

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast

S7E30

Oaths - Matthew 5:33-37

Description – We're continuing today on the saying of Jesus from Matthew 5, looking today at Matthew 5:33-37 on Oaths

Matthew 5:33-37

³³ “Again, you have heard that it was said to our ancestors, You must not break your oath, but you must keep your oaths to the Lord. ³⁴ But I tell you, don't take an oath at all: either by heaven, because it is God's throne; ³⁵ or by the earth, because it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, because it is the city of the great King. ³⁶ Do not swear by your head, because you cannot make a single hair white or black. ³⁷ But let your 'yes' mean 'yes,' and your 'no' mean 'no.' Anything more than this is from the evil one.

An oath is to make a solemn declaration where you appeal to God as a witness to keep the promise you're making.

Where do we see this language or see this phraseology in the Old Testament?

When you read scripture, especially in the New Testament, you need to ask the question, where did I first hear this? Where was this before in the Bible?

Example: when a hebrew reads Jesus entering in on the back of a Donkey (Matthew 21) where does their mind jump right to? Zechariah 9:9!

Zechariah 9:9

⁹ Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! Shout in triumph, Daughter Jerusalem! Look, your King is coming to you; he is righteous and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

So where have we heard this before, and the following question: Where have we seen this before?

1 Kings 1:38-40

³⁸ Then the priest Zadok, the prophet Nathan, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites went down, had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and took him to Gihon. ³⁹ The priest Zadok took the horn of oil from the tabernacle and anointed Solomon. Then they blew the ram's horn, and all the people proclaimed, "Long live King Solomon!" ⁴⁰ All the people went up after him, playing flutes and rejoicing with such a great joy that the earth split open from the sound.

So what do we have here? King Solomon, David's son, coming in to be anointed as the new King. Hebrew word for Anointed is also the word for Messiah. And you've also got the people there cheering and proclaiming "Long live the king!" and in Jesus's day they're shouting and proclaiming:

Matthew 21:9-10

⁹ Then the crowds who went ahead of him and those who followed shouted: Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest heaven!

¹⁰ When he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was in an uproar, saying, "Who is this?" ¹¹ The crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth in Galilee."

So where have we heard the words "earth, footstool, and thorne"

Isaiah 66:1

This is what the Lord says: Heaven is my throne, and earth is my footstool. Where could you possibly build a house for me? And where would my resting place be?

Build a house for the Lord - in Jerusalem!

What Jesus is driving at here is that we shouldn't take oaths and swear by something. We need to as Christians live in such a way that what we say, we mean. That our yes would be yes, and our no would be no.

So whenever you make an oath, it's a reminder that you're under the sovereign hand of God.

But who are we to say we can fulfil this? James reminds us of this in James 4:

James 4:13-15

¹³ Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will travel to such and such a city and spend a year there and do business and make a profit." ¹⁴ Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring—what your life will be! For you are like vapor that appears for a little while, then vanishes.

¹⁵ Instead, you should say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that."

So we have to adjust our thinking, and say, "Lord willing, I'll be able to do this..."