

Matthew Survey — Section Two

Historical Record #2

Matthew 11:1 -- 12:50
Topical Study Overview

About This Section

Chapters 11 and 12 document the prevailing negative response of Israel to the gospel of the kingdom in the face of an intensified testimony. Chapter 11 records the Lord reproving the nation, pronouncing the fifth installment curse upon the bastions of resistance, and declaring the critical juncture in which his Father has begun hiding the truth from the wise and prudent and revealing it unto the babes. Chapter 12 records the Lord's frontal assault upon the vain religious system, exposing its leaders as Satan's own men, and concluding with the Lord identifying the believing remnant as his own family.



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Topics at a Glance

Topic	Core Content
P1: John's Question and Counter Doctrine	Pharisaical mishandling produces offence (Matt 11:1-6)
P2: Reproving This Generation	John's true identity and the prevailing negative response (Matt 11:7-19)
P3: The Fifth Installment Curse	Upbraiding Chorazin, Bethsaida, Capernaum (Matt 11:20-24)
P4: The Critical Juncture -- Isaiah 28-29 Fulfilled	Father hides from wise, reveals to babes; Lord becomes sole repository (Matt 11:25-27)
P5: The Invitation to Rest	Opening move of the frontal assault -- appeal to the heavy laden (Matt 11:28-30)
P6: The Frontal Assault Begins	Sabbath controversies; hypocrisy and scriptural dishonesty exposed (Matt 12:1-21)
P7: The Beelzebub Counter Doctrine Exposed	Satan's own men identified; strong man bound (Matt 12:22-37)
P8: The Sign of Jonas	Evil and adulterous generation; escalation of designations (Matt 12:38-45)

Topic	Core Content
P9: The New Family Defined	The believing remnant as the Lord's own generation (Matt 12:46-50)

Topic Summaries

P1

John's Question and the Pharisaical Counter Doctrine *Matt 11:1-6 -- Lessons 20-21*

- John the Baptist, in prison, sends two disciples to ask Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? -- a question produced by the influence of the Pharisaical counter doctrine.
- The Pharisees mishandled Malachi 3:1 and 4:5-6, asserting both passages refer to Elijah himself, thereby denying John is the prophesied forerunner and denying the kingdom of heaven can be at hand.
- This counter doctrine package was designed to produce offence in Christ -- to make people offended in him -- and unfortunately succeeded with the nation as a whole and even influenced John.
- The Lord's reply directs John's disciples back to the signs of the kingdom: blind receive sight, lame walk, lepers cleansed, deaf hear, dead raised, poor have the gospel preached -- matching Isaiah 35 as hallmark signs that Adonai Jehovah himself is present.
- Blessed is he, whosoever shall not be offended in me (v. 6) -- underscoring that the counter doctrine's chief effect was producing offence.

P2

Reproving This Generation -- John's True Identity and the Prevailing Negative Response *Matt 11:7-19 -- Lessons 20-22*

- The Lord uses John's question as a springboard to reprove the people as a whole for their prevailing negative response.
- Malachi 3:1 speaks of a different prophet than Malachi 4:5-6; the vain religious system erroneously applied both passages to Elijah alone, denying John's identity as the Malachi 3:1 forerunner.
- This is Elias, which was for to come (v. 14) is a conditional benefit-equivalence statement, not an identification -- responding to John gives the same benefit Elijah promised in Malachi 4:5-6.
- From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence (v. 12) -- the prevailing negative response is the violence, and the violent ones (the religious leadership) will become more violent as the climactic stage advances.
- The Lord likens this generation to children who refuse to respond to either the mourning call (John) or the dancing call (the Lord himself) -- a prevailing refusal on both ends.
- Wisdom is justified of her children -- the Proverbs 1:20-23 pattern is now being fulfilled: wisdom's counsel was scorned by the majority; only a remnant hearkens.

P3

The Fifth Installment Curse -- Upbraiding the Bastions of Resistance *Matt 11:20-24 -- Lesson 22*

- Then began he to upbraid the cities -- the enforcement of the accountability factor begins here, only after abundant testimony, the intensification of the twelve, and the prevailing negative response were all established.
- Three cities are identified as bastions of resistance and strongholds of apostasy: Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum -- headquarters for the dissemination of the vain religious system throughout the Galilee area.
- Most of his mighty works were done in these cities -- the Lord specifically went to the strongholds to assail Satanic control there and give them the greatest abundance of testimony and opportunity.
- The curse formula: It shall be more tolerable for Tyre, Sidon, or Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee -- the negative-responding Israelite cities are held to a higher standard because of the greater testimony they received.
- This fulfills the pattern established in Matthew 10:14-15 where the twelve were told to shake off the dust when rejected -- the Lord now pronounces the consequence.

P4

The Critical Juncture -- Isaiah 28-29 Fulfilled: Hiding and Revealing *Matt 11:25-27 -- Lessons 22-23*

- At that time -- these three words mark a decisive moment; this action does not take place at the beginning of the Lord's ministry but specifically now after the prevailing negative response has settled into its established position.
- The Lord thanks his Father because the action prophesied in Isaiah 28 and 29 has now been put into effect: the Father is hiding these things from the self-professed wise and prudent ones (the scribes and Pharisees) and revealing them unto the babes (the remnant).
- The wise and prudent are now sealed in their blindness -- the book is a closed book to them from this point forward.
- All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son (v. 27) -- the Lord is declared the sole repository of truth in Israel.
- This critical juncture is what makes chapter 12's frontal assault possible and appropriate: the Lord goes on the offensive precisely because his Father has acted in accordance with Isaiah 28-29.

P5

The Invitation to Rest -- Opening Move of the Frontal Assault *Matt 11:28-30 -- Lessons 23-24*

- Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest -- the appeal is directed to those still entangled in the vain religious system and its burdensome, heavy laden doctrine of works and man-made tradition.
- This appeal is itself the opening move of the frontal assault: the Lord calls the burdened to leave that system and come to him as the only repository of truth.
- My yoke is easy, and my burden is light -- in contrast to the grievous burdens

the Pharisees bind and lay on men's shoulders (Matthew 23), what the Lord provides is restoring understanding of God's Jehovahness and grace.

- The rest offered here is rooted in the Sabbath doctrine and in what Isaiah 28 describes as the rest God declares to his people -- a rest they refused because of the scornful men who rule.

P6

The Frontal Assault Begins -- Exposing Ignorance, Hypocrisy, and Scriptural Dishonesty *Matt 12:1-21 -- Lessons 24-26*

- At that time (12:1) -- the same time marker; the frontal assault that began at the end of chapter 11 continues directly into chapter 12.
- The Lord provokes a situation on the Sabbath (disciples plucking corn) to expose the Pharisees' ignorance and dishonesty: he brings up David and the shewbread (1 Samuel 21) and the priests profaning the Sabbath -- scripture they cannot honestly deal with.
- In this place is one greater than the temple -- the Pharisees are ignorant of the doctrine of God's Jehovahness and grace; they do not recognize the embodiment of God's Jehovahness standing in their midst.
- Go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice (Hosea 6:6) -- the Pharisees were told to go and learn this before and refused, manifesting their dishonesty of heart.
- The man with the withered hand in the synagogue (vv. 9-13): a deliberate provocation exposing hypocrisy -- they would rescue a sheep on the Sabbath but condemn healing a man.
- Matthew 12:14 -- the Pharisees went out and held a council how they might destroy him -- the frontal assault produces infuriation and the violent begin to manifest murderous intent.
- The primary beneficiaries of this entire exposure are the twelve apostles themselves, who need to comprehend the depth of the bankruptcy and apostasy of the vain religious system in preparation for what they will face in the fifth installment.

P7

The Beelzebub Counter Doctrine Exposed -- Satan's Own Men Identified *Matt 12:22-37 -- Lessons 26-27*

- A blind and dumb man possessed with a devil is healed; the people respond, Is not this the son of David? -- the proper response to the signs of the kingdom. The Pharisees immediately counter: He doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.
- Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation -- the Lord exposes the stupidity and internal incoherence of the Beelzebub counter doctrine: Satan would not cast out his own agents.
- If I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you -- the casting out of unclean spirits is the precise sign that the climactic stage has arrived and the strong man is being bound.
- He that is not with me is against me -- no neutrality is possible; the Pharisees by this counter doctrine are against him.
- O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? (v. 34) -- the Lord calls them what they are doctrinally: a generation of vipers, not the

pure holy generation of Abraham they profess to be.

- Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment (v. 36) -- full accountability for everything they are now saying and doing.

P8

The Sign of Jonas -- Escalation to Evil and Adulterous Generation *Matt 12:38-45 -- Lesson 27*

- Master, we would see a sign from thee -- at this late stage, after abundant signs and the intensification of the twelve, this request demonstrates dishonesty of heart and outright rejection of everything given.
- The Lord escalates from generation of vipers to evil and adulterous generation -- these particular scribes and Pharisees have demonstrated they have no honesty of heart whatsoever.
- Evil and adulterous generation declares them to be in perfect alignment with the adversary -- adulterous in that they have left their lawful covenant Lord and are cohabitating with Satan.
- There shall no sign be given it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas -- Jonas in the whale three days and three nights is a type of the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection; that will be the only sign now given to this generation.
- The queen of the south and the men of Nineveh will rise in judgment against this generation -- Gentiles who had far less testimony responded; this generation will be condemned by comparison.
- The parable of the unclean spirit returning with seven worse (vv. 43-45): even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation -- a prophetic declaration regarding the fifth installment; the final condition of this wicked generation will be far worse than its beginning.

P9

The New Family Defined -- The Believing Remnant as the Lord's Own Generation *Matt 12:46-50 -- Lesson 28*

- The Lord's physical mother and brothers arrive and are announced to him; he takes the occasion to define the family that stands before God at this time.
- Who is my mother? And who are my brethren? -- the Lord contrasts the natural family with the spiritual reality of who constitutes his family in view of what he has said about the apostate generation.
- Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother -- doing the will of the Father means accepting the counsel of God against themselves as preached in the gospel of the kingdom.
- The remnant are given a generation designation of their own; they are not the generation of vipers, not the evil and adulterous generation, and will not be part of the wicked generation of the Lord's wrath.
- They are identified in Psalm 22 and elsewhere as the Lord's own generation -- the Israel of God, the believing remnant -- capping off the two chapters of historical record with a positive counterpoint.
- The Holy Ghost has Matthew use this incident to conclude chapters 11 and 12 together: the cadence now turns from Historical Record #2 to Doctrinal

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

The Sole Repository of Truth

In Matthew 11:25-27, the Lord declares that his Father has fulfilled Isaiah 28-29: the self-professed wise and prudent (the scribes and Pharisees -- the scornful men who rule his people) have been sealed in their blindness, and the things of the program are now hidden from them and revealed only unto the babes. The Lord alone is therefore the sole repository of truth in Israel from this point forward. This is what authorizes and motivates the frontal assault of chapter 12.

Generation of Vipers vs. Evil and Adulterous Generation

Keith distinguishes these as two distinct designations applied at different stages. Generation of vipers (Matt 12:34) is a doctrinal identification -- it declares them to be what the council of God against Israel says they are by nature, not the holy seed of Abraham they claim. Evil and adulterous generation (Matt 12:39) is an escalation applied to those who demand a sign after all the abundant testimony, demonstrating zero honesty of heart. Adulterous specifically identifies them as ones who have left their lawful covenant Lord and are in cooperative league with the adversary. Wicked generation (Matt 12:45) applies to those who persist into the fifth installment and become the pawns of the wicked one himself.

The Frontal Assault -- Purpose and Primary Audience

Keith consistently distinguishes between the immediate target and the primary beneficiary of the Lord's frontal assault. The immediate target is the Pharisees, scribes, and chief priests -- any among them who still have ears to hear are given opportunity. But the primary beneficiaries are the twelve apostles themselves. Everything the Lord does in chapters 12 through 23 is designed to produce in the twelve a deep comprehension of the depth and scope of the corruption, apostasy, and abomination of that system -- so that in the fifth installment they can make the complete disassociation without regret, knowing it has to be done.

Transition from Historical Record to Doctrinal Instruction -- The Matthew Cadence

Chapters 11-12 are Historical Record #2 documenting the prevailing negative response and the Lord's frontal assault. The cadence then turns to Chapter 13 -- Doctrinal Instruction #2 -- the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. This shift is not arbitrary: now that the apostate element has fully reared its head and been exposed, the twelve need specific doctrinal education about what is going on and what is coming, particularly regarding the extension of mercy and forbearance and the final fifth installment.

Key Scripture References

Matthew 11:2-6	John's question from prison prompted by Pharisaical counter doctrine; the Lord's answer points to the hallmark signs of the kingdom from Isaiah 35
Matthew 11:12	The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence -- Keith's summary statement for the prevailing negative response; the violent are the religious leadership whose opposition will grow
Matthew 11:20-24	The Lord upbraids Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum as bastions of resistance; the fifth installment curse pronounced
Matthew 11:25-27	The critical juncture -- Father hides from the wise and prudent and reveals unto babes (Isaiah 28-29 fulfilled); Lord declared sole repository of truth in Israel
Matthew 11:28-30	The appeal to the heavy laden -- opening move of the frontal assault; invitation to leave the burdensome vain religious system and find rest
Matthew 12:14	The Pharisees held a council how they might destroy him -- the frontal assault begins to develop into murderous intent that will culminate at the cross
Matthew 12:24-30	The Beelzebub counter doctrine exposed as incoherent; the Lord reveals he is binding the strong man (Satan who holds Israel as his lawful captive)
Matthew 12:34	O generation of vipers -- doctrinal identification of the Pharisees; the council of God against themselves which they refuse to accept
Matthew 12:38-39	An evil and adulterous generation -- escalated designation applied to those who demonstrate dishonesty by demanding yet another sign after all the testimony
Matthew 12:43-45	Unclean spirit returning with seven worse -- prophetic declaration concerning the fifth installment; the final condition will be seven times worse than the first
Matthew 12:46-50	The Lord defines his true family -- whosoever does the will of his Father -- identifying the believing remnant as his own generation
Isaiah 28-29	The prophetic basis for the action the Father takes at the critical juncture of Matt 11:25-26: hiding wisdom from the self-professed wise and revealing unto the babes

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