their ability to judge in his case.

C)But they were forced to confess their inability to make a judgment in the case of John the Baptist .

D)If they couldn’t make a judgment on John how could they make one on Jesus.

E)They had refused both John and Jesus because both had criticized them, but they would not admit it.

1)They preferred to plead ignorance—and to look ridiculous. Their dishonesty had been unmasked.”

Jesus proceeds to share 3 parables that are going to reveal the heart of the problem.

A)Hypocrisy – Hardness of heart and a Haughtiness – 3 sins that we need to be careful that we don’t find ourselves being guilty.

B)Parable of the Two Sons- Hypocrisy

28 “But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go, work today in my vineyard.’ 29 He answered and said, ‘I will not,’ **{Imagine that}** but afterward he regretted it and went. 30 Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. **{Imagine that}** 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?” They said to Him, “The first.”

Jesus said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. **{Ouch! Imagine the crowd – smirks – no accept John the Baptist has ever talked to these guys like that –**

32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did **not believe him**; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.

You saw John the man of God come and challenge – and you rejected him.

A)But sinners – tax collectors – harlots – they heard – although like the first son they might have rejected the way of God first

B)But eventually – hearing John they repented – they turned to the Lord

1)AND YOU SAW IT – Did NOTHING –

C)Even thought it was OBVIOUS – A WORK OF GOD WAS HAPPENING – YOU REJECTED IT

D)You are like the 2nd son – Sure we will go – but you didn’t believe –

1)Hypocrites – you pretend like you are into God but in reality you are not!

Parable of the Landowner- Hardness of heart

33 “Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. Exact picture is given in Isaiah 5 {Israel is God’s Vineyard – He built a tower - they knew this: And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country. 34 Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit. In Leviticus we are told that the fruit

in a new field was not to be collected until the 5th year.

35 And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another. 36 Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them. 37 Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.' 38 But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.' {these guys want the vineyard for themselves} 39 So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.

40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"

41 They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."

There is a connection between the parable of the two sons and the parable of the Landowner

A) because each has to do with a vineyard, representing God's kingdom

B) But there is also a progression from the first to the second.

1) In the first parable the fault of the second son is his hypocrisy. Here it is a hardness of heart.

C) In the parable you see the progression of the history of the nation of Israel.

When they were young, God saw them as a new vineyard and He was excitedly waiting for them to produce fruit – God was the vinedresser.

A) God appointed men like the Sanhedrin, to care for and protect the vineyard of God, the nation of Israel

B) they were the hired workers. – but they wanted the vineyard for themselves – it was about power

C) God the landowner, sent many servants (who were the prophets) to them

1) and they beat some and killed some. –

D) Rejected his servants – in the same way that Israel rejected the prophets of God

1) Elijah was driven from the land by an Israeli king.

2) Isaiah by tradition was sawn in two.

3) Zechariah was stoned to death.

APP - That is what hardness of heart does – God sends messengers but we don't want to hear it.

A) We don't want to listen – We ignore the messengers

B) If I have one person who tells me something – I might not pay attention –

1) I might say – they don't know me – they don't know what they are talking about

C) But if I have 3-4 people pointing the same thing out to me –

1) and especially if some of them are people I know love me – I would be A FOOL not to listen.

When we don't listen to GOD'S messengers there is usually three reasons why:

A) #1 because we are being foolish, we think we know better –

B) #2 we are being deceived we just can't see it

1) OR #3 our hearts have become hard

C) Good sign that your heart is hard is when you get mad when someone tries to talk to you

1) your hardness is followed by hostility.

D) The hearts of the Leaders of Israel had become so hard and hostile that they beat the messengers

1) (Prophets) and eventually ended up killing the son (JESUS)

42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.

This was the Lord's doing, And it is marvelous in our eyes'?

43 "Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. 44 And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder."

NOW Here Jesus quotes from Psalm 118, it is one of the Hallel songs or the songs of ascent –

A) the people of Israel would sing these songs on the Journey up to Jerusalem for Passover. –

B) Very well known. In fact it was Psalm 118 the people were quoting from when Jesus road into Jerusalem for his triumphal entry.

C) Back in the days of Solomon When the temple was under construction,
1) stones were quarried miles away and transported to the temple mount.

D) Stones Forty feet wide and twenty feet high, these stones were massive.

1) they fit together so perfectly that no mortar was needed, not even a knife blade could fit between them.

E) Tradition had it that one stone arrived on the scene but, because no one could figure out where it was supposed to go,

So the builders rolled it off a cliff into the Kidron Valley.

A) Not until the foundation was complete did the builders discover they were one stone short.

B) Sure enough, the stone they had rejected was none other than the cornerstone.

C) Here, Jesus pulls from that tradition as well as from Psalm 118, and says, **“Haven’t you read? The One who was rejected, the One who was cast away is indeed the chief cornerstone, the foundation stone.”**

43 “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it. 44 **And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”**

Jesus is the cornerstone – the foundation stone: Whoever falls on him will be broken.

A) Broken things get thrown away in our world – Worthless!

B) But heaven puts a premium on brokenness – when a person is broken – that is when God can start to work in their life.

C) Psalm 51:17 : **A broken and contrite heart – God will not despise.**

1) He doesn’t turn away from – He turns toward the broken hearted – He pays attention to them

Those who stumble upon Jesus and are broken – God can do great things with

A) God is a great rebuilder -

B) But those who continue to harden their hearts and resist Jesus- will be judged –

1) the rock falls on them and grinds them to powder.

C) Either you will fall on Him and be saved, or He will fall on you and you’ll be crushed.

1) It’s your choice. – I recommend the first

D) Jesus describes it this way in Matthew 23:12 **And whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**

CHECK THIS OUT

45 Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. 46 But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

SO Jesus points out their problem with Hypocrisy and a hardness of heart – continues on that theme in Chapter 22

A) The third parable - Parable of the Marriage Feast Chapter 22 – Haughtiness

And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: 2 “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son,

Now marriages were big deals in those days. More so than today: It was a seven-day feast.

A) King – Royal feast -

B) The king gives out a two-fold invitation.

1) Invitation number one in advance, { sort of like our save the date }

C) Servants are sent out letting people know that they are invited to the wedding

D) Second, once the feast was made ready then the second invitation was like saying **“Dinner is served. Come on in and get it.”**

2 “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, 3 and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come. {So with the Save the date – people are already letting it be known – they can’t make it – but the King is **Persistent** 4 Again, he sent out other servants, saying,

‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, **and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.**” ’ 5 But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. {We are too busy
6 And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them. { Here again we have a picture of a hardness of heart.

These people’s hearts are so hard that they don’t even see the privilege it is that the King is inviting them to the feast.

"7 But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, **destroyed those murderers,** and burned up their city.

A)The King doesn’t take this lightly

8 Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

9 Therefore go **into the highways,** and as many as **you find, invite** to the wedding.’ 10 So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, **both bad and good.** And the wedding hall was filled with guests. {THAT IS US - the good the bad and the Ugly – {another Church – the good the bad the beautiful.

B)Jesus is painting a picture here of what would happen to much of Israel

1)They would reject the invitation – so the gospel – Good News would go out to the gentiles

C)Romans 1:16-17 ¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷ For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, *“The just shall live by faith.”*

D)Paul would go preach: City after city always the same – Jew first

1)Some would believe but most would reject – so then he would go to the gentiles

E)That is the picture here: Jesus is saying the servants went out into the highways and the byways – whoever – tell them invited.

Now since these folks didn’t have the time to get ready for the celebration – purchase a new suit or make a new dress

A)And because many of them were poor and couldn’t afford nice wedding attire –

B)the King supplied everyone with a wedding garment

C)Watch what happens next - -

11 “But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment. 12 So he said to him, ‘**Friend,** how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. {He didn’t have a good answer –

The Problem here is haughtiness

A)this guys thinks – I don’t need the Kings Robe – my garments are good enough –

B)I like what I am wearing better

What is the meaning of this: God the father invites us into His Kingdom

A)But we have to have the right attire – RIGHTEOUSNESS

B)THE BIBLE says our righteousness is like filthy rags – so what does the father do?

1)He supplies us with a garment –

C)Clothed in the righteousness of Jesus

Isaiah 61:10 *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, My soul shall be joyful in my God;*

For He has clothed me with the garments of salvation, He has covered me with the robe of righteousness,

The problem with the religious leaders in Israel and many who have come after them

A)in their haughtiness they felt like their clothes were good enough

B)Paul said concerning the Jewish people as a whole, in Romans 10, "And they, being ignorant of Gods righteousness, and trusting in their own righteousness have rejected the righteousness of God."

C)**MANY LIKE THEM – My clothes are great – good person**

D)THAT DOESN’T FLY WITH GOD!

13 Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

14 “For many are called, but few are chosen.”

SO How do you know if you are chosen:

A) You accept the garment that has been given to you

B) YOU approach God based Not on your own righteousness but on the righteousness of Jesus

C) NOTHING YOU CAN DO – only what has been DONE BY JESUS

So the religious leaders in Israel question Jesus about His authority

A) He turns the tables on them – in a series of parables reveals THE HEART OF THEIR PROBLEM

B) Haughtiness – Hypocrisy and Hardness of heart that would be their ruin if they didn’t repent and have a change of heart

C) Broken by the Cornerstone and saved or Crushed and Judged

Before we go tonight consider this:

Authority is an important theme in Matthew’s Gospel.

A) You may recall that at the beginning, after Jesus had first begun to teach, Matthew said that “the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had *authority*, and not as their teachers of the law” (Matt. 7:28–29).

B) In Matthew 8:8-9 the centurion acknowledged his authority, comparing it to his own authority as a military commander: “Just say the word, and my servant will be healed. For I myself am a man under *authority*, with soldiers under me”

C) In Chapter 9 – Jesus says to a paralyzed man – Son your sins are forgiven – Wait only God can forgive!

D) So then Jesus says “so that you may know that the Son of Man has *authority* on earth to forgive sins... rise up and walk.” Matthew 9:6

In chapter 21, the chapter we are studying now, the word *authority* occurs four times,

A) twice on the lips of Jesus’ accusers and twice in JESUS’ response.

B) The most important occurrence of the word is at the very end of the Gospel, in the Great Commission, where Jesus says, “All *authority* in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matt. 28:18–20).

These verses teach us FOUR important things about Jesus’ authority.

1ST Jesus’ authority is God’s authority.

A) This is the only thing “all authority in heaven” can mean, for the only ultimate authority in heaven is God’s.

B) SO If Jesus has been given all authority in heaven, this can only mean that he is God and speaks with God’s authority.

C) The story about his ability to forgive the sin of the paralyzed man teaches the same truth.

1) The religious leaders thought he was blaspheming on the grounds that only God can forgive sins (Matt. 9:3).

2ND Jesus’ authority validates his teaching.

A) The authority he used to raise the dead and heal the sick and calm the storm – brought validation to his teaching

B) Ultimately his Resurrection from the dead would be his FINAL proof of his authority

1) He can be trusted and followed – he did exactly what he said he would do

3RD Jesus has authority to forgive sin.

A) This is the most important point of all, for sin is our greatest problem.

B) Sin keeps us from God..

C) The leaders of Israel would not acknowledge Jesus’ authority.

1)They wanted to be the authorities themselves, and the result is that they perished in their sins.

D)Many will perish for exactly the same reason.

1)They cling to their own supposed authority and will not come to Jesus.

4th Jesus' authority is given to his followers.

A)He sends us out with the authority of the word of God

B)The power of the Holy Spirit

C)Mission to impact our world