

Who Do You Say That I Am?

Seeing and Delighting in Jesus through an Expositional Journey through the **Gospel of Matthew**

135- The Glory of God's Justice- Part 2

Church August 10, 2025

Matthew 11:20-24

20 Then He began to denounce the cities in which most of His miracles were done, because they did not repent.

21 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

23 And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day.

24 Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you."

*To the Glory of God the Father; God the Son;
and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

There are two great Truths that are *clearly* and *repeatedly* taught in Scripture that are normally *minimized* or even completely *ignored* by far too many of the people of the modern Church. And those two Truths are:

1. The Fall of Mankind
2. The Absolute Sovereignty of God

Now after being in the Church for over 54 years- I have NEVER met anyone who does not believe in both of these Truths. Every person I have ever talked to for over a half- Century says they believe that Adam "fell" in the Garden and God is "Sovereign". EVERYBODY says they believe those two Truths. But simply believing that both of those things are true- is NOT the Problem. The Problem is one of Degrees. In other words, the Reason people either *misunderstand* both of these Truths or actually believe Wrongly about them- lies in trying to understand

just “HOW Fallen” Mankind is; and just “HOW Sovereign” God is. So, with God- is God:

- NOT Sovereign at all
- *Partially* Sovereign
- Sovereign *at certain Times*
- Sovereign *under certain Circumstances*
- Sovereign *with certain Issues*

... or is the one, true, and living God, Who is revealed to us in both the created Universe and the Scriptures- “*Absolutely Sovereign over Everything- all the Time*”? And how does believing that- affect all of the other Truths of the Bible like:

- Salvation
- Human Destiny
- Human Will
- Satan’s Operation in the Earth
- Evil
- Damnation

In other words, does the Sovereignty of God “*ebb and flow*”? Are there Times when God’s Sovereignty is *stronger* and governs all of Creation *differently*- based on certain Circumstances and Situations? Is God *completely* Sovereign over *some* Things but *less* than completely Sovereign over other Things? Is there *some* Part of the Universe that exists and operates on its own- *completely separate* from God’s Will and ongoing Governance? Is there some “*Time-frame*” or “*Season*” whereby God’s Sovereignty is either *diminished* or altogether *ceases to exist*? And is there any Issue over which God’s Sovereignty does NOT exercise COMPLETE Control?

Now even though the “*Sovereignty of God*” is a *fundamental* and *primary* Doctrine of the Bible- and has been taught by the Christian Church for over 2,000 consecutive years- you might be shocked to hear how- many people, who lay claim to believe the Bible is the Word of God, answer these Questions in our Day. The sad Reality is that the people of the modern Church are “all over the map” when it comes to what they believe and teach about the Sovereignty of God. So, today, there is simply NO Consensus at all about how we are to understand God- and that is a very terrible and sinful Reality.

Because it isn’t as though the Bible isn’t very precise and very clear about this Issue. But, because a very large population of the modern Church simply do

NOT read or study the Bible very much- they honestly don't know what to believe about Sovereignty; or how the Bible answers these Questions!

And because that is true- the Issue of the "*Glory of God's Justice*"; along with other similar Issues like "*God's Wrath against Sin*"; the "*Damnation of unrepentant Sinners*"; "*Hell*"; "*God's Fury at Sin*" and the "*Judgment of God*" in general- escapes them. And so, many today simply don't understand and don't want to even discuss the Concept that God has promised to eternally punish people, who rebel against Him.

And so, while they linger; and talk about; and sing about; and embrace; and enjoy; the Truth that "*God is Love*"- over time- they become terribly warped- because they do NOT balance that wonderful Truth with the Truth that God is also "*Righteous*"!

To say that God is "*Sovereign*" means- by default- that He exercises complete Control over ALL THINGS- ALL THE TIME! And God simply CANNOT be "*Sovereign*"- AT ALL- unless He exercises complete Control over ALL THINGS- ALL THE TIME! And so, things like:

- The created Universe
- All of Nature
- ALL the Nations of the Earth
- Human Choices and Decisions
- Birth, Life, and Death
- Salvation
- Evil
- Satan
- Eternity

If God is Sovereign- at all- then He exercises *complete* Control over all of these Issues (and much more)! In other words, if there is a single thing in the entire Universe that exists and operates on its own- free from God's complete Control- then God is NOT Sovereign- at all!

And it is because we are all "Fallen": as to why we are all SINFUL! Because all Sin flows out from our hearts- precisely because we are Fallen! And if Man is "Fallen" at all- if all of Mankind is "Fallen" in any way, shape or form- then all human beings are TOTALLY and COMPLETELY "Fallen"- or else Man is NOT "Fallen- at all! Human beings being "Fallen"- like God being "Sovereign"- is ALL- INCLUSIVE! So, there is no such thing as anyone being "*somewhat Fallen*" or "*partially Fallen*" or "*Fallen to a certain Degree*": or "*Fallen under certain Circumstances or at certain Times*"! Mankind is either TOTALLY and

COMPLETELY “Fallen- or Mankind is NOT “Fallen” at all. So, again, like Sovereignty- it is ALL or NOTHING!

Now the Reason I am talking about this- is because I am convinced that no one can understand very important and eternal Issues like “*Salvation*”- correctly; fully; and rightly- without *first* understanding that Man is TOTALLY and COMPLETELY “Fallen” and God is ABSOLUTELY SOVEREIGN OVER ALL THINGS- ALL THE TIME! So, the “Fall of Man” and the “Sovereignty of God” are the two big, important, “*kahuna* Doctrines” of biblical Christianity that EVERY Church should teach and that every person, who is saved- should understand.

So, whether we are talking about things like “*Salvation*” or “*Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*”; or “*Heaven*” or “*Hell*” or the “*Glory of God’s Grace*” or the “*Glory of God’s Justice*”- we will- *sooner or later*- get “off base” (which is to say we will become “Unbiblical”)- unless we *first* understand- *rightly and fully*- that God is “*absolutely Sovereign over everything – all the Time*”; and that all of Mankind is “*totally and completely Fallen*”! Which is precisely WHY so many in the modern Church ARE, in fact, off base (Unbiblical) about those Issues!

And this is why so many today, who lay claim to be saved, *categorically* REJECT the Idea of Hell; Damnation; God’s Wrath against Sin; and God’s Judgment against unrepentant people. Precisely because they either do NOT understand the “Sovereignty of God” or the “Fall of Man”- or both- they naturally migrate into seeing the “*Justice of God against Sinners*”- as being a gross “Overreaction” to our Transgressions. And so, they ask, “*How could a God- who is pure Love- a God Who has gone to such great Lengths to rescue Sinners- allow them to be tortured and punished in a Lake of Fire- Forever- and remain Good?*”

Now I personally think this is a very Good Question. So, I don’t shy away from it- like so many do today. I see this Question as simply a wonderful Opportunity for me to obey what the Apostle said in **1Peter 2:9**:

But you are A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;

... and ONE of the “**Excellencies of God**” that ALL Believers are supposed to proclaim (which is WHY God saved us in the *first* place)- is the “*Glory of God’s Justice*”!

And so, even though this is a Subject that is NOT usually taught anymore- it is important for us to learn about it and believe in it- because as we read the Passage here in **Matthew 11** that is before us today- you really can’t understand it

properly unless you also understand the “*Glory of God’s Justice*”! And that’s why I’m teaching it this morning.

Because the real Question is NOT, “*Who does God think He is- by judging all those wonderful people?*” The real Question is, “*Who do those fallen ‘creatures of the dust’ think they are- by purposefully and repeatedly rebelling against the sovereign and glorious Owner and Creator on the Universe?*”

Now as I told you last Time- this Passage illustrates a radical Shift in Jesus’ earthly Ministry because, for the first Time- Jesus is NOT merely “*seeking and saving that which was Lost*”; and He is NOT merely *defending* Himself against the Accusations hurled at Him. Beginning with this Passage- Jesus is now also *damning* those who refuse His Call to repent and believe. And, as I have said, that Side of Jesus’ Ministry, while very Unpopular with us- is VERY Important to God. So, let’s get into this first Occurrence of Jesus pronouncing Judgment on those who *refuse* to believe. And so, with this Passage- we are introduced to the “*Glory of God’s Justice*”.

And to illustrate the Glory of His Justice- Jesus mentions six ancient Cities that were very Important to both the ancient world as well as those who read and study the Bible. And Jesus contrasts the Cities of Tyre, Sidon, and Sodom- which were known, from the Old Testament, as being very wicked and evil Cities- against the Cities of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum- where Jesus ministered during the early part of His earthly Ministry.

Chorazin (also spelled as “*Korazim*”) was a “Village” situated on what was known as the “*Korazim Plateau*”; and was located in the “Upper Galilee Region” that was built on a hilltop overlooking the Sea of Galilee about 2.5 miles north of Capernaum. Beginning a few hundred years before Jesus was born- Chorazin was a significant Jewish center during the Roman and Byzantine periods- known for its olive oil and wine production. It was constructed using “black basalt stone” and was part of what became known as the “*Evangelical Triangle*” consisting of Chorazin; Bethsaida; and Capernaum- where Jesus focused the early years of His earthly Ministry.

Now even though Jesus keeps those three Cities/Villages completely separate in His Condemnation here in **Matthew 11**- it was very common back then for all three to be lumped together and collectively called, “*Capernaum*” or even the “*Region of Capernaum*” or even the “*Region around Galilee*”. And so, when the Bible says Jesus did or said something “*in Capernaum*” it *could* have actually been done or said in any of those three places.

And that is important for us to know because there is NOTHING in the Bible referencing Chorazin *specifically*- until Jesus pronounced Damnation against it. And yet, He said He performed “**many Miracles**” there. And that proves that,

while Chorazin was NOT mentioned specifically- it was probably lumped in with either Capernaum or Bethsaida or both.

Now Bethsaida was the Birth City of three Apostles: Andrew, Peter, as well as Philip. And so, there are five references of this City in the Bible- apart from Jesus' Condemnation of it here in **Matthew 11:21** as well as in **Luke 10:13**. And even though some teach that Bethsaida was the same City as Bethany- that's simply not true. Bethsaida was on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee and was part of the "*Evangelical Triangle*" while Bethany (the City of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus)- was a small Village on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives about two miles from Jerusalem; and was located many miles away from Bethsaida. So, while Bethany means: "*House of Figs*" or "*House of Hurting*"- Bethsaida means: "*House of Hunting*" or "*House of Fishing*".

Now in Jesus' Damnation of Chorazin; Bethsaida; and Capernaum- our Lord *contrasts* these three Cities- where He performed many Miracles- with three ancient Cities of Tyre; Sidon; and Sodom. And so, in order for us to get the Importance of this Divine Condemnation- we need to do some research on those cities as well.

The City of Tyre was initially the Capitol City of the ancient Nation of Phoenicia- which is the modern-day Country of Lebanon. The ancient Phoenicians were known for their maritime Power and Tyre became famous as a great port in which ships from all over the world could harbor. And that sea-Trade made Tyre very rich. Tyre also became famous for its purple dye- which was one of the rarest and most costly dyes in the ancient World. Tyre is mentioned in the Bible as early as **Joshua 19:29** and, at that time, was already considered to be a "fortified city". Tyre is mentioned 57 Times throughout the Bible.

The King of Phoenicia (Hiram) was friendly with both King David as well as Solomon and sent David lumber from the famous "*Cedars of Lebanon*" which was used to build both David's Palace (**2Samuel 5**) as well as Solomon's Temple (**1Kings 5**). The City of Tyre sent skilled Craftsmen to King Solomon to help with the construction of the Jewish 1st Temple in Jerusalem around 957 BC.

Over the years, the City of Tyre expanded to include an island about ½ mile off the Coast of Tyre and became "New Tyre". And along with their great Wealth- Tyre also built great and high walls to protect them from Invasion. So, Tyre was a very powerful; very rich; and very famous City in the ancient world.

But over time- things turned very badly for Tyre. And like most human beings- the great Wealth and Prestige that the people of Tyre accumulated eventually made them to be Arrogant and Wicked before God (**Ezekiel 28:1-19**). And so, around the late 6th Century BC- the Prophet Ezekiel was "moved" by God the Holy Spirit to pronounce God's Judgment against the great City. And this Prophet said this in part from **Ezekiel 26:3b-5**:

... Behold, I am against you, O Tyre, and I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves. They will destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers; and I will scrape her debris from her and make her a bare rock. She will be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken,' declares the Lord God, 'and she will become spoil for the nations.'¹

God had promised Tyre, **"I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves"** and so, a long series of pagan Peoples and Empires attacked the City of Tyre over the next 1700 years- one after another- like the waves of the Sea- and *repeatedly* decimated it.

- Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (585-572BC)
- Alexander the Great (332BC)
- Mameluke Muslims (1291 AD)

Now Nebuchadnezzar completely conquered the part of Tyre that was on the mainland. But when Alexander the Great came through- he was used by God to fulfill Ezekiel's Prophecy to an amazing degree. Alexander ordered his men to tear down the houses and walls of the mainland city and literally throw the debris into the Sea in order to build a Causeway from the mainland to the island! He then conquered the island section of Tyre and left it in ruins!

And then almost 13 Centuries after Jesus rose from the Dead- the Mameluke Muslims rose through; destroyed the city again; and left it in ruins!

But there were *many* cities in the ancient world where the people became Arrogant and Wicked before the Lord. And yet, God's Anger was turned very specifically against Tyre. Why? The Prophet, speaking for God, said this from **Ezekiel 26: 2:**

Son of man, because Tyre has said concerning Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gateway of the peoples is broken; it has opened to me. I shall be filled, now that she is laid waste,

... so, the Arrogance and Wickedness of the people of Tyre was directed specifically against the City of Jerusalem- which at that Time had become the combination of "Yeru" or "Yireh" (House/Dwelling/Abiding Place) and – "Shalem"

¹ This Sermon is NOT a comprehensive Examination of the **Book of the Prophet Ezekiel**.

or “*Shalom*” (Peace)” to make “*Yerushalem*” or “*Yerushalayim*” or the “*Dwelling of Peace*” or the very “*Habitation of God*”!²

The City of Sidon is found in the Bible 33 times and is mentioned many times, alongside of Tyre. Sidon was originally a son of Ham, and a great-grandson of Noah, who eventually settled in the Region of Canaan near Gaza; Sodom; and Gomorrah and propagated that Region.

The City of Sidon soon became very prosperous and also very wicked. And the people of Sidon became known as much for their Idolatry as they were for their Wealth. And so, God used the Prophet Ezekiel to condemn it as well in **Ezekiel 28:20-24**:

20 And the word of the Lord came to me saying,

21 “Son of man, set your face toward Sidon, prophesy against her

22 and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, And I will be glorified in your midst. Then they will know that I am the Lord when I execute judgments in her, And I will manifest My holiness in her.

23 “For I will send pestilence to her And blood to her streets, And the wounded will fall in her midst By the sword upon her on every side; Then they will know that I am the Lord.

24 “And there will be no more for the house of Israel a prickling brier or a painful thorn from any round about them who scorned them; then they will know that I am the Lord God.”

Now please notice that as God promises to destroy the City of Sidon, He used a very interesting Way to His Judgment:

Behold, I am against you, O Sidon, And I will be glorified in your midst. Then they will know that I am the Lord when I execute judgments in her, And I will manifest My holiness in her.

God said two things here about His promised Damnation against Sidon that is very interesting:

1. God will be *glorified* in the midst of Sidon as He judges them
2. God will manifest *His Holiness* in Sidon as He judges them

² The form “*Yerushalem*” or “*Yerushalayim*” first appears in the Bible, in the **Book of Joshua**. According to a Midrash, the name is a combination of two names united by God, “*Yireh*” (the abiding place, the name given by Abraham to the place where he planned to sacrifice his son) and “*Shalem*” (Place of Peace, the name given by high priest, Shem). This is according to Ginzberg, Louis (1909). *The Legends of the Jews Volume I: The Akedah* Archived 13 March 2020 at the Wayback Machine (Translated by Henrietta Szold) Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society.

Now, normally, when we think about God's "Glory" and "Holiness"- we attach both of these two things with a very Wonderful Setting. We usually think about the Glory of God when it pertains to God doing something Miraculous and Powerful- yes- but also usually something that is *beneficial* to us. And so, even though the Manifestation of God's Glory and Holiness is, many Times, very Frightening- it is usually considered to be a "Good Thing". For example, when the shepherds were in the field- tending their flocks of sheep- preparing them for Sacrifice in the Temple in Jerusalem- Here is what the good doctor infallible wrote in **Luke 2:8-14:**

8 In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened.

10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people;

11 for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

12 This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

13 And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

Now, granted, this Demonstration of God's Power and Glory *initially* frightened those Shepherds. But they quickly recovered because the Angel told them,

I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

... so, even though this Display of God's Power and Glory was Powerful and initially very Frightening- it was a VERY GOOD Announcement- not only to those men but also to the whole world!

But here with the promised Damnation of the people of Sidon- the Display of both the Glory of God along with His Holiness was NOT Good at all- from a human Perspective! In fact, it was a terrible sovereign Act of Damnation! And yet, it is attached to both God being Glorified and the very Holiness of God!

Now most people have heard about both Sodom and Gomorrah. God the Holy Spirit “moved” on Moses to write that the men of Sodom were...

... wicked exceedingly and sinners against the Lord. (Genesis 13:13)

Now during the past Decade- there have been many Efforts, by people- who do NOT believe the Bible is the inspired; infallible; and inerrant Word of the living God- to try to *sanitize* the Sin of both Sodom and Gomorrah in order to try to accomplish two great Evils:

1. To make the Sin of Homosexuality *less* Offensive and *more* Acceptable to the people of the modern Church
2. To recast the Sin of Sodom as being nothing more than “*Inhospitality*” rather than sexual Perversion

I have an entire Series of Sermons that I preached immediately after the US Supreme Court sanctioned so-called “homosexual Marriages” back in 2015 called, “*Human Sexuality and the Sovereignty of God*”. You may want to get those Sermons so you may know what the Bible actually teaches about ALL sexual Sins; how God is absolutely Sovereign over even this area of our Lives; and so, you can accurately *refute* this wayward Effort to *normalize* what God has already condemned.

And, of course, we know that Abraham tried to intercede with God- by pleading for God to NOT destroy them. And yet, God could NOT find even 10 righteous Souls in Sodom. And so, God delivered Lot and his two Daughters from that wicked City while He rained down Fire and Brimstone on both Sodom and Gomorrah and destroyed them completely! And yet, even after *warning* them all to NOT look back- Lot’s Wife DID look back and was *immediately* turned into a “*Pillar of Salt*”!

So, in this Passage in **Matthew 11**- Jesus brought up three wicked Cities that He judged in the ancient world! And that would be frightening enough. But our Lord compared three Cities of His Day with those three ancient Cities:

1. Chorazin
2. Bethsaida
3. Capernaum

... in which Jesus had performed MANY Miracles! And look what Jesus said about that in **Matthew 11:21&22**:

21 "Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles had

occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

22 Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

Now there was NO Jew, worth his salt, in the 1st Century, that did NOT know full-well about the promised Damnation and Destruction of both Tyre and Sidon. Every living Jew was taught, from a child, about how Evil and how Sinful the people of Tyre and Sidon had been; and how JUSTIFIABLE their Damnation was! So, the average Jew of the 1st Century believed that the people of Tyre and Sidon DESERVED the Judgment they received from God! The people of Tyre had pronounced great Arrogance against the beloved City of Jerusalem while the people of Sidon had *encouraged* the Jews to commit horrible Idolatry!

And History bore out the Prophecies of Ezekiel to be true! And so, the Jews of the 1st Century had NO Mercy for anyone living in either Tyre or Sidon. They simply lumped them all into the Category of being wicked, pagan, Gentiles- who EARNED the Damnation of God! And yet, Jesus told them two things that should have curled their hair:

1. **If the miracles had occurred in Tyre and Sidon which occurred in you, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.**
2. **It will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.**

... now WHY did Jesus say this? *Why* did He equate the Sin of the people of Chorazin; Bethsaida, and Capernaum to be MUCH MORE EVIL than the Sin of the people of Tyre and Sidon? Because the people of Chorazin; Bethsaida, and Capernaum had the Privilege of seeing the incarnate God- Jesus Christ- at work in their Cities- performing MANY Miracles- proving that He was God. And yet, with ALL that Proof- they refused to Believe!

And that tells us that the Sin of *rejecting* Jesus- is far WORSE than the Sins that were committed BEFORE God took on Flesh and became Man! Because you CANNOT have it both Ways. The incredible Blessing of God now being “*Immanuel*” and being “*with us*” here on the earth- is balanced by the frightening Prospect that whoever *rejects* Jesus will be judged by God much MORE- than God judged those who NEVER had that Blessing! Please look at what the unknown writer said in **Hebrews 9:13-14**

**13 For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh,
14 how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?**

This says that the Cleansing that Jesus provides is *infinitely* BETTER than anything people received under the Old Covenant! But if the Cleansing is so much BETTER- then to whom MUCH is given- MUCH is required! And so, the Judgment on those who reject such a wonderful Cleansing will be MUCH WORSE than the Judgment on those who never had such a Cleansing and NEVER knew anything about it! And that is why that same man wrote this in **Hebrews 2:2-4:**

**2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty,
3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation? After it was at the first spoken through the Lord, it was confirmed to us by those who heard,
4 God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will.**

Now keep in mind- the Divine Judgment God rendered to the Cities of Tyre; Sidon; and Sodom was horrible; and Unspeakable; and Frightening! So, it is NOT that those Cities escaped Judgment because they didn't have Access to Jesus. That is NOT what Jesus said here! Jesus said that because He is so much BETTER and GREATER than what those people had Access to- that the three Cities of Chorazin; Bethsaida, and Capernaum will be judged MUCH WORSE- because they DID have Access to Jesus!

My friends, there is a Truth that Jesus spoke that many today either try to *ignore* or *minimize* to the Point where it becomes almost ineffective. And that Statement is found in what Jesus told the Scribes and Pharisees in **Matthew 12:3b-6, 41&42:**

**3... "Have you not read what David did when he became hungry, he and his companions,
4 how he entered the house of God, and they ate the consecrated bread, which was not lawful for him to eat nor for those with him, but for the priests alone?
5 Or have you not read in the Law, that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple break the Sabbath and are innocent?
6 But I say to you that something greater than the temple is here.
41 The men of Nineveh will stand up with this generation at the judgment,**

and will condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

42 The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

... and, of course, the “SOMETHING GREATER” that Jesus was talking about here that was infinitely *greater* than the Temple in Jerusalem; the Prophet Jonah; as well as even King Solomon- was HIMSELF!

Beloved, Jesus is GREATER! He is GREATER than it ALL! The ENTIRE Message of the 27 Books of the New Testament is that Jesus is GREATER! BETTER! MORE IMPORTANT than ANYTHING else! And by Jesus referencing the Temple in Jerusalem- the single MOST holy Place in ALL of Israel- He was *including* EVERYTHING that pertains to the Temple!

And that means that Jesus is GREATER than the Old Covenant’s symbolic Teaching on the Sabbath; He is GREATER than animal Sacrifices; He is GREATER than the Levitical Priesthood; He is GREATER than the Sanhedrin Court; He is GREATER than the High Priest; He is GREATER than ALL the ceremonial and dietary parts of the Law; Jesus is GREATER than the Need for physical Circumcision; or the NEED for an earthly King; or the NEED for the Office of Prophet! And Jesus is GREATER than what the Old Covenant taught about the NEED for an earthly Temple in Jerusalem!

And because Jesus is GREATER than ALL of these things that pertain to the Old Covenant- those things are now both “OBSOLETE” and they were “READY TO DISAPPEAR!”- 2,000 years ago! Please look at what the unknown writer *infallibly* wrote in **Hebrews 8:13**:

When He [God] said, "A new covenant,"[in Jeremiah 31:31-34] He has made the first [Covenant] obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

Now before you get the Notion that I am lifting Jesus HIGHER than even God the Father- please look at what was *infallibly* written in **Philippians 2:9-11**:

9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,

10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

This says that now that Jesus has Come; and has Lived; and has Died; and has Risen again- the ONLY Way for ANYONE to glorify God the Father is by glorifying God the Son! And this goes on to say that God the Father is the One, who set it up like this!

Now please look again at what Jesus said in **Matthew 11:23&24**:

23 And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades; for if the miracles had occurred in Sodom which occurred in you, it would have remained to this day.

24 Nevertheless I say to you that it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for you."

The Judgment of Capernaum will be WORSE than the Judgment on the sexually perverse City where God rained down Fire and Brimstone? And if you can manage to tolerate that- Jesus then promised that the City that was His Headquarters during His early Ministry; the City where He healed the sick; raised the dead; and where He cast out demons- proving beyond any Doubt that He was God in human Flesh- the City of Capernaum would,

... not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will descend to Hades...

WHY? Because they rejected Jesus! Listen to me. You do NOT have to be saved to want Jesus to heal you; or bless you; or feed you; or cast out demons from you! ALL lost people want those things. You do NOT have to be saved to want a better Life- free from Pain and Persecution and Heartache and War! ALL lost people want a Life like that! You do NOT have to be saved to go to Church; or sing Hymns; or read the Bible; or even believe the Bible is true. Lost people do all those things- all the Time. Even satan himself does those things!

You don't have to be saved to want all those things. But you DO have to be saved to love Jesus! You DO have to be saved to find Joy in obeying Him! And you DO have to be saved to be willing to lose EVERYTHING you have- including your own Life- for the Joy of knowing Him!

But the Reason that is true- is because it is also true that *rejecting* Jesus is the single GREATEST Sin anyone can commit! Jesus said rejecting HIM is WORSE than being Arrogant against Jerusalem! Rejecting Him is WORSE than trying to get other people to commit Idolatry! And Jesus said rejecting Him is WORSE than committing sexual Sins! Now ALL Sin will be judged by God. So, NOBODY gets away with ANY Sin! But there ARE Degrees to our Sin. And rejecting Jesus is WORSE than them ALL and will bring the WORST Judgment!

But look at what the Apostle Paul infallibly said about God's Judgment in **Romans 2:5:**

But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God,

Notice that Paul called the frightening Wrath and Judgment of God, "RIGHTEOUS"! And that means two things:

1. God's Judgment against ALL Sin is PERFECT!
2. God's Judgment against ALL Sin is a Derivative of His Righteousness

The Bible repeatedly and clearly declares, "**God IS Love**". So, God is NOT merely *lovely* or *loving* or *loveable*- but part of WHO God IS- is "Love"! But God is NOT "Wrath" or "Judgment"! Neither Wrath nor Judgment is part of WHO GOD IS! But the Bible DOES say that God is RIGHTEOUS!

And it is God's Righteousness that *compels* Him to judge and to damn all Sin! Why? Because Sin *belittles; insults; despises; hates;* and seeks to *ignore; minimize* or even *eliminate* the one thing that God loves the MOST: His GLORY! And that is Why the Bible says,

for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (Romans 3:23)

So, when God acts against the Sin that has been committed against His Glory- *as a Derivative of His Righteousness*- that is the "Justice of God". And because God is Who He is- there is a "Glory"; or a "Value"; a "Worth"; and an "Importance" to that Justice of God- even as there is a "Glory" to the Grace of God!

Now we DON'T normally look at it like that. We love the Glory of God's Grace. And we sing about it; and celebrate it; and rejoice over it! And we should. But God values His Justice as much as He values His Grace. So, Grace and Justice are EQUAL in God's Sight. God is equally as Gracious and He is Just. We are the ones who are warped and lopsided. But as we become more Biblical in our thinking and doing- as we grow to hate Sin and see Sin as a terrible Attack against God and His Glory- we will begin to not only understand; but we will begin to also *value* the Justice of God!

Dear friends, I have long thought that, as God's New Covenant people, we MUST worship and love and adore and seek to obey the God of the Bible and NOT some God we have fabricated in our own mind. And that means we must learn

about; and believe; and then value ALL of God's Characteristics and Attributes- His "*Excellencies*"- as Peter described them. And the Bible says we are to "Proclaim" or "Herald" ALL of God's Excellencies to this lost, pagan World. And so, we MUST come to a place where we not only believe that God's Wrath against Sin *exists*- but that He is Right and Correct to damn all Sin. And that means that Damnation- as frightening as it may be- is NOT God sinning- or even over-reacting- but God's Wrath against Sin- is PERFECT and JUST! And because it is PERFECT and JUST- there is a "GLORY" to it!

And so, ALL the sinful Accounts of ALL people will be sovereignly and eternally adjudicated- either on the Cross through the Glory of His Grace or in Hell through the Glory of His Justice- and, in the final Analysis- there will be NO outstanding Accounts!

So, I beg you this morning to run to Jesus! Fall on His Mercy! Plead for His Grace! But, please, do NOT bargain with God about how much of your Life you are willing to forfeit! Surrender- UNCONDITIONALLY! And pray that God would allow you the Privilege of receiving the Glory of His Grace! Because if you *continue* to rebel- you WILL receive the Glory of His Justice! And God will be glorified either Way!

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your Pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God ALONE!