

THE PARABLES OF JESUS, #040 A Chronological Study



*"To Him who opened His mouth in parables and
uttered things hidden since the creation of the world."
Psalm 78:2*

"The Faithful VS The Wicked Servant" **Matthew 24:42-51; Mark 13:34-37; Luke 21:34-36**

INTRODUCTION

This parable is in the last chapters of the book of Matthew and Mark. We'll also look at Luke for a fitting closure of this parable. Here in these last chapters the context concerns Jesus teaching about Israel and the coming future day when the Lord is going to return to them. He has told them, "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather **your** children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. Behold, **your** house is being left to you desolate! For I say to

you, from now on **you** will not see **Me** until **you** say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!'" [Mt. 23:37-39].

Jesus is speaking about His second coming in this parable and 3 others in Matthew in Chapter 23 & 24. He's not addressing the Church's Rapture as that information was given by the Apostles much later after His ascension.

We also need to note that throughout the Old Testament the idea of the "Household" is most always a comment concerning the nation of Israel.

THE FAITHFUL VS THE WICKED SERVANT THE FULL TEXT OF EACH OCCURRENCE

We'll first look at all the text we'll be considering. This will give us a good overview, allowing us to focus on individual ideas in our discussion.

Matthew 24:42-51 [NASB]

42 "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming. 43 But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into. 44 For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.

45 "Who then is the faithful and sensible slave whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? 46 Blessed is that slave

whom his master finds so doing when he comes. 47 Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions. 48 But if that evil slave says in his heart, 'My master is not coming for a long time,' 49 and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards; 50 the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, 51 and will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Mark 13:34-37

34 It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his slaves in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert. 35 Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— 36 in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep. 37 What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'"

Luke 21:34-36

34 "Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap; 35 for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth. 36 But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

THE TEXT

We have three texts to explore – the first (Matthew 24:42-51), concerns Israel and its future for blessing VS it's future for judgment and condemnation.

We'll start with Jesus' introduction in Matthew 24 and verse 42-44.

42 "Therefore be on the alert, for you do not know which day your Lord is coming.

Jesus had just told them that He was going away, and that the days ahead will be just like the days of Noah – as usual and full of people who refuse to know the Lord God. Nothing to look forward to as an indication of His return – except those days will get worse and worse, and there will come a time when evil things are building up so fast that you will be sure of... like seeing trees starting to bloom, "Summer"... His return, will be imminent.

43 But be sure of this, that if the head of the house had known at what time of the night the thief was coming, he would have been on the alert and would not have allowed his house to be broken into.

Then He says to them a quick little parable. The Head of the HOUSEHOLD and the THIEF. This little metaphor is about a man looking after his "household," Israel, and a thief. This is one of those times when it's a good idea to remind ourselves that often the details of a parable can't be stressed strongly – or you will miss the point of the parable.

We have Israel as the Household, the key subject of His story. The thief is providing a lesson about the household knowing that

he was going to come and attempt a burglary... into the owner's home... the owner would be ready for him, and the burglary would not take place.

OK, now we're done with the thief and the burglary, now Jesus' lesson:

Mt. 24:44-51

⁴⁴ For this reason you also must be ready; for the Son of Man is coming at an hour when you do not think He will.

Jesus is coming back, and they know He is because He told them so, but not when. Therefore, they must ALWAYS be ready for His return.

I'll repeat a necessary idea. Jesus is referring to His 2nd coming to the nation of Israel, on earth, post Tribulation. He's not talking about His return to the "Air," the Rapture. He's addressing the Jews of Israel, not the members of the Church. The lesson learned is similar for each, however.

Now we move on to discuss two different kinds of servants in charge of the Household, Israel. So, we ask ourselves, "Who are the servants in charge of the household Jesus is talking about?" This would be the Priests, Scribes, and the Sanhedrin (Pharisees and Sadducees).

⁴⁵ "Who then is the faithful and sensible servant whom his master put in charge of his household to give them their food at the proper time? ⁴⁶ Blessed is that servant whom his master finds so doing when he

comes. ⁴⁷ Truly I say to you that he will put him in charge of all his possessions.

Jesus sets up His question by asking His listeners to choose between two quite different servants. The rhetorical “Who” asks about those who are the “servants” “Whom his master put in charge.”

Servant Number 1: We can look at Israel and see that since the time of Jesus’ question there have been those Jews who God has called to His service among the people of Israel. Because of them, Jews around the world have come to know Jesus as their Messiah. They have been giving the people of their charge the Word of God of both the Old and New Testaments – “Giving them their food at the proper time.”

Blessed is each of those servants who has been called of God to do this in answer to God’s call upon their lives – for the past 2000 years. “Blessed will be those servants whom Jesus finds doing so when He returns.” Believing Israel is looking ahead to the time when Jesus returns to the earth – and finally, they get to establish their Promised Kingdom and rule their land (the earth) and their People (Israel).

⁴⁸ But if that evil slave says in his heart, ‘My master is not coming for a long time,’ ⁴⁹ and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eat and drink with drunkards;

Servant number 2: We should notice right away two things: First, this servant is evil and has not been called and not been put in charge of this household (Israel) by the Master (God). Second, he has an entirely different “heart” – one of self-inclined immoral

activities and has planned upon "My master is not coming for a long time."

We can see by his activities that he is indeed evil. He has taken to beating those around him who have similar responsibilities and he takes as his comrades those who are "drunkards." Their minds are dull and distant from morality and their God.

We are therefore left with that other leadership of the nation of Israel – those who's intentions are based upon self aggrandizement and controlling works of unholy law for the people they control. All trying to worship their god by attempting to please him through false sacrificial living and the keeping of a rewritten (to their advantage) Mosaic legal system that seeks to please themselves and not God.

⁵⁰ the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know,

The problem with ignoring the truth around them is that they don't seem to believe anything that the prophets proclaimed throughout their scriptures. It took them nearly 2000 years to re-establish their nation after its demise in 70 A.D. Since then, they have been plagued by enemies and wars that are continuing today. They are not expecting Jesus to return at all – They have no belief in Him and no intention of any belief.

⁵¹ and will cut him (the bad servant) in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Here are some tragic and hard words. For those unbelievers who are alive at the 2nd coming of Jesus – at the end of the Tribulation – they will only find God’s judgment awaiting them. Everything they have will be torn from them (not speaking of cutting the people into pieces), every responsibility, every relationship, every supposed honor – all cut away and removed. They will be assigned a place with the “hypocrites,” those who are professing to be loving God and believing in Him but don’t. Then... because of God’s judgment upon them for believing He does not exist – they will be sentenced to eternal judgment, that place that is called “Hell.” That place of weeping, and gnashing of teeth, for eternity.

Now on to our second Gospel:

Mark 13:34-37

33 "Take heed, keep on the alert; for you do not know when the appointed time will come.

We join Mark, the gospel writer, as he is discussing the return of Jesus Christ. Again, he is addressing Jews of the nation of Israel, so we need to focus upon that and not the ramifications of these words upon Christians and especially those waiting for His soon return "In the air." So, Mark is telling his listeners what Jesus' death and return will be like.

34 It is like a man away on a journey, who upon leaving his house and putting his servants in charge, assigning to each one his task, also commanded the doorkeeper to stay on the alert.

Jesus's death, Mark says, is like a man who has gone away on a journey. This man is a householder – again a reference to the fact that Jesus (God) is the owner of the nation of Israel. As we said a little earlier, He has put His servants (those charged with doing His work) his Israelites who belong to Him, in charge of doing His work in His Household (Israel). One of His servants was especially put in charge of the security (the doorkeeper) of His Household – and he is also commanded to “Stay on the alert.” Everyone of His servants has been given a “task” to be done in His absence.

³⁵ Therefore, be on the alert—for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether in the evening, at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning— ³⁶ in case he should come suddenly and find you asleep.

Jesus is thorough in describing when they should be on the alert because no one knows when He is coming back from His journey. Evening, midnight, at the rooster crowing or if you don't have a rooster – in the morning. Why? Because the servants are supposed to be working and watching, and not sleeping on the job.

³⁷ What I say to you I say to all, 'Be on the alert!'

Jesus has been talking to those who are followers of His. Some of those followers are “dyed in the wool believers.” Some just find Him interesting or entertaining, and some are His enemies. The WARNING IS TO ALL! “BE ON THE ALERT!” for the Owner, Master, Householder, Messiah, and Christ – the Son of God returning for His Covenanted People, Israel, to establish His believing Israelites in their Promised Land, People, and Kingdom.

And our third Gospel:

Luke 21:34-36

Luke has been telling about many of the things that will happen during Jesus' absence. Chapter 21 is just full of insights and metaphors about what lays ahead for Israel and the world. In the very background of these events, we should probably remember three other periods of time when God tested mankind. First, was from the time man was created to the fall – and the result was that man was thrown out of the wonderful land of... the Garden of Eden. They were thrown out for their failure to believe God and His Word.

Secondly, remember the world and how it evolved from a believing family, walking with the Lord – to a world totally full of people who would not turn back to their God. That world was lost to a great world-wide flood that cleaned the plate, for God to give man another chance.

Third, a fresh new world with only 8 believing persons to start, a new family given through Abraham to produce a "Covenanted Family" placed on earth to become His Priesthood, mediators to the unbelieving world. That people largely continued to reject their God and turn to idols, and to certainly not become the mediators between the people of the world and God Almighty. They ended up being cast out of their lands and placed under the rulership of several disciplining nations – and here they are, still rejecting their God, and now His Son, and that Son is now speaking to them about the end of their nation and the discarding of their people – until a great judgment is made upon them and their Lord returning after being killed by them because they rejected both Him and His Father.

Now He's telling them in Luke's gospel just how to behave and spend their remaining time until He returns.

³⁴ "Be on guard, so that your hearts will not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and that day will not come on you suddenly like a trap; ³⁵ for it will come upon all those who dwell on the face of all the earth.

Jesus was telling His listeners that spending their time thinking and wondering God's things: His grace, His love, His care, His people, and so much more about Him... rather than concentrating on "dissipation," wasting your life on earthly pleasures, "drunkenness," which must have been very prevalent during Jesus' day, and the everyday worries of life – income, relationships with important people, having things... stuff like that. Focusing your life on all those things will put you into a position of not being aware of the Lord, and His plans for you and your people. In doing so... The Lord's return will take you by surprise. His verse 35 statement indicates that, for the most part, the world around you does not care about God, or His Son's returning – in fact they just don't believe it at all.

³⁶ But keep on the alert at all times, praying that you may have strength to escape all these things that are about to take place, and to stand before the Son of Man."

Again, the reminder that Jesus is talking to Israelites, and talking about His "soon" return to establish their covenanted Kingdom on earth – something they have been waiting for over 4,000 years – since Abraham, about 2090 B.C.

Jesus has been telling them some of the troublesome and terrible things that will take place between His telling them, and the time He returns.

He tells them to keep on praying, specifically that they may have strength to escape all those things, so that they may end up at His 2nd coming able to "Stand before the Son of Man," as they come to Him and submit themselves to His Majesty as King.

THE MESSAGE TO BELIEVERS

The message to believers is the same message, but with different environments. For believers, we are waiting for His return "in the Air" as He comes to remove His Church from the face of the earth. He is coming to take us to His Father's House to be married to Him and then to enjoy the "Wedding Feast of the Lamb," where we will be in joyous jubilation with our "Groom" for this wonderful feast that He has promised.

So, for us, we need to be faithful, watchful, encouraged, and enduring. We need to be His chosen heavenly people who are ready to accompany Him when He chooses to rescue His Covenanted people (believing Israel) at the end of the age and ready to minister to His people in establishing His Kingship in His Kingdom on earth. We will reign with Him for a thousand years, and never grow old. When the final judgment comes after the 1000 years, we will be off with Him into eternity and awaiting the New Earth and the New Heaven, and whatever He has for us... for ever.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS WITHOUT ANSWERS

1. What is the point of God staying faithful to Israel for all these thousands of years?

2. What is the importance of the difference between Israel and the Church?

3. Why are all non-believers and believers supposed to “pay attention” to the times?

4. Who are the people whom the focus is on who are called to look and pay attention, and why?

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS

1. What is the point of God staying faithful to Israel for all these thousands of years?

Israel plays a most important part in showing to the world that He is a loving, caring and absolutely faithful God. The Fall of mankind sets the stage to define our God. Just to say that God is faithful doesn't really say very much to the men and women of this world. However, a God who loves, supports, care about, disciplines, forgives, men and women who have the tendency to become wicked and evil, endlessly for many thousands of years – is a God whom members of the world should put their trust and love. His sending His Son to earth to pay the price for that continuing, eternal forgiveness to those who would willingly, voluntarily believe that He came here to do that... completes the grandeur of this God that is absolutely worthy of our trust, belief, and faith.

2. What is the importance of the difference between Israel and the Church?

Before Israel was brought forth through Abraham, the world was established, mankind fell from God's Grace, and was wiped clean except for Noah and his family. God called Abraham to build a God Covenanted Nation that would bring forth God and His name to the world. Over the course of a few thousand years this covenanted nation, Israel, followed the ways of the world and largely walked away from God, a little at a time, until the arrival of God's Son Jesus. It was then that it was proved that even with the love of God and His continuing grace for a Covenanted people, that mankind in general would not trust the God of creation. With the death and resurrection of Jesus came the offer of becoming a direct family member of God – to become a brother or sister of the very Son of God – and do it for all eternity. Now, when God calls and

one believes, they become a part of that special family, the Assembly, the ecclesia, the Church. Israel was given the calling to become a people, a nation, and a land – The Promised Land of Israel. The Church was given the calling to become a people whose home would be mansions in Heaven. Both callings are eternal blessings of God. Both belong equally to God the Father. Israel, however, will always be held in “1st place” as those people who were covenanted (contracted) to become His. They were the Ancients, the Prophets, the Kings, the testimony, and history that makes up the Old Testament. The Church are the ones who make up the story of God’s Son, Jesus, and the people who willingly and voluntarily have chosen to take HIM as their Savior. Both hold their places for eternity.

3. Why are all non-believers and believers supposed to “pay attention” to the times?

For the unbeliever... the easiest way to say this is to point to someone who is in prison and sentenced to be executed. For some, there exists the opportunity for someone to come along and find the right evidence to offer up a re-trial and be released from that “death sentence.” If you are an unsaved, unbelieving person, there is time for you to seek, ask, and knock. Time to listen to the call of God and respond in belief and faith in Jesus the Savior. Don’t keep turning away from Him.

For the Christian professor... they are called to be ones who remain faithful at all occurrences and times but who have never willingly, voluntarily actually given themselves to belief and faith in Jesus. If you are one of them...Please use the admonition to “pay attention” to the world and the times so that you don’t miss your opportunity to become His in reality. Don’t miss the Grace and Love of God and the chance to enjoy that relationship for all of eternity. Don’t wind

up in the eternity of the place called Hell – forever being in torment and suffering.

For the Christian Believer... they are called to be ones who remain faithful at all occurrences and times – because that's the calling of the relationship established by believing in Jesus, the Son of God Almighty. A calling that establishes the Holy Spirit of God to physically dwell inside each believer. You are the very temple of God. Know the times, know the circumstances of the world around you. Be knowledgeable and ready for the Son of God to come "in the air" to retrieve you before that time of great war and tribulation. Be ready, your "bags packed," for His taking you to be in Heaven with Him and ready to become His Bride at the Wedding and Feast of The Lamb! Perhaps He's coming real soon!

4. Who are the people whom the focus is on who are called to look and pay attention, and why?

The deepest focus in this parable is upon those who "care" for God's people. In the context of the parable, those people are the religious leadership of the nation of Israel. The King's, Priests, Scribes, and the organizations of the Pharisees and Sadducees – and any other's who sit in the place of Biblical teachers and professors. They are the ones whom God focuses upon here – for they have the responsibility of looking after the general Israelite population.

When put into the context of Church Age believers it becomes the Pastors, Missionaries, Elders, Deacons, teachers, professors, leaders, Sunday School teachers, small group leaders – all those who take part in caring for the Body of Christ in the local church and worldwide. The New Testament writers often speak to those who have these relationships because they know that the general mass of believers doesn't tend to be quite so deeply involved with

their bibles and paying attention to their walk. Those who teach and care for the body are specifically called to do just that – love, care, teach, encourage, and pray for each and every person under their “care.” Be one of those, Paul tells many of His people under His care to “look after” their brethren.

The "The Ancient Path" Study materials on this website are made available here free and may be copied for use in Bible study groups, in limited numbers, providing that no charge is made for them. Items that appear as copyrighted materials that are not of our authorship are not to be copied without the express permission of the original copyright holders. Every effort has been made to give proper footnote credit for items that are quoted.

J. Deering [AncientPath.net] is the author and editor of this study.

AncientPath.net © 2019

Jeremiah 18:15

"Don't stumble from the Ancient Path"

2024-02-14 updated