

**Study Series 7 Lesson 6: Matthew 24:45-51 (Matthew 24: Transitional period –  
Fulfillment of Hebrews 8:13)**

MATTHEW 24 “OLIVET DISCOURSE” (Verses 45 - 51)  
(Matt. 24, Mark 13, Luke 21)

8. FAITHFUL SERVANT VS. EVIL SERVANT (Matt. 24:45-51):

<sup>45</sup> “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? <sup>46</sup> Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. <sup>47</sup> Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.”

A) (Matt. 24:45-47) PRIESTS IN HIS KINGDOM - Jesus tells His disciples about His coming *Parousia* will bring judgment against Israel and their obsolete Old Covenant (OC) world. He uses a parable to give them a picture of what He is describing. In this illustration, He says that when the master comes and puts his servant in charge of his household, he will reward that servant if he is wisely doing his job. The master will make the faithful servant ruler over all his good.

(1) This parable refers to Jesus, the Master, leaving His spiritual household after the Cross at His ascension. The faithful servants are His true believers (Christians). They are rewarded for being obedient and dependable witnesses of the gospel. They looked for His coming (*Parousia*) to return for them and to bring judgment against OC Israel and were staying prepared and ready (stayed watching the signs as Jesus told them to do).

When He returned with judgment to pour out His wrath on the OC Hebrews in late AD 66 - 70, Christ was fully consummating the transition from the Old Covenant (OC) to His New Covenant (NC) kingdom, and from then on **all Christians have the responsibilities in His kingdom to continue spreading the gospel and discipling His believers** (The obsolete and empty OC Temple and earthly priesthood system was done away with forever).

(2) This is an important and exciting point for Christians in the New Covenant system of the Kingdom of God. As believers, we all have a managing role and a royal priesthood position in the Kingdom. Each believer has direct access to God. We no longer must go through a priest with sacrificial animals to pray to God (1 Pet. 2:5, 9; Heb. 13:15; Lev. 7:12-15; Rom. 12:1).

Now, all believers are priests themselves and they have direct access to the throne. (As from that time, when the Temple and OC system was destroyed and the eternal Kingdom fully consummated, there was no longer any “not yet” access into the Holy of Holies (Heb. 9:8; Rev. 15:8, 16:17-21 were fulfilled). We today live with Him in life and fellowship now, and then forever in His presence “face to face” once we leave this life and go to be with Him in the afterlife.

This is only because of **the completed redemptive work of Jesus Christ**. Those who are “in Christ” by faith, are able to go where He goes. They have been permanently entrusted with His power, which is functional when they trust Him, obey Him, and glorify Him.

**“<sup>48</sup> But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ <sup>49</sup> and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, <sup>50</sup> the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, <sup>51</sup> and will but him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth”.**

B) (Matt. 24:48-51) WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH – In the same parable, Jesus told His disciples that the evil servant was not prepared for the master to return. The evil servant was not faithful in managing the household. He beat the fellow servants and was a drunkard. The master punished him and put him with the hypocrites. He would suffer with weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Remember, this time in the early 1<sup>st</sup> century before AD 70 was a very unique “once in time” era: God was closing the obsolete Old Covenant relationship with the OC Hebrews. Yes, they were already divorced (Jer. 3:6-9; Ezek. 16:1-3, 32-38, 23:22-35), but the carrying out of the removal of that obsolete OC system would only be fully accomplished after one final plea made to the OC Hebrews – as Christ was their promised Messiah, and the elect remnant needed to be saved as foretold and promised in so many OT passages.

The preaching of the gospel and warning to the OC Jews was done by the Apostles, other believers, and especially Paul. The gospel was spread through the four corners of the known world, and inspired by the Holy Spirit to be written down in many of the books in the Bible for all of us to see and believe (Col. 1:6, 23; Rom. 1:8, 10:18, 16:25-26; 1 Thess. 1:8; Titus 2:11; 1 Tim. 3:16; Acts 2:5).

The 1<sup>st</sup> century saints went throughout the Roman empire for 40 years explaining to the OC Hebrews that Christ was the Messiah and was the fulfillment of all of the OC promises, and that they needed to leave Judaism and the OC earthly shadow elements and come to the true fulfillment by faith in Christ alone, and had to discard trying to put any value on any bloodlines or works to try and show they were a fleshly child of Abraham, but that all the believers now, **whether Jew or Gentile**, were established as the spiritual “true Israel” (Rom. 2:28-29, 9:6-7; Gal. 3:3-7, 28-29; Phil. 3:2-3).

The warnings and call to repentance had to go to the Jew first (Rom. 1:16. Recall also Matt. 15:24. Also see John 1:11, 29-31), as Christ was their promised Messiah, but once the pleading and reasoning with, and the anger and refusal of the OC Jews reached its culmination – Paul announced that they **judged themselves** unworthy of everlasting life – and he turned thenceforth to the Gentiles, as the commission of warning to the OC Jews was nearing completion (Acts 13:45-51, 18:5-6, 28:20-29).

So, you can just imagine the 1<sup>st</sup> century animosity and struggle within the OC Jews and their hatred of the NC church, as each group were saying that they were the ‘true children’ of God.

- (1) The meaning of the parable in Matt. 24:48-51 is that faithful believers (Christians) are rewarded and put in charge of His kingdom. On the other hand, Jesus deals harshly with the unbelieving Jews. When He comes in judgment against Israel, He finds them still rejecting Him as the true Messiah, and still practicing the Old Covenant sacrifices and ceremonies. Since the cross, that was now an abomination to God for it denies all that Jesus had suffered and done for His people. The unbelieving Jews continued in their rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. He now returns and judges them, multitudes are slaughtered between AD 66-70, and they are sentenced along with the rest of the unbelieving dead to an eternity in the eternal Lake of Fire where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- i. This brings into light the warning and meaning behind Heb. 10:28-30, “Anyone who has rejected Moses’ law dies...how much worse punishment...who has trampled the Son of God underfoot...the blood of the covenant...the Lord will judge His people.”
  
- ii. Who is the audience – the Hebrew Christians; what is the issue Paul has been bringing them through – **their history** – the history of the Old Covenant, and how it was a type and shadow and could never save them. And how **Christ has come with the substance spiritual fulfillment through His blood shed on the cross of the eternal New Covenant.**

What had been the battle since the beginning of the church through this entire 1<sup>st</sup> century transition period? – the OC Hebrews had been saying again and again, with attack and persecution, since the church began, that they (OC Hebrews) are still the children of God and that the NC believers needed to come back under the Mosaic law if they were to be saved, and needed to be circumcised, and observe all the covenantal laws and ordinances. The pressure had been intensified by the point in time of the writing of the book of Hebrews (approx. AD 62 – 63), and a **great persecution and great falling away (apostasy)** of many believers from the church back into Judaism had been going on.

- iii. Paul is addressing this very same familiar issue here in Heb. 10:28-30 and he is telling them that if they leave the truth of the NC blood in Christ, and return to the OC law, then there is nothing left to save them, as they had known the truth and would be trampling the power of the blood and saying it was not the power unto salvation **by faith alone.**

If they turn back to the pressures of the Judaizers and the OC sacrificial system, they are told that would leave them with nothing but a fearful expectation of judgment and condemnation about to come, having “tasted the heavenly gift, and been partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the **age “about to”** come (*Mello*) (Heb. 6:5). The whole theme and contrast through Hebrews is of the OC vs. NC.

(2) This parable also describes the final sentencing of the judgment against Israel. They are the first century evil servants that the Master finds when He returns. They are **NOT** some distant relatives of those servants, some two thousand years later.

When Christ came (*Parousia*) in judgment against the Old Covenant system and the wrath of God was poured out the Jews from late AD 66 thru 70, He found two kinds of people in Israel. There were the faithful Jewish remnant and the non-believing reprobate Jewish leaders and people.

At the *Parousia* the believers were raptured and saved/rescued from the coming outpouring wrath upon OC Israel, given eternal life and brought into the unseen heavenly realm of His eternal New Covenant kingdom to be with their Messiah Jesus forever (their redemption (rescue) had “drawn nigh” Luke 21:28; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 1:5; Heb. 1:14; Tit. 2:13). Those 1<sup>st</sup> century non-believing scoffers were a wicked and perverse generation (Isa. 28:14-22; Deut. 32:20; Matt. 17:17; Luke 11:29-32; Acts 2:40, 13:41; Jude 17-18). They were cast out once and forever and were not included in His New Covenant kingdom (Matt. 8:11-12; Luke 13:22-29; Matt. 21:41-45, 22:1-2, 7-8; Gal. 4:30).

The obsolete OC world animal sacrifice system was sentenced, judged and the power of the ‘holy people’ completely destroyed, mass multitudes killed, including their priests, while their temple and all the elements that made up the OC system melted in fervent heat in the fires Rome set on Jerusalem and the Temple (Deut. 32:23-26; Dan. 9:24-27, 12:7; Matt. 22:7, 23:31-38, 24:1-2; Luke 21:6, 20-22).

The obsolete OC was done away with forever, as the NC was fully consummated, and the Old Covenant ‘sons of the kingdom’ were cast out into outer darkness—where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 8:12, 24:51; Lk. 13:22-29).

## 9. SUMMARY – SYMBOLIC LANGUAGE IN PROPHECY:

A) The type of prophetic language that is used in Matthew 24, and elsewhere in the NT, is symbolic, figurative and apocalyptic language. This is often used in Scripture regarding prophecies. Those passages told exactly what was to happen in **their 1<sup>st</sup> century near future**, so those born again who were **watching** and **searching** would be able to understand. In a very dangerous time to be a believer, the Holy Spirit allowed Christians to understand, whereas at the same time by using the symbolic metaphoric language, He kept the meaning hidden from their non-believing persecutors. By now, we should be very familiar with the symbolic and apocalyptic language used many times in the Old Testament (we looked at many examples in **Study Series 5 Being a Hebrew in the Old Covenant**).

B) Let us recall just a few of these passages → one example of this figurative or symbolic language is (Jeremiah 4:23-27). God is talking to and about Judah and Jerusalem. He tells them that He is angry with them because of their wickedness. He prophesies that His destruction is coming upon **them**. He states that the land will be desolate, but it will **not** be **a full end** at that time. After this prophecy, the southern kingdom of Judah ended in the exile of most of its people to Babylon, mainly as a result of two invasions by King Nebuchadnezzar (597 and 586 BC). Remember, the northern kingdom of Israel has already long since been judged and destroyed by God using the Assyrian armies back in 722 BC. The only Hebrew nation left at that time were these people being spoken to in the southern kingdom of Judah. The language describing what happened is as follows:

**Jeremiah 4:23-27 (NKJV) – “I beheld the earth, and indeed it was without form, and void; and the heavens, they had not light. I beheld the mountains, and indeed they trembled, and all the hills moved back and forth. I beheld, and indeed there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens had fled. I beheld, and indeed the fruitful land was wilderness, and all its cities were broken down at the presence of the LORD, by His fierce anger. For thus says the LORD: ‘The whole land shall be desolate; yet I will not make a full end.’”**

C) The following passage of Jer. 4:5-18 helps provide us with the context and audience of this apocalyptic and figurative judgment language. God tells Judah that their wickedness is causing Him to send judgment upon them. The “presence of the Lord” spoken of in verse 26 is demonstrated by the fierce anger of the Lord. In the New Testament this is like the “coming (Gk. *Parousia*, which literally means a time of “*presence*,” as opposed to a quick appearing) of the Lord.” It means being against someone or something in a fearful way. The following are some of the verses in Jeremiah, chapter four, that describe what is actually happening to Judah and Jerusalem:

**“Declare in Judah and proclaim in Jerusalem, and say:” (Jer. 4:5)**  
**“I will bring disaster from the north and great destruction.” (4:6)**  
**“To make your land desolate, your cities will be laid waste, without inhabitants.” (4:7b)**  
**“O Jerusalem, wash your heart from wickedness, that you may be saved.” (4:14)**  
**“Your ways and your doings have procured these things for you.” (4:18a)**

D) Another Old Testament example of symbolic, figurative or apocalyptic language in Scripture in Micah 1:3-6. God is talking about the two areas of Samaria and Jerusalem. The northern kingdom of Israel (Samaria) was gradually overrun by the Assyrians, with the capital of Samaria finally falling in 722 BC.

**Micah 1:3-6 – “For behold, the LORD is coming out of His place; He will come down and tread on the high places of the earth. The mountains will melt under Him, and the valleys will split like wax before the fire, like waters poured down a steep place. All this is for the transgression of Jacob and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what are the high places of Judah? Are they not Jerusalem? “Therefore I will make Samaria a heap of ruins in the field, places for planting a vineyard; I will pour down her stones into the valley, and I will uncover her foundations.”**

This destruction came as a result of the wickedness and transgression of Israel. Its occurrence was spoken of as the Lord ‘coming’ and ‘coming down.’ **The Lord used human armies** to bring about the desolation of the northern kingdom of Israel, but His description was letting us know that **it was His doing**, it was **as if He had come Himself**.

E) Likewise in Matthew 24, and elsewhere in the NT, it is describing the fall and destruction of the special chosen status of the remaining kingdom of Judah. The judgment and destruction of the city of Jerusalem, the desolation of the Jewish Temple, and the consummation into the New Heavens and Earth cosmological order through the blood of Christ and New Covenant eternal kingdom in the New Testament times were all said to occur at the coming (*parousia* = presence) of Christ. The primary events are described in symbolic and apocalyptic language:

**Isaiah 51:6 includes the following statement: “For the HEAVENS will vanish away like smoke, the EARTH will grow old like a garment, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner.” A few verses later in Isaiah 51:16 God says: “That I may plant the HEAVENS, lay the foundations of the EARTH, and say to Zion, ‘You are my people.’”**

F) In Deuteronomy 32:1, after the formation of Israel, God said: **“Give ear, O HEAVENS, and I will speak; hear O EARTH the words of my mouth.”** God was not talking to the literal, physical heavens and the earth. No, He was talking to ISRAEL (see: Deut. 31:30. Also see: Isa. 1:1-4). Old Covenant Israel was the epitome of the Old Heavens and Earth animal sacrifice system (instituted back in the Garden of Eden by God).

SUMMARY: Our Lord Jesus is not capable of deceiving His people. He is truth! He does not lie to them. He does not give them a promise, knowing that it will not come true. He promised His disciples and His people that He would come again in **their** generation. He would save/rescue the persecuted believers from their persecutors and the coming outpouring of God's wrath on OC Israel. He would bring judgment on the Old Covenant Jewish world, remove the obsolete Old Heavens and Earth animal sacrificial system (epitomized in the OC Jewish Temple system), and consummate the eternal New Heavens and Earth and New Covenant everlasting Kingdom (through His blood).

The Apostles told the believers again and again that Jesus was **coming soon!** (1 Cor. 1:6-8; Phil. 1:6; Col. 3:1-4; 1 Thess. 4:15, 17; 1 Tim. 6:14; Heb. 8:13, 9:26-28, 10:25-27, 37; Jam. 5:7-9; 1 Pet. 1:5-7, 10, 12, 20, 4:5, 7, 17; 1 John 2:28). The first century believers **expected** Him to come and **trusted** Him to come and rescue them **before** the outpouring of God's wrath on OC Israel (1 Thess. 1:10, 5:9). This was their blessed hope. They obeyed His instructions to be prepared.

Unfortunately, over the years many Christian leaders have taught that Jesus was really talking about something that would occur 2000 years in the future. This is in an effort to try and explain why, as they believe, He did not come in the first century. Even the honorable **C.S. Lewis** said in 1960: "‘Say what you like,’ we shall be told, ‘the apocalyptic beliefs of the first Christians have been proved to be false. It is clear from the New Testament that they all expected the Second Coming in their own lifetime. And worse still, they had a reason, and one which you will find very embarrassing. Their Master had told them so. He shared, and indeed created, their delusion. He (Jesus) said in so many words, ‘this generation shall not pass till all these things be done.’ And he (Jesus) was wrong. He clearly knew no more about the end of the world than anyone else.’ It is certainly the most embarrassing verse in the Bible." (Essay "The World's Last Night" (1960) found in *The Essential C.S. Lewis* p. 385)

Now, **this is unacceptable for Christians** to have to hold hands with the enemies of Christ, such as Islam, atheists, and other false religions, and to say that Jesus was wrong. And this is inadvertently what is being done by many churches today just to promote a futurist view of eschatology. The fact is that the futurists are wrong. **Jesus was right! He fulfilled all prophecies. He judged and did away with the OC, He rescued His 1<sup>st</sup> century saints from their persecutors and the coming wrath of God, and He fully consummated His everlasting New Covenant Kingdom in His church, which will last for all generations, forever and ever – Amen!** (Eph. 3:21; Gen. 8:21; Isa. 9:7, 45:17; Dan. 2:44, 7:13-14; Eccl. 1:4; Psa. 78:69, 104:5, 119:90; Psa. 148:4, 6; Ezek. 37; Luke 1:32-33; Eph. 2:20-22).