

## Matthew 23:13-26:68

### **Thursday, February 4 – Matthew 23:13-39**

1. An ancient church father once said, “The heart is hard which will not be softened by benefits, nor terrified by threats, nor moved by promises.” That describes Israel, especially its leaders. The context of this section is found in verse 32: “Fill up, then, the measure of the sin of your forefathers.” Jesus saw the religious leaders as the last in a long line of men who would kill those who spoke God’s truth to them. Every religious impulse of the Pharisees was at odds with God’s will and with his Son’s will. The only word suitable for such rebellion is *woe*.

2. Identify Jesus’ point in each of the seven woes. Woe to the religious leaders because:

Verse 13:

Verse 15:

Verses 16-22:

Verses 23,24:

Verses 25,26:

Verses 27,28:

Verses 29-32:

### **Friday, February 5 – Matthew 24:1-28**

3. The judgment on Jerusalem is a picture of God’s judgment on the world. The end of God’s grace on his people as a nation came in a.d. 70 when the Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem. The end of God’s time of grace for the world will come when he returns to judge all people. Jesus links the two together, moving from one to the next without making any special comments. Some verses clearly refer to the first event, and some clearly refer to the second. Some apply to both. Jesus’ purpose is not to satisfy our curiosity for detail about the end of the world but to keep us watching for his second coming through signs found in the history of the world.

### **Saturday, February 6 - Matthew 24:29-51**

4. How do Jesus’ words in verse 35 help us as we watch for his return?
5. Some interpret verses 40 and 41 as predicting a rapture, where believers will be caught up into heaven and unbelievers will be left on earth to face terrible times. Evaluate that thought in the light of the context of these verses.

**Sunday, February 7 – Matthew 25:1-30**

6. True or false: The foolish virgins had never come to faith. Explain your answer.
  
7. What is the significance of “midnight” (verse 6)?
  
8. What are the “talents” God has given his church? (Note - “*Talent*”—This is a very large sum of money.)

**Monday, February 8 – Matthew 25:31-26:13**

9. In the picture of the sheep and the goats, Jesus links our faith with our deeds and we are judged on the basis of what we do. The deeds spoken about in this section have often been interpreted as general works we do in response to what God has done for us. However, it seems best to refer to them as the works we do for others because they are members of God’s family. Each deed has a strong element of confession attached to it. Evaluate each work in view of that interpretation.
  
10. With the above question in mind, what is the significance of the phrase “the least of these brothers of mine” (verse 40)?

**Tuesday, February 9 – Matthew 26:14-46**

11. Against the backdrop of the greatest betrayal of all time comes the greatest act of giving of all time. Look at the following phrases and words. What do they tell you about the Lord’s Supper?

“take and eat . . . drink . . . fruit of the vine” (verses 26,27,29)

“all of you” (verse 27)

“my body . . . blood” (verses 26,28)

“the covenant” (verse 28)

“poured out” (verse 28)

“forgiveness of sins” (verse 28)

**Wednesday, February 10 – Matthew 26:47-68**

12. Against the backdrop of Peter’s denial of Jesus respond to the following: Sometimes the apostles, like Peter and Paul, are called heroes of faith. Do you think they would have wanted to be referred to as such? Would you want future generations to speak of you like that?