

Truth Hurts

Matthew 16:21-23

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- I. Time for Truth v.21
 - a. Jesus Began to Show
 - i. From the Time
 - 1. Jesus timing to reveal - It is now just a little over six months before the cross.
 - a. They must know it now to be ready then.
 - b. The great confession of Peter made this seem an appropriate time. He will repeat the warnings (17:22. with mention of betrayal; 20:17-19 with the cross)
 - 2. They understand that Jesus was indeed the long-promised Messiah, he proceeded to teach them something of what messiahship meant
 - 3. Now it is used to mark the transition from a period of ministry that has reached its culmination in Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, to a period in which orientation towards a fate of suffering for Jesus in Jerusalem comes into sharp focus.
 - ii. To Show - to make vividly clear, to his disciples something that at this point is mysterious and completely out of their purview.
 - iii. To His disciples - Disclosure to the disciples alone is of a piece with their place of privilege in 13:11-12 and elsewhere.
 - 1. The Galilean mission to the common people is over. Henceforth the Lord devotes Himself mainly to instructing His disciples.
 - iv. Must go to Jerusalem- So the necessity (δεῖ [dei], must) of his suffering death at the hands of the Jerusalem ecclesiastics who have dogged his steps in Galilee is now plainly stated
 - 1. Necessary - He says it was *necessary* for him to *go off to Jerusalem*. Most of his ministry, as Matthew records it, had been spent in Galilee and adjacent regions. But now a divine necessity takes him to Jerusalem (cf. 23:37; Luke 13:33-34) for the climax of his ministry.
 - 2. There he must *suffer*, a word that can cover a variety of unpleasantnesses
 - 3. The verb δεῖ, "it is necessary," points to nothing less than the will of God (cf. the use of δεῖ in connection with the passion and the fulfilling of scripture in 26:54; cf. Luke 24:26-27). It is thus the compulsion of God's will that lies behind the following four infinitives, which are together syntactically governed by δεῖ.

b. To Suffer

i. Suffer- *endure, undergo*

1. The omission brings 'suffer many things' into immediate connection with 'at the hands of (ἀπό) the elders and chief priests and scribes' and thus sharpens an already strong focus on the role of the Jewish leadership
2. For the Jews in general, and presumably for the Twelve up to this point, being Messiah meant unadulterated glory. The Messiah might encounter opposition and even hardship, but this kind of thing was no more than an unpleasantness that must be passed through on the way to majesty and splendor. For Jesus suffering was the essence of messiahship, and from this point on he brings it out again and again (cf. 17:9, 12, 22-23; 20:18-19, 28; 21:38-39; 26:2).

ii. From Elders, Chief Priest and Scribes

1. The conjunction is a comprehensive term for the Jewish leadership, and the single article that precedes the list classes them as a united group. The conjunction can scarcely be anything other than the Sanhedrin, the supreme legislative body among the Jews.
2. The elders were those whose age, experience, and piety accorded to them the responsibilities of leadership. The chief priests were the intermediate hierarchy between the single high priest, the presiding officer of the Sanhedrin (see 26:62-68), and the priesthood generally (for the chief priests and the Sanhedrin, see 26:59). The scribes were the professional Torah scholars (cf. 2:4 and see Comment on 13:52).

- a. The three are mentioned together again only in 27:41

iii. To be killed

iv. Raised on Third Day

II. Wasn't Ready for Truth v.22

a. Peter

b. Took Him Aside- "taking to himself," aside and apart, "as if by a right of his own

- i. He acted with greater familiarity after the token of acknowledgment had been given

c. Rebuke Him

- i. God forbid it - God forbid - *may God be gracious to you, Lord, may God in mercy spare you this, God forbid*
- ii. This shall Never Happen- Strongest kind of negation, as if Peter would not let it happen. Peter had perfect assurance.

1. This is followed by a very strong negation "this will in no wise happen to you." Peter's confidence in this response depends upon

his faulty concept of the nature of the Messiah and his work. He has yet to understand that God has willed another path for the Messiah.

- iii. Lord- “Lord” is a respectful form of address, but “God forbid” is a strong repudiation of what Jesus has just prophesied
 - 1. This was quite a remarkable act in itself, given Peter’s confession of Jesus as Messiah and that he addresses Jesus as κύριε, “Lord,” but it is also indirect evidence that for Peter the deity of Jesus was hardly yet clear despite his confession.

III. Then Get Behind Me v.23

- a. Turned - quick ingressive action, away from Peter in revulsion, and toward the other disciples- The purpose of the turning can be to attack someone **Mt 7:6**, or a desire to see or speak
 - i. Evidently he had been facing away from Peter, but he now turns to him and in unusually
- b. Get Behind Satan - *μου get behind me! get out of my sight*
 - i. Get Behind- strong words utters a vigorous repudiation of Peter’s pious petition. “Go away” is more forceful than elegant
 - ii. Satan- here is a renewal of the Satanic temptation faced there by Jesus
 - 1. Indeed, Peter was taking up essentially the position of Satan in the temptation narrative. The evil one had tried to get Jesus to take the easy, spectacular way and to avoid the path of suffering, and that in essence was what Peter was advising
 - iii. Peter is called Satan by Jesus, because his attempt to turn Jesus aside from his divine assignment to accept the consequences of his involvement with humanity has made him a tempter of a diabolical sort, who might thwart the divine plan of salvation
- c. You are a Stumbling Block
 - i. **an action or circumstance that leads one to act contrary to a proper course of action or set of beliefs, temptation to sin, enticement to apostasy, false belief**
 - 1. **Compare to him being the rock of the church**
 - a. Peter, “the rock” (v. 17), had become in effect a stone of offense or a “rock of stumbling” (Isa 8:14)
 - 2. stumbling block” (cf. the cognate verb in 11:6), in the path to the accomplishment of God’s will
 - 3. refers to the clearing of Jesus’ path by the removal of an obstacle (and perhaps hints at the proper place for a disciple following Jesus; cf. esp. v. 24; and 4:19; 10:38).
 - ii. Setting your mind - *take someone’s side, espouse someone’s cause*
 - 1. Mind- Man’s intellectual processes in a narrow sense or, more broadly, the sum total of a man’s mental and moral state of being

- a. The meaning is: 'because you do not concur with the ways of God (which include suffering and death for the Messiah) but instead concur with the ways of men (expecting the Messiah to triumph without pain)
2. God's Interest - *someone's things, affairs, circumstances*
3. Man - *The thoughts* is really a general term meaning more literally "the things"; Peter's mind was not set on the things of God. *But* is the strong adversative—far from the things of God ("You are not on God's side,"), Peter's mind was set on purely human ways of thinking. It comes naturally to us to think of glory and honor, of comfort and security.
4. Peter's focus, like that of the other disciples (cf. 20:21), was on the triumphant aspects of the Messiah and the messianic kingdom. But if Peter would set his mind on the will of God, he needed to make room for the necessity of the suffering and death of Jesus. And as they next will be told, the disciples must face that reality in their own lives.