

## Matthew 23:34-39 “What Makes Jesus Sad”

3.4.18

How many times in your life has it happened to you? You have tried and tried to convince someone of the error of their ways. You've poured out your heart and you've talked till you're blue in the face, but they just won't listen. You know they're headed for disaster, but they are bent on doing it their way even though it means a train wreck is coming. How does that make you feel?

Frustrated, disappointed, exasperated? How about just plain SAD? Sad...I believe Jesus felt all of these emotions and more as He stood in that packed Temple courtyard on that Tuesday afternoon...the week He would die.



He had been preaching and teaching all day and He has been imploring the people to listen... It's been so frustrating! I want you to look at the last four words in verse 37...

**Matthew 23:37b**  
you were not willing!

Jesus, has been pouring out his life...He's been teaching, and preaching and performing miracles for three years and these guys still didn't get it...



He has tried and tried to show them that He is the Messiah. But, they refuse to believe. And so, this is it! This is the last public sermon Jesus ever gave and it's the climax of His ministry to the nation of Israel. He has come to His own and His own has received Him not. Jesus is grief-stricken and He has shouted “Ouai” (Oh-I), Woe to you...for you have brought all of this on yourselves.

**Matthew 23:32-39**

<sup>32</sup> Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. <sup>33</sup> You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? <sup>34</sup> Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, <sup>35</sup> so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. <sup>36</sup> Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. <sup>37</sup> “O

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! <sup>38</sup> See, your house is left to you desolate. <sup>39</sup> For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

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Without question, this is one of the saddest scenes in all of the Bible. Jesus is grieved to His soul! Jesus has now pronounced doom on those who have rejected Him... Ouai! **OH-I**, woe to you! Jesus was in pain! His suffering had begun...How sad...Oh, how sad that it had come to this! Judgment. Judgment that the Pharisees and the nation of Israel had brought upon themselves because of their rejection of Jesus, as the Messiah! Oh, what a sad scene!

**The cup has been filled** and Jesus said to those Pharisees: "Finish it!" You say, "What do you mean?" Look at verse 32 again... Jesus said:

**Matthew 23:32**

<sup>32</sup> Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers.

This means: finish what your forefathers, in their ignorance did to the prophets who tried to show them the way. Jesus was saying, the cup is now full and running over and judgment is going to be poured out on you. Jesus has reached His limit. Sin has reached its limit and the cup will be poured out on the Pharisees and the nation of Israel and JESUS IS HEART-BROKEN.

Church family, as we have watched this scene unfold for the last couple of months, it's all come to this climax. This is it. The Pharisees will now concoct the plan to finish Him off...and that will happen in just three days. ***But, I want you to understand something else...***

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When you hear the message of Jesus Christ, as you are hearing in this room right now the gospel of Jesus Christ...understand this...you and I have a responsibility to make decision for Christ. That means that as you sit here today, you are either hearing a message of grace, that leads to salvation, or a message of judgment that leads to your eternal doom. You see, if you accept Christ, and His merciful grace...you get heaven, but if you reject Jesus Christ you bring judgment upon your own soul. And what is more...if you continue to reject Jesus, then the more you hear His message the greater the condemnation and judgment there will be for you. In other words, the more you sit in this room and reject Jesus, the more condemnation you are piling up on your on head. Just like these guys...



They were responsible for what they had seen and heard, and so are you, and so am I. And that's why Jesus cried out "Oh-I" in pain, grief and suffering, in such overwhelming sadness... **"OH-I" that it's come to this...because...YOU WERE NOT WILLING!**

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These religious leaders...**the Pharisees**, representing the nation of Israel, had been given chance after chance after chance and this had been happening even for their own forefathers for centuries.

### **Matthew 23:34-35**

<sup>34</sup> Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, <sup>35</sup> so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar.

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Listen, the leaders of the nation of Israel have been killing the prophets of righteousness since Abel and that continued all the way down to the last OT prophet who was murdered, Zechariah. Literally from A-Z they've rejected righteousness! Why **THEY WERE NOT WILLING!**

That's why Cain killed his brother Abel. He was jealous of Abel's righteousness and the Pharisees are jealous of Jesus and His righteousness! So Cain killed his brother! And they'll kill Jesus.

Listen, people who are living in sin and overt rejection of God can't stand anyone who is righteous. They'll call them names...abuse them...and ultimately, in the worst-case scenario, they'll kill them!

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That's what they did to Zechariah the prophet. They murdered him between the sanctuary and the altar. Do you know where that is? See this depiction of the Temple on the screens...



The Temple is considered the Sanctuary and the altar is pictured there on the left with the smoke coming off of it is just outside the sanctuary. Do you see then where Zechariah was murdered? The courtyard! They killed Zechariah the prophet in the courtyard of the Temple! Where is Jesus standing on this Tuesday afternoon?

The Temple courtyard!!! This is so powerfully poignant and yet they're utterly blind to the truth! I can almost imagine Jesus having His hands to His face saying: **YOU WERE NOT WILLING!**

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I read **an old poem** as part of my study this week that I want to share with you that I believe describes His grief. They would eventually take to the cross... The poem is entitled: "**But You Would Not.**"

***But You Would Not***, author unknown

He wept alone and men passed on  
The men whose sins He bore  
They saw the man of sorrow's weep  
They'd seen Him weep before

They ask not whom these tears were for  
They asked not whence they flowed  
Those tears were for rebellious men  
Their source the heart of God.

They fell upon this desert earth  
Like drops from heaven on high  
Struck from an ocean tide of love  
Like rain from cloudy skies

With love and tenderness divine  
Those crystal cells did flow  
'Tis God that weeps through human eyes  
For human guilt and woe

The eyes of God are downward bent  
Still ranging to and fro  
Scanning this wide wilderness  
There still roams a child of woe

And if the rebel chooses wrath  
Jesus mourns his tragic lot  
Deep breathings from the heart of God  
I would, but you would not.

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What a tragedy! He came to His own and His own received Him not! Oh the grief, the sorrow! Oh why did it have to come to this!!! Jesus said in verse 36...

**Matthew 23:36**

<sup>36</sup> Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

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What things? Judgment! Judgment for those who have rejected Him. The cup of God's judgment would be poured out on the nation of Israel. And that happened...about 40 years later Jerusalem was destroyed! In August of 70 A.D. the Temple, where Jesus was standing that Tuesday afternoon, was eventually destroyed by fire.

Roman soldiers in 70 A.D. would come into the temple and lift their own banners in the very Holy of Holies and sacrifice to their false gods on the altar. Titus, the General of the Roman Army who would eventually become the Caesar, the King of Rome, would order that the entire city of Jerusalem be destroyed. And according to the Jewish historian, Josephus, 1,100,000 Jews were killed, and 97,000 were taken as prisoners. Out of one city gate, it was recorded that they hauled over 115,000 corpses of Jews. They obliterated them. See it again...

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**Matthew 23:36**

<sup>36</sup> Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

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You see, some of those people standing there in the courtyard that day were likely alive 40 years later to see all of that come to pass.

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Listen carefully, God has a limit. His patience will not last forever. When the cup is full, it will be poured out! The Bible says: God's spirit does not always strive with man. Understand this: God will not tolerate rejection of His Son forever...judgment will fall! Oh, can you feel the pain of Jesus: **YOU WERE NOT WILLING!!!!!!** **And because of that...look at what Jesus said in verse 38.**

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**Matthew 23:38**

<sup>38</sup> See, your house is left to you desolate.

What's He talking about? The Temple. Remember, on Monday, a day earlier...when He came in and cleaned it out...



and flipped the tables of the moneychangers...

What did He call the Temple? MY HOUSE, right? Yes... He said you have made MY HOUSE A DEN OF THIEVES! But, today...on Tuesday...He says...I'm done...it's YOUR HOUSE and it's going to be destroyed and left desolate. And it was in 70 A.D. That's what He said in... **Look down at the next chapter...**

**Matthew 24:1-2**

Jesus left the temple and was going away, when his disciples came to point out to him the buildings of the temple. <sup>2</sup> But he answered them, "You see all these, do you not? Truly, I say to you, there will not be left here one stone upon another that will not be thrown down."

To put it in Old Testament terms, Jesus said: "Ichabod." Do you know what that means? It means: "the glory of the Lord has departed." Translated: "You're on your own now. I'm done. I'm leaving." Oh the grief: **YOU WERE NOT WILLING!** And that's why Jesus cried out in **verse 37...**

**Matthew 23:37**

<sup>37</sup> "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"

Jerusalem, Jerusalem! He said it twice...and when you see Jesus do that, it's for emphasis... "Martha, Martha," in Luke Chapter 10. "Simon, Simon," in Luke 23. "Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me," in Acts 9. It's a repetition of grief, it's a repetition of raw emotional pain! O how Jesus wanted to bring them to safety. Like a mother hen with her chicks. See the image...



That's something familiar that all those people would understand! They saw this every day in their own yards. That hen wants to keep her chicks safe under her wings...right next to her...she doesn't want her little chicks to be consumed by the Enemy Prey lurking about! But, Jesus said: **THEY WOULD NOT!** How sad...train wreck is coming!

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And so, that's where He ends His sermon, right...with verses 37-38, right? No. Don't skip verse 39. Because if we skipped verse 39, and it all ended with the judgment of Israel, then Jesus would not be telling the truth.

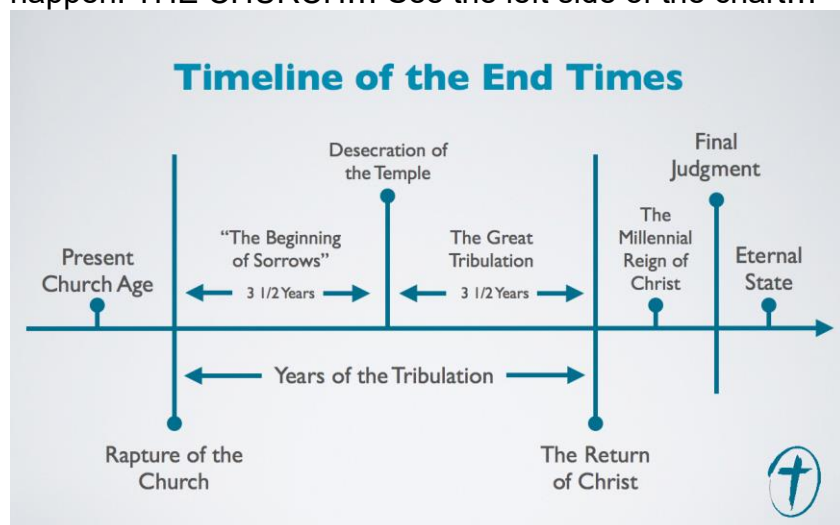
### **Matthew 23:39**

**<sup>39</sup> For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'**

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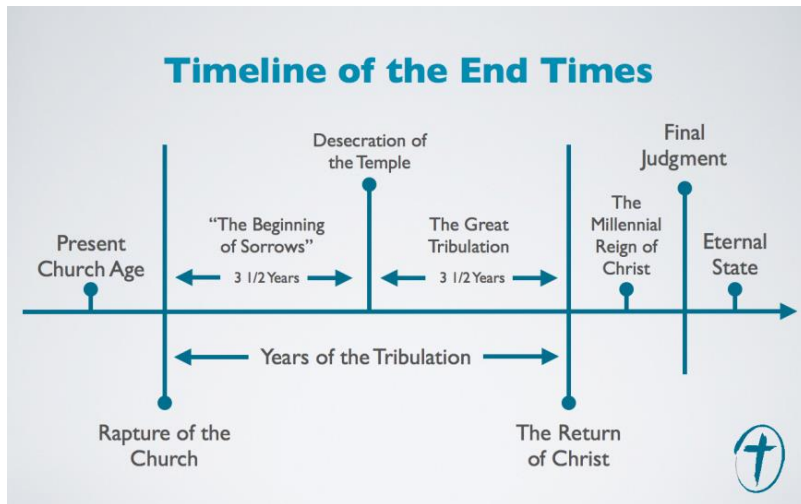
Jesus said, "YOU," that's the nation of Israel, you **WILL NOT SEE ME AGAIN**, until what? Until the nation is crying out "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." That's Psalm 118. That's prophecy...that's the promise that God had made to the nation of Israel when He said Jesus would rule and reign from the throne of David in the Temple right there in Jerusalem!

But, you say, "Wait a minute...how can this happen if the Temple is going to be destroyed and Israel scattered to the winds, how can this be?" Well, something else had to happen! We had to happen! **THE CHURCH...** See the left side of the chart...



The church had to be established. Gentiles had to get a shot at the kingdom. And that's the **PRESENT CHURCH AGE**. Because in just 3 days Jesus would die on the cross, and then He would rise from the dead...[another miracle...the greatest one of all...proving He is was the Son of God having **EVEN** power over death]...and then 50 days after that, Pentecost would come, and 3,000 people would be saved in Jerusalem as Peter preached and the Church would be born. **NO...**please don't be mistaken...see the chart... Jesus keeps His promises...

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Oh...He will come back...see the right-hand side of the chart where it says: "Millennial Reign?" That's where He will keep His promise to Israel and rule and reign for 1,000 years from the Throne of David, [representing the nation of Israel], in Jerusalem, just like He said He would.

You say, "Okay...thanks Pastor Kevin for the lesson on the rejection of Jesus by the nation of Israel, but would you kindly tell me what all of this has to do with me?" Okay... I sure will. Listen carefully, and we'll be done, if Jesus had to pronounce judgment on His own people Israel...the Jews, because they reject Him, what do you think is going to happen to you if you reject Jesus? Listen, this entire chapter, chapter 23 is a lesson not only for what happens to a nation that rejects Jesus, but a lesson for every man, woman and young person in this room, who rejects Jesus.

Jesus is here right now and saying your name...not Jerusalem, Jerusalem, but...your name...like "Kevin, Kevin, I am willing..." But the question is: **But are you?**