

1. Jesus Corrects the Disciples Misconceptions: **The “Not-Yet” of the Kingdom**
  - a. The Son of Man is going away
    - i. They will desire to see Him, but they will not
    - ii. Thus, the Kingdom, though present already, was still yet to come in its fullness because the King was going away for a time to receive the Kingdom from His Father (19:12)
  - b. He must suffer first and be rejected by his generation
    - i. The Kingdom's inauguration involved a different kind of beginning - suffering, rejection, and death
    - ii. The oil of kingship that was poured on the head of Jesus was the oil of suffering and vicarious death, not before the nation or the world, but before his brethren alone
      1. His inauguration was not heralded by the people, but he was rejected by the people, a rejected King, but the One inaugurating His Kingdom was not the people, but God
      2. The servant is not greater than his master (we will suffer rejection, too)
  - c. This Day Will be Visible to All
    - i. There will be false claims of His presence in the in between times
    - ii. "Here!" or "There!"
      1. But His return will be both at the same time and obvious, like lightning across the sky
      2. This image shows that when He returns it will be no secret, no doubt, no questions left about who He is
        - a. **This phrase eliminates the idea of a “secret rapture” whereby the world isn’t** sure what happened to Christians because they were secreted away, disappearing in a moment
        - b. The phrases about one being taken and the other left is about separation for judgment, thus the context of death and vultures and corpses
    - iii. **Jesus’** fulfillment of His kingdom will be extravagant, excruciating, and extraordinary
      1. Extravagant in salvation, excruciating for his enemies, and extraordinary in its comprehensive power
      2. Apocalypse = Revelation of Jesus
        - a. He will be revealed in the awesome power, authority, and judgment over all things which were mysteriously hidden in his first advent
        - b. He will burn like fire in His holy goodness: Revelation 1:10-19
2. This Day Will Divide Those For Salvation AND Judgment
  - a. Salvation for Those Who Trust in Him to Heed His Word
    - i. Noah (Genesis 6-9) – listened to the warning, heeded His way of salvation, and entered into the only door available for his salvation
      1. **This faith in God’s Word, which acted by rejecting his world’s comfort and reputation** and honor, and entered was saved when the destructive deluge fell
      2. Thus, there is salvation from the judgment – the floating boat brought him safely through the waters
        - a. 1 Pet 3:20
    - ii. Lot (Genesis 19), likewise – **listened to the warning of God’s message and** fled destruction
      1. This **faith in God’s word, which acted by rejecting his** home as his hope, left his city for the city and covenant promise of God’s salvation from judgment
      2. But his wife longed for this world and was consumed by the falling doom
      3. 2 Peter 2:1-11 – Lot likened to a sufferer who endured the blasphemous reviling and hatred of authority of his age
    - iii. It is not as if Noah and Lot were perfect: they both got hammered right after their salvation and were shamed by their children, Lot incestuously
  - b. Judgment for Destruction of His Enemies
    - i. Noah and Lot were saved from destruction, but their land, their city, their worlds were destroyed by the judgment of God
      1. Flood and Fire

2. Both terrible and total, consuming and consummate, deluge and devouring
  - ii. **This is why when the disciples ask “Where?”, Jesus responds with an answer that is graphically about death**
    1. This is intensely graphic imagery commonly used in judgment motifs of OT prophetic literature – war creates corpses on which the carrion birds feast
  - c. Divisive
    - i. There will be a sudden division between people
      1. **The terrible truth is that when Jesus returns in power, the “full strength” of God’s wrath will be poured out upon those who reject the “eternal gospel of the kingdom of God in Christ, and live by the world’s system**
        - a. Revelation 14:9-11
          - i. We see “diluted strength” of God’s wrath here on earth through catastrophes: exiles, plague, disease, war, famines, etc.
          - ii. **These pale in comparison to the full strength of God’s judgment on that day**
          - iii. The images used of deluge of water, fire and sulfur, burning consummation, are images that are terrible in power and scope
        2. The glorious promise is that when Jesus returns in power, those who have closed to Him in humble faith will find shelter from His fury
      - ii. **Destruction came immediately when God’s people were made safe**
        1. **“When Noah entered the ark, then the flood came and destroyed them all”**
        2. **“When Lot went down from Sodom, fire and sulfur rained from heaven and destroyed them**
          - a. One taken, the other left
          - b. One to judgment, one to life
            - i. This is not the rapture, but rather an emphatic separation of sheep from goats, some to destruction and some to life
            - ii. This is why **the disciples ask “where”, Jesus responds with “where death is”**
        3. In the same way, when the Son of Man returns, He will gather His people to safety and He will destroy everyone else
  - d. Sudden/Unexpected
    - i. Two analogies: Noah and Lot
    - ii. Similar contexts: everybody going about their business as if our actions have no significant consequence from the Almighty God
      1. all the words used are imperfect in form, implying their continuing actions, "were drinking" "were eating", etc.
      2. These words are juxtaposed with the single word "they were destroyed" which is in the aorist form, indicating a final, singular act of destruction
      3. When Jesus returns, it is over, no more chances, no more mercy, His patience will end
    - iii. Sudden
      1. Again, doing normal things and division will come unexpectedly
      2. The world is oblivious to the coming destruction and judgment of God by Jesus Christ, but disciples are to be aware of this both for their hope (18:1-8) and as a warning not to **love the world too much (“don’t return”)**
      3. The truth of the transience of this world ought to move us to invest in eternal things rather than transient – to have a distrust of this world’s promises and comforts
- e. Comes to All
  - i. Men and Women
  - ii. Relatives and Co-Workers
  - iii. Discriminately indiscriminate
  - iv. Nobody escapes the judgment of God
    1. Either at the Cross – where the justice of God was completely satisfied (union with Jesus)

2. Or at His return – where it will take eternity to accomplish, but never satisfy the wrath of God
3. How Shall We Respond to Jesus' Warning?!
  - a. Keep Your Eyes Forward on the King and the Kingdom!
    - i. Remember Lot's wife
      1. 80% - 20% analogy
    - ii. Whomever seeks to save his life will lose it
      1. Interestingly, the one who tries to "preserve" his life will "destroy" it
      2. The one who "destroys" (aorist) his life will "preserve it alive" (ζωογονεω)
        - a. These are different words than earlier in Luke regarding "preservation" and life
        - b. It speaks to the one who longs to preserve *this* life, rather than the life to come
        - c. Longing for *this world*, rather than the Kingdom of God where righteousness dwells and the King who rules it
          - i. Thus, Lot's wife is the prime example
          - ii. She longed for her life in Sodom, more than she longed to see the kingdom of God
            1. This is opposed to Abraham, who left Ur behind by faith in the promise of God, "because he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God." (Heb 11:8-10)
            2. Hebrews 11:11-16 – "But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city." (v16)
            3. Hebrews 13:14 – we long for the lasting city
            4. John 14:12 – Jesus goes to prepare a home for us *where He is*
    - iii. This is the primary point that Jesus is making to his disciples
      1. The Pharisees rejected the Kingdom of God because they rejected its King
      2. The disciples are warned that they must reject this world as their home and hope, and not cling to it, love it, long for it, but rather long for the Kingdom of God
        - a. For when it breaks into history unexpectedly, will Jesus find faith on the earth?
        - b. Are we entering the Ark or lingering on dry land? Do our eyes rise on the hills or are they prolonged on Sodom's verdant valley?
  - b. Consider the goodness of this truth!
    - i. Justice is Always Good
      1. Justice is also protecting the righteous and the weak from being oppressed, and judgment upon oppressors is always good
        - a. Al Qaeda, Manson, Hitler, didn't need to be negotiated with, they need to be stopped
        - b. Jesus will stop all evil on that day for the sake of His people
          - i. Revelation 6:9-11
    - ii. Nobody would appreciate a judge who simply said evil wasn't a big deal and nothing needs to be done about it.
      1. If an unrepentant rapist was set free, we would throw a fit...especially if he assaulted our daughters
    - iii. Jesus talks about Hell, judgment, sulfur, outer darkness, destruction of His enemies more than anyone else in Scripture.
      1. If we think that this judgment is unfair or manipulative, then we must also declare that Jesus is unfair or manipulative.
  - c. Never Stop Praying for His Justice
    - i. Our present forgiveness is conditioned on future justice

1. We refuse to retaliate against those who wrong us BECAUSE we believe that God will deal with this injustice at some point
  - a. Either upon His Son when the perpetrator is regenerated and repents and come entrusts themselves to Jesus – justice totally and completely satisfied by His blood
  - b. Or, when Jesus returns to judge the earth – justice eternally poured out
- ii. When we cease to believe that there is an ultimate judgment by God, then we will take up the sword ourselves
  1. The reason that these school shooters retaliate for perceived wrongs so viciously and then kill themselves is because **they don't believe that there is an ultimate judgment by God**
  2. What keeps the Christian under intense persecution from doing this? We entrust justice to God and cry out to Him for it
    - a. This is the point of Luke 18:1-8 – the victim crying out for justice from the Judge
    - b. **Thus, we shouldn't every give up crying out for God to bring justice to His elect** – and this belief keeps us from taking justice into our own hands and empowers us to work for the good of our enemies
    - c. Without a belief and prayer that God will answer for the wrongs done to us in that day, we become hardened and vengeful and hateful
- d. Proclaim the Gospel Hope
  - i. Love warns of real danger!!
    1. This is why Jesus wept over Jerusalem! They refused to come to him for rescue.
    2. **If Jesus' return means destruction of all** who reject His rule, it is the most loving thing that we can to proclaim that God has provided escape from His wrath and the payment for our unrighteousness that brings His just wrath!
 

“And will anyone deny, with Jesus hanging there, that sin is the critical enemy, the most dangerous insatiable thing in the world, and that he personally needs to be forgiven?”  
— James S. Stewart
    3. Why has he waited? – He is being patient, giving more time for repentance (2 Pet 3:9), but this patience should not be seen as making the promise of future judgment void
  - ii. The Return of Jesus is for Our Hope:
    1. The judgment of this world is the destruction of sin, of brokenness, of all that would demean and belittle the beauty of God, and our grief over sin is rooted in the God who was crushed and made hideous that you and I might know and make much of His beauty
    2. In that day sin will be no more, for we shall suddenly and extravagantly be changed, in the twinkling of an eye
    3. “But according to his promise, we are waiting for a new heavens and a new earth where righteousness dwells.” (2 Pet 3:13)

#### Conclusion:

God is just, holy, and supremely powerful. His destruction of sinners is right and good. He didn't have to show mercy that elects, regenerates, transforms, and saves! But, He does! He has provided an ark to carry us through the waters safely and without harm, hewn from the body of His own divine Son! He has dragged us out of Sodom by the hand, placing on the one path, the one truth, the one way, Jesus Christ! In this God has revealed Himself to be both just and merciful to sinners, so how can anything in this world compare to such a glorious and extravagant love and mercy?!

It cannot! And what awaits those who entrust themselves to Christ Jesus is joy at seeing His face, the face of extravagant love and delight! If you have not repented from your sins and run to Jesus, run today, for only He is able and willing today to bring you safely through the coming waters and shelter you from the fire to come.