

Audio Transcript of Sermon

April 5, 2025

The Final Days of Jesus Before the Passover

Hello. Thank you for joining us today. My name is Tom Laign with Sabbath Bible Study. Throughout His earthly ministry, Jesus was constantly teaching the disciples, right up until the very end. As a teacher, He wanted to make sure the disciples understood what was being taught, and He also knew some of what was being taught wouldn't be understood until He was no longer with them. It's easy to see that the disciples didn't always understand at first what was being taught, and yet Jesus never gave up on them. Looking at what happens in a classroom today, there are both students and a teacher and the perspective of what happens in that classroom will vary based on whether one is the student or whether one is the teacher. Students come with differing abilities and teachers know within their class will be students who will easily learn what is being taught as well as students who will be challenged to learn what is being taught, and it is the job of the teacher to teach all students, not just students who easily learn. In preparing to teach a group of students the teacher will not only be aware of what is being taught but will develop strategies and alternative strategies to teach students. Teachers will also have a strong connection between the lesson being taught today and other lessons that will be taught. Students will not always connect with what they are learning in the current lesson to other lessons they have been taught, and teachers often help students make that connection.

When I taught students receiving special education services and needed to implement each child's individualized education plan, I was implementing instruction in the classroom designed to meet the goals and objectives for each student, which compounded the level of planning needed in developing lessons. During my career I came to realize the value of what today might be called scope and sequence. Because of the organization of special education programs, I had a clear understanding of my students' present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, and I also knew what goals and objectives were selected to be achieved during the next year. My job as a teacher was to improve their academic skills and functional performance from where they currently were to where they needed to be in that year. The lessons my students encountered were based on that need for growth and due to the individualized nature of instruction for students receiving special education services, even though I could group

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instructional topics together, like math, the math that students would do would look different based on their need.

The students wouldn't have looked at what happened in my classroom the same way as I would as their teacher. They wouldn't have understood the long-term planning that went into ensuring their success and they wouldn't have understood the different methods used to teach. They would have seen it as another day in Mr. Laign's class not even fully understanding they were learning something new. Even though most of my students were at planning meeting where goals and objectives were developed, most would not have been able to correlate a lesson to a particular goal or objective. Though both my students and I were involved in the same lesson, our perspectives were different, and they didn't always immediately learn then. Sometimes I would see the need to reteach a topic using different strategies, and sometimes multiple different strategies would be needed before a student could learn a lesson.

As a teacher, I've sometimes wondered how Jesus felt teaching the disciples especially when nearing the end of His earthly ministry. He knew what fate awaited Him even though the disciples didn't seem yet to grasp what would happen. From the Bible we have a glimpse of what was happening shortly before the crucifixion. In Matthew we can see where Jesus had two of the disciples go to a village to locate a donkey and colt and to return with them so that Jesus could ride them into Jerusalem, to fulfill a specific portion of prophecy. As Jesus entered the city, He was greeted with a large crowd who announced His arrival and saw Him as a prophet. Matthew twenty-one verse one.

Matthew 21:1-46

- 1. And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,**
- 2. Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.**
- 3. And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.**
- 4. All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying,**
- 5. Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.**

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- 6. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,**
- 7. And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.**
- 8. And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.**
- 9. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.**
- 10. And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?**
- 11. And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.**

After entering the city, Jesus went to the temple where he threw out all who sought to profit from the temple. He sought to restore the temple as a house of prayer when it had become a den of thieves. Verse twelve.

- 12. And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,**
- 13. And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.**

The chief priests of the temple couldn't help but notice what Jesus was doing. They saw how He healed the blind as well as people with mobility limitations, and they saw how happy the people truly were, and instead of being happy for the people, they were angry. After angering the chief priests at the temple, Jesus traveled to nearby Bethany to stay there for the night. Verse fourteen.

- 14. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.**
- 15. And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,**
- 16. And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?**
- 17. And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.**

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The next day, Jesus returned to Jerusalem and along the way noticed a fig tree because he was hungry. He also noticed that fig tree had no figs on it, and He cursed the tree causing the fig tree to wither away much faster than what would naturally occur. When the disciples noticed this, Jesus used this to teach about faith. Verse eighteen.

18. Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.

19. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever. And presently the fig tree withered away.

20. And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

21. Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this which is done to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

22. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

When He came back to the temple, the chief priests and elders had questions for Jesus. They wanted to know by whose authority He was able to do what He did, and instead of giving them a direct answer, Jesus challenged them giving them a no-win situation. Jesus understood they wanted Him dead, and He also understood it wasn't yet time for Him to die. Jesus asked them if they thought the baptism of John was from heaven or from men, and they knew no matter how they answered, Jesus would have the upper hand, so they declined to answer, and when they declined to answer, Jesus also declined to answer. Verse twenty-three.

23. And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24. And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

25. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

26. But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.

27. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

Jesus then taught using a parable of a son who initially refused to do what his father wanted, and then repented, and a second who lied to his father and never did what his father wanted. With this example, the chief priests and elders correctly told Jesus the son who initially said he would not do what his father wanted but then repented did what his father wanted, and then Jesus told them that the tax collectors and harlots would be in the Kingdom of God before them, showing that a person who is a sinner can repent but a person who sees himself as righteous in their mind has nothing to repent of. Verse twenty-eight.

28. But what think ye? A certain 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: but afterward he repented, and went.

30. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not.

31. Whether of them twain did the will of his father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.

32. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

Jesus then taught a parable where a wealthy landowner left his estate in charge of the groundskeepers. At the time of harvest, the wealthy landowner sent servants to collect the harvest and instead of being given what was due the landowner, the servants were killed by the groundskeepers, and the groundskeepers repeatedly did this. Jesus then asked what they thought the fate of the groundskeepers would be, and the chief priests and Pharisees told Jesus that the groundskeepers would be killed and the landowner would hire others to do the job. Jesus then used that understanding to show how those representing God have always been rejected by mankind, and that the Kingdom of God would be taken from them and given to people worthy of the Kingdom of God, and they

really wanted to kill Jesus but didn't because they feared the people. Verse thirty-three.

33. Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country:

34. And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it.

35. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.

37. But last of all he sent unto them his son, saying, They will reverence my son.

38. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance.

39. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

40. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen?

41. They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.

42. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

43. Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

44. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.

45. And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.

46. But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.

Jesus probably noticed their evil intent and then taught the same concept again using a different parable. In this parable, Jesus taught of a king who made a marriage for his son and called all the servants together, but they would not come instead doing whatever they wanted to do. Some even went as far as to kill the

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king's other servants making the king very angry. The king killed all who betrayed him and knowing that many who were called to the wedding rejected the offer, the king found suitable replacements to come to the wedding, but all who came were expected to be properly attired, because the king threw out a guest not wearing clothes appropriate for a wedding. Matthew twenty-two verse one.

Matthew 22:1-46

- 1. And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,**
- 2. The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,**
- 3. And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.**
- 4. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.**
- 5. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise:**
- 6. And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.**
- 7. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.**
- 8. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy.**
- 9. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage.**
- 10. So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests.**
- 11. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment:**
- 12. And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless.**
- 13. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**
- 14. For many are called, but few are chosen.**

The Pharisees must have sensed they were being spiritually overpowered and outmaneuvered by Jesus, and they sought advice on how they might entrap Jesus in His own words. One of them, a disciple of the Herodians, asked Him if it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, and Jesus showed them how their own money had the inscription of Caesar and how they should give to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's. Verse fifteen.

15. Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk.

16. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men.

17. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?

18. But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

19. Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny.

20. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription?

21. They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.

22. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.

The Sadducees who didn't believe in a resurrection asked Him if a man who through death of his wife had multiple wives throughout his life, which wife would be his in the Kingdom of God. Jesus explained that in the Kingdom of God there is no marriage between those who are resurrected because they will be eternal like angels. Verse twenty-three.

23. The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,

24. Saying, Master, Moses said, If a man die, having no children, his brother shall marry his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother.

25. Now there were with us seven brethren: and the first, when he had married a wife, deceased, and, having no issue, left his wife unto his brother:

26. Likewise the second also, and the third, unto the seventh.

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27. And last of all the woman died also.

28. Therefore in the resurrection whose wife shall she be of the seven? for they all had her.

29. Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.

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

31. But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying,

32. I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

33. And when the multitude heard this, they were astonished at his doctrine.

Seeing the Sadducees were stumped, one of the Pharisees asked Jesus a technical question about the Old Testament, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus told them that loving the Lord God with all their heart, soul, and mind was the great commandment and that a second great commandment was to love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus showed how on these two commandments hang all the law and prophets. Verse thirty-four.

34. But when the Pharisees had heard that he had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together.

35. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

36. Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

37. Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

38. This is the first and great commandment.

39. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

40. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

Jesus then challenged the Pharisees asking them whose son they thought Jesus was, and they replied that Jesus descended through David. Jesus then gave the psalm where David wrote, "The Lord said to my Lord sit on my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool." Jesus then asked how a son can be called a Lord, and with that thought the Pharisees no longer wanted to verbally challenge

Jesus because they had to know Jesus was the Lord David was referencing. Verse forty-one.

- 41. While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them,**
- 42. Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David.**
- 43. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying,**
- 44. The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool?**
- 45. If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?**
- 46. And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.**

With the religious elite silenced, Jesus than gave His followers and disciples a two-pronged message about the Pharisees. He told them to do what they said to do, but not to do what they did. Jesus was teaching about hypocrisy and how the scribes and Pharisees were hypocrites. He showed that those who are worthy to be the greatest are the ones who are the greatest servants. Matthew twenty-three verse one.

Matthew 23:1-39

- 1. Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,**
- 2. Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:**
- 3. All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.**
- 4. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.**
- 5. But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,**
- 6. And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,**
- 7. And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.**
- 8. But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.**
- 9. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.**
- 10. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.**

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11. But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant.

12. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.

He called the scribes and Pharisees hypocrites because they made it impossible for people to enter into the Kingdom of God and would purposefully not enter themselves. He showed how they would twist religious concepts to benefit themselves, how they would seek converts and then condemn them for who they were while giving themselves a free pass with what they did. He explained how they looked at the smallest parts of the law and forgot about justice, mercy, and faith. He showed how they worked hard to look righteous so they could hide the sinful people they really were. Verse thirteen.

13. But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.

14. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.

15. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.

16. Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor!

17. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18. And, Whosoever shall swear by the altar, it is nothing; but whosoever sweareth by the gift that is upon it, he is guilty.

19. Ye fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gift, or the altar that sanctifieth the gift?

20. Whoso therefore shall swear by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21. And whoso shall swear by the temple, sweareth by it, and by him that dwelleth therein.

22. And he that shall swear by heaven, sweareth by the throne of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

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23. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

24. Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.

25. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within they are full of extortion and excess.

26. Thou blind Pharisee, cleanse first that which is within the cup and platter, that the outside of them may be clean also.

27. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness.

28. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

Jesus went on and showed how the scribes and Pharisees saw themselves as better than their ancestors never considering that if they had lived back in the time of their ancestors, they would have done the very same things. He then compared what their ancestors did in killing prophets to how they killed Zacharius the son of Barachias on the temple ground. Verse twenty-nine.

29. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous,

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

31. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets.

32. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.

33. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

34. Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

35. That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar.

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36. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.

Jesus then showed how Jerusalem was known for killing prophets and how He would treat people differently. He also foreshadowed His death by explaining how He would soon not be seen until they recognized that a person who comes in the name of God is blessed. Verse thirty-seven.

37. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

38. Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

39. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Jesus would then provide the Olivet prophecy and related teachings, and last week we looked at the Olivet prophecy. We will move forward to the time a couple of days before the Passover where Jesus told the disciples he would be betrayed and crucified. They probably didn't fully understand what would happen. At about this time the religious elite gathered together to solve their Jesus problem. As that planning was going on Jesus spent time at the house of Simon the leper in Bethany where he was treated to an expensive ointment. The disciples couldn't imagine the waste of money when there were so many poor and Jesus told them instead that what this woman did would be remembered forever as a memorial for the kindness she showed. Matthew twenty-six verse one.

Matthew 26:1-16

1. And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished all these sayings, he said unto his disciples,

2. Ye know that after two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified.

3. Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people, unto the palace of the high priest, who was called Caiaphas,

4. And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him.

5. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people.

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6. Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,
7. There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat.
8. But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?
9. For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.
10. When Jesus understood it, he said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me.
11. For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always.
12. For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.
13. Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

This seemed to be the tipping point for Judas who made a deal with the chief priests to betray Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Verse fourteen.

14. Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests,
15. And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.
16. And from that time he sought opportunity to betray him.

Moving ever closer to the spring Holy Days we need to remember that Jesus taught whoever denies Him before men will be denied by Jesus before God the Father and those who confess Jesus will be confessed by Jesus before God the Father. As we are faithful to Jesus and show our faithfulness to other people, we will be treated faithfully, and as we are faithless to Jesus and show unfaithfulness to other people, we will be treated unfaithfully. Matthew ten verse thirty-two.

Matthew 10:32-33

32. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.
33. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

Peter wrote that those who deny Jesus do so because they are false teachers who privately will bring in damnable heresies. We need to be especially careful of people claiming to represent God and Jesus Christ who use flattering words all in an attempt to get money from us. Second Peter two verse one.

2 Peter 2:1-3

- 1. But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.**
- 2. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.**
- 3. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.**

John warned that even during his time there were those who did not believe Jesus came in the flesh. Even though we live thousands of years later there are still some who do not believe Jesus came in the flesh, and these people have the spirit of antichrist who deny Jesus. First John four verse one.

1 John 4:1-4

- 1. Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.**
- 2. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God:**
- 3. And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.**
- 4. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.**

Instead of denying Christ when it is not convenient to be a Christian, we need to be prepared to suffer. It is when we suffer as a Christian, we unequivocally show we confess Jesus, and if we suffer for Jesus no matter how large or small, we will reign with Jesus. Throughout many years of the faith, just about everyone has had to pass on some opportunity or be looked down on because we first chose the

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Kingdom of God and God's righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ. Second Timothy two verse eight.

2 Timothy 2:8-12

8. Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel:

9. Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

10. Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

11. It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:

12. If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

Getting closer to the spring Holy Days, it is a good time to remember that instead of denying Jesus in our life, we need to deny ourselves. Instead of seeking to make Jesus more and more like us, we need to seek to make ourselves more and more like Jesus. Instead of denying Jesus, we deny ourselves. What was previously important in our life will no longer be important as what is of the Kingdom of God, what is of righteousness, and what is possible through Jesus Christ is what we focus on. Luke nine verse eighteen.

Luke 9:18-26

18. And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?

19. They answering said, John the Baptist; but some say, Elias; and others say, that one of the old prophets is risen again.

20. He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

21. And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing;

22. Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day.

23. And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

24. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

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25. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away?

26. For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels.

Denying ourselves means we commit our lives to becoming a new person being reconciled to God through Jesus Christ. Second Corinthians five verse sixteen.

2 Corinthians 5:16-19

16. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more.

17. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

18. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;

19. To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

As we seek to deny ourselves and to confess Jesus Christ through how we live our lives we can be confident that God the Father will continue the good work He began in us and will never give up on us. Philippians one verse three.

Philippians 1:3-6

3. I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

4. Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,

5. For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

6. Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Jesus taught that we cannot deny Him and must instead deny ourselves. No longer is our life about just what we want but is focused first on the Kingdom of God and God's righteousness all made possible through Jesus Christ. As we make final preparations for the spring Holy Days, now is especially the time to live our lives in such a manner that we confess Jesus by the very way we live our lives.

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Thank you for joining us today. God-willing we'll get together next time on the Sabbath. Until then, thank you for joining us today.