

Luke 17:22-37

Introduction: This teaches us about the judgment immediately preceding the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

- 1) Jesus teaches His disciples about the future establishment of His kingdom—17:22-25 ²² *Then He said to the disciples,*
 - a) The limitations for disciples—17:22 ²² *“The days are coming when you^{pl} will desire to see one of the days of the Son of Man (cf. Dan. 7:13-14), and you^{pl} will not see it.*
 - i) They will not see Jesus in His full glory in their lifetime.
 - b) The dangers for disciples—17:23 ²³ *And they will say to you^{pl}, ‘Look here!’ or ‘Look there!’*
 - This is similar to the warning Jesus gave the unbelieving Pharisees in 17:21
 - i) Don’t be distracted—*Do not go away or chase after them.*
 - (1) There will be many false alarms
 - c) Why?—17:24-25
 - i) The visible nature of His coming—17:24 ²⁴ *For just as the lightning, when it flashes out of one part of the sky, shines to the other part of the sky, in this way will the Son the Man be in His day.*
 - (1) When Christ comes the second time it will be obvious to all (unmistakable just like lightning), you won’t need a human guide to see Him.
 - (2) There will be no need to search for the Son of Man at his coming, though many will falsely claim its arrival. (NET)
 - ii) The necessity for disciples to remember that all things are according to God’s time schedule—17:25 ²⁵ *But first it is necessary for Him ① to suffer many things and ② to be rejected by this generation.*
 - (1) This was not what they expected from their Messiah.
 - (2) This is the fifth prediction of His suffering (cf. 9:22, 44; 12:50; 13:32-33; 18:32-33)
 - (3) The consummation cannot come until Messiah suffers. This is a postponement of the Kingdom.
- 2) Jesus reminds them examples of sudden judgment from the OT—17:26-33
 - a) A pre-Flood example; the reality of Noah; judgment will come as surprise to those who live a life of normalcy and mere external focus—17:26-27 (cf. Gen. 6:5-8:22) ²⁶ *And just as it happened in the days of Noah, in this way also it will be in the days of the Son of Man. ²⁷ They were eating, they were drinking, they were marrying, they were being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark and the flood came and destroyed everyone.*
 - i) The coming sudden judgment associated with the Son of Man will condemn many. (NET)

- b) A post-Flood example; the reality of Lot and his wife; judgment will come as surprise to those who live a life of normalcy and mere external focus—17:28-32 (cf. Gen. 19:15-29)
 - i) The circumstances—17:28-30 ²⁸ *It was the same way in the days of Lot: they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building;* ²⁹ *but on the day that Lot went out from Sodom, it rained fire and sulfur from heaven and destroyed everyone.* ³⁰ *It will be the same on the day when the Son of Man is revealed (by God).*
 - ii) The commands in light of the swift devastation of judgment—17:31-32
 - (1) A sense of urgency—17:31 (there's no time)
 - (a) ³¹ *In that day, let not the one who is on the housetop, and his goods in the house, descend to take them away;*
 - (b) *and likewise let not the one who is in the field turn back.*
 - (2) The potential danger—17:32 ³² *Remember Lot's wife!* (cf. Gen. 19:26)
 - (a) The warning about *Lot's wife* is not to look back and long to be where one used to be. The world is being judged, and the person who delays or turns back will be destroyed. (NET)
 - c) The main principles disciples need to remember—17:33
 - i) ³³ *Whoever tries to rescue his life will destroy it,*
 - (1) If there is no willingness to suffer the world's rejection at this point, then one will not respond to Jesus (which is trying to keep his life) and then will be subject to this judgment (which is losing it). (NET)
 - ii) *and whoever destroys his life will preserve it.*
 - (1) Suffering and persecution caused by the world, even to death, cannot stop God from saving (Luke 12:4–6). (NET)
- 3) Jesus teaches them that a sudden clear separation is coming—17:34-36
- a) Nighttime activity—17:34 ³⁴ *I tell you^{pl}, in that night there will be two in one bed; one will be taken and the other left.*
 - b) Daytime activity—17:35 ³⁵ *Two women will be grinding (a hand mill) at the same place; one will be taken and the other left.”*
 - c) Only in TR—[³⁶ *Two will be in the field; one will be taken and the other left.*]
 - d) Those taken are taken away to judgment. Those left behind are received into the Millennial Kingdom.
 - e) This is the opposite of what will happen at the Rapture (cf. 1 Thess. 4:13-17). At that event Jesus will take the godly into heaven, and will leave the unbelievers on earth to enter the Tribulation. (Constable)
- 4) The disciples try to understand His teaching—17:37
- a) ³⁷ *And having responded, they said to Him, “Where, Lord?”*
 - i) Where will those taken to judgment end up?
 - b) *So He said to them, “Wherever the body/corpse is, in that place the vultures will be gathered together (by God).”* (cf. Deut. 28:26)
 - i) The picture is that of unburied bodies being torn apart by scavengers.

- ii) Jesus' answer is that when the judgment comes, the scenes of death will be obvious and so will the location of the judgment. (NET)
 - iii) Jesus used this same expression on Tuesday during the Passion Week in what is known as the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24:28)
 - iv) This will take place after Armageddon in the valley of Esdraelon/Jezreel as described in Rev. 19:17-21
- 5) Things for us to remember:
- a) It is normal for genuine believers to long for the physical return of Christ.
 - b) If you are here this morning without having trusted Christ as your Lord and Savior, turn to Him today before it is too late.