

Matthew Chapter 24 Third Continued

Matthew 24:37 "But as the days of Noah [were], so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

"As the days of Noah":

Jesus' emphasis here is not so much on the extreme wickedness of Noah's day (Gen. 6:5), but on the people's preoccupation with mundane matters of everyday life ("eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage" (verse 38), when judgment fell suddenly.

They had received warnings, in the form of Noah's preaching (2 Pet. 2:5), and the ark itself, which was a testimony to the judgment that was to come.

But they were unconcerned about such matters and therefore were swept away unexpectedly in the midst of their daily activities.

Matthew 24:38 "For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark,"

"For as in the days that were before the flood":

Not all the days before the flood, from the creation of the world; but those immediately preceding it, a century or two before it.

They were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage: not that these civil actions of life were criminal in themselves, had care been taken that they were not abused.

It is lawful to eat and drink, provided it be in moderation, and not to excess; and to marry, and give in marriage, when the laws, rules, and ends thereof, are observed: and therefore this must be understood.

Either of their wholly giving themselves up to the pleasures of life, and lusts of the flesh, without any concern about the affairs of religion, the worship and glory of God, the welfare of their souls and their approaching danger, of which Noah had given them warning.

Or of their luxury and intemperance, in eating and drinking, and of their libidinous and unlawful marriages; for the word here used for eating, signifies eating after the manner of brute beasts.

They indulged themselves in a brutish way, in gluttony and drunkenness; and it is certain from the account given of them (in Genesis 6:2), that they entered into unlawful marriages, and unclean copulations.

Wherefore these things may be spoken of them, as what were really sinful and wicked, and denote a course of sinning.

A constant practice of these sins of intemperance and lust, and which is still more fully expressed, until the day that Noah entered into the ark.

Verses 39-42:

The observation that the people of Noah's day "knew not" the severity and suddenness of the coming destruction indicates that this last generation will be totally unprepared for the "coming of the Son of man," the return of Christ to judge the world (see 2 Thess. 1:7-8).

The reference to "two" being in the field or at work at the time of Christ's return implies the suddenness of His coming to separate the lost and the saved.

Matthew 24:39 "And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

"They knew not":

That is, they knew not the exact time until it came upon them.

So says he, it shall be when the Son of man shall come.

They shall not know "the precise time" until he comes, and then once again they will be found engaged in the ordinary business of life unconcerned.

There are several comparisons we should note here.

Noah knew the flood was coming and was preparing as God had told him to do.

He did not know what hour it was coming, but he did know that it was very soon.

He especially knew it was soon, when God sealed him and his family in the ark.

The world around him did not believe that it would rain.

It had never rained before, why would it rain now?

You see, that is just like worldly people of our day.

They do not believe that the second coming of Christ is near.

If you try to tell them, they laugh at you like the worldly people of Noah's day.

They were going on about everyday life, just as people are today.

When Jesus returns, it will be too late to decide to accept Him

It was too late for the people of Noah's day, after it started raining.

We have some friends who sing a song about Noah.

It goes like this; "It wasn't raining when Noah built the ark."

You know, if people could look up in the eastern sky and see Jesus in the clouds, they would surely believe.

Jesus doesn't want us to believe in our minds in something we can see.

Faith is what He wants from us, faith is believing something we cannot see.

Noah and his family were in the ark of safety, and the people around were left for the punishment that lay ahead for them.

In the case of the people of Noah, they were drowned.

In the case of the people left when Jesus takes the Christians away, the wrath of God will fall.

Terrible war, and pestilence, and famine await those who are left.

In all, 21 plaques are mentioned in the book of Revelation.

It is certainly not a rosy picture.

The thing to do is be prepared to go with Jesus and escape the horrors that await those left.

Verses 40-41:

One shall be taken”:

I.e., taken in judgment (verse 39).

This is clearly not a reference to the catching away of believers described (in 1 Thess. 4:16-17).

Matthew 24:40-41 "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left." "Two [women shall be] grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

Life will go on with the routine until it's too late, and then instant devastation.

And so, that generation will be like Noah's generation.

Warned and warned many, many times.

That generation was warned for 120 years as the ark was built.

The strongest reason to take the separation depicted in this passage as a reference to ones taken away in judgment is the context.

It appears that (verses 40- 41), are illustrating that which preceded it (in verses 36- 39), namely that those who were not prepared in the days of Noah were taken away in judgment by the flood.

Verse 39 ends by saying, "so shall the coming of the Son of Man be."

Clearly the emphasis in this verse is on all of the unbelievers being taken away in the judgment of the flood.

Therefore (verses 40- 41), drive that point home by giving a couple examples of the coming separation that will occur at this time of judgment.

Now Jesus gets very specific (in verses 40-41).

"Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left".

"Two [women shall be] grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

What do we mean "taken"?

I've heard people say this means the Rapture.

You can't bring in the Rapture here.

This is long after that.

This is talking about taken in judgment.

Look again at verse 39.

"And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away".

It's based on that imagery.

It's based on that picture of the flood sweeping men away into death.

Two are going to be in the field when that final devastating flood of fire comes.

And one is taken in judgment.

Two at the mill and one is taken in judgment and the other left.

What are they left for?

They're left to go into what, into the Kingdom.

And they become those who populate the Millennial Kingdom.

They are the redeemed.

So you'll have people on the job.

Some will be believers and some will be unbelievers.

The unbelievers will be swept away and the believers will be preserved.

That separation process is described in detail in the judgment of the sheep and goats that's (in Matthew 25:31 to 46), where He takes the goats on the one hand and then sends them into everlasting punishment.

His sheep on the other hand and gives them the Kingdom.

So they are left.

Very important, they are left for the Kingdom.

So it is this that we have to keep in mind.

The future generation will be warned for three and a half years.

And the fact is they're being warned right now.

They've been warned ever since the New Testament was written whatever generation it is that will be alive when that happens, and that could be this one.

But they're not going to awake to it until they're taken away in judgment.

Matthew 24:42 "Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come."

"Watch therefore":

Be always on your guard, that you may not be taken unawares, and that you may be properly prepared to meet God either of judgment or mercy, whenever he may come.

This advice the followers of Christ took, and therefore they escaped; but the miserable Jews rejected it, and were destroyed.

Let us learn wisdom by the things which they suffered.

This will be an individual calling.

You cannot hang on to someone and take them with you.

Each individual will be judged, whether they will rise to meet Jesus or be left.

You see, in these passages, that someone you work with every day may not make it.

We should witness to everyone we come in contact with; especially to our families and friends.

Time is running out.

We must get them saved now before the trumpet blows.

We should be anticipating His coming and praying.

Verses 43-51:

The parable of the two servants follows to illustrate the seriousness of Christ's second coming, a fact that Jesus never allegorized or spiritualized, but spoke of in the most serious terms: "cut him asunder ... weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Matthew 24:43 "But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up."

"The thief":

As no one knows what hour the thief will come, no one knows the hour of the Lord's return or the Day of the Lord that accompanies His coming (1 Thess. 5:2; 2 Pet. 3:10).

But the believer is to be ready at all times.

Christians must watch for the Lord.

We must not decide that He is delaying His coming and get lax in our worship.

Some so called Christians today are falling away pretty rapidly.

Some are still sitting on the pews of the church building, but just in form only.

They are looking for entertainment in the church.

Worship should be reverently seeking the will of God in everything.

God wants our love, but He also wants us to revere Him and to be obedient to Him as well.

Matthew 24:44 "Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh."

“In such an hour as ye think not”:

The parables that follow teach Christ’s followers to be ready in case He comes sooner than anticipated (verses 43-51).

And also, to be prepared in case He delays longer than expected (25:1-13).

Be ready when the trumpet blows.

Do not let salvation wait until tomorrow.

It might be too late.

Just when we think He is not coming is just the hour He will.

Verses 45-51:

The evil slave represents an unbeliever who refuses to take seriously the promise of Christ’s return (2 Pet. 3:4).

Though he is an unbeliever (as demonstrated by his punishment), he is nonetheless accountable to Christ for the stewardship of his time.

Jesus was teaching that every person in the world holds his life, natural abilities, wealth, and possessions in trust from God and must give account of how these things are used.

Matthew 24:45 "Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?"

This passage is in fact, "a parable," though it is not expressly so called.

The design is to show that his disciples should act as if they were each moment that we’re expecting his return.

This he illustrates by the conduct of a servant who did not expect his master soon to return, who acted with great impropriety, and who was accordingly punished.

"Who then, is a faithful and wise servant":

By the conduct of a faithful and wise servant Jesus intends to denote a faithful Christian, a servant of God, or a teacher of religion.

"Whom his lord":

His master.

The word here has no reference to God.

It means the "lord" or master of the servant.

Applied to Christian teachers, in the spiritual meaning of the parable, it refers to "Christ," who has appointed them as teachers, and who is their Lord and Master (John 13:13-14).

"Over his household":

His family.

Christian ministers are the servants of God appointed over the church, the family of Christ (1 Thess. 5:12-13; 1 Cor. 3:5; 4:1:2; 12:28).

"Meat in due season":

The word "meat" here means food of all kinds.

When the Bible was translated into English, the word included, as the original does, all kinds of provisions requisite to support and nourish life.

"In due season":

As they need it, or in the accustomed times.

This was the office of a steward.

Among the ancients this office was often filled by a "slave", one who had shown himself trusty and faithful.

The duty was to have a general superintendence over the affairs of the family.

Applied to Christian ministers, it means that they are to feed the flock of God, to "minister" to their needs, and to do it as they need it (John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 4:1-2).

Matthew 24:46 "Blessed [is] that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing."

"Blessed is that servant whom his Lord, when he cometh":

Whether in a way of judgment, as against Jerusalem; or at death, when he comes to remove him out of this time, into eternity.

Or at the day of judgment, when he, meaning the righteous judge, will give the crown of righteousness to him.

That he will be found doing and acting the faithful and wise part, ruling the household of God well; giving to all wholesome food, a proper portion of it, and that in the right time.

Jesus will reward those who are faithful.

Jesus said the person who is a servant is the greater.

A wise servant is one who does not weaken in the faith.

This type of faith will stand up in famine or any other catastrophe that might come.

Matthew 24:47 "Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods."

"Verily I say unto you":

Nothing is a greater truth, more certain or to be depended on than this; all such wise, faithful, diligent, and industrious servants may expect it.

He, shall make him ruler over all his goods; will honor him with greater gifts, bestow a larger degree of Gospel light and knowledge on him, make him more useful in the church.

And will cause him to inherit all things in the other world; all glory, happiness, and bliss.

Matthew 24:48 "But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming;"

"But and if that evil servant":

An evil servant unwise and faithless one who though he may have gifts and talents, yet destitute of the grace of God.

And though he may be in the highest post and office in the church of God (for sometimes wicked and graceless men are in such places) thinks;

"My Lord delayeth his coming":

Then begins to think that either he will not come at all to call him to an account for the use of his time, gifts, and talents.

Or will not return in a long time; or, and with pleasure to his mind, perhaps may not return at all.

Matthew 24:49 "And shall begin to smite [his] fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;"

"And shall begin to smite his fellow servants":

By abusing the power given him, usurping a dominion over their faith, and imposing on their consciences things which Christ has never commanded.

This servant was vexing and burdening them with trifling rites and ceremonies, and other unnecessary things; that was wounding, grieving, and often offending weak minds by his conduct and example.

And persecuting the saints, such of them as cannot come into everything in his way of believing and practicing.

"Eat and drink with the drunken":

Giving himself up to luxury and intemperance.

Feeding himself instead of the family; serving his own belly, and not his Lord and Master Christ.

Living an ungodly and licentious life, altogether unbecoming the Gospel of Christ.

Such servants and stewards have been, and are in the church of God; but sad will be their case, when their Lord comes, as follows.

Respect seems to be had either to the ecclesiastical rulers among the Jews, who went under the name of the servants of the Lord, but persecuted the apostles, and those that believed in Christ.

Or the "Judaizing" Christians, and false teachers, that were for imposing the ceremonies of the law upon believers.

Here is where we see the church people, and especially the ministers of God, compromising with the world.

They actually are losing the holy reverence and fear that we all should have.

The bible says the beginning of knowledge is fear of the Lord.

The Bible is very plain as well, about not fellowshiping with the worldly.

Matthew 24:50 "The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for [him], and in an hour that he is not aware of,"

“The lord of that servant”:

Not by redemption and grace, but by creation and profession, shall come in a day when he looked not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of: suddenly and unexpectedly.

Such was his coming in wrath and vengeance on the Jewish nation; and such is his coming oftentimes by death; and such will be his coming at the day of judgment.

Matthew 24:51 "And shall cut him asunder, and appoint [him] his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

"Shall cut him asunder":

This kind of punishment was anciently practiced.

Sometimes it was done by the sword, sometimes by saws.

It was practiced among the Chaldeans (Daniel 2:5; Daniel 3:29), and among the Hebrews (2 Samuel 12:31; 1 Samuel 15:33; 1 Kings 3:25; Hebrews 11:37).

It was also practiced by the Egyptians and Romans.

It is not perhaps here to be taken literally, but does signify that the wicked servant should be severely punished.

“Hypocrites”:

They are spoken of here as the worst of people.

"Weeping and gnashing of teeth":

These are those who shall be cast out into outer darkness.

This is an image of future punishment.

It is not improbable that the image was taken from Roman dungeons or prisons.

They were commonly constructed underground.

They were shut out from the light of the sun.

They were of course, damp, dark, and unhealthy, and probably most filthy.

Masters were in the habit of constructing such prisons for their slaves, where the unhappy prisoner, without light, or company, or comfort, spent his days and nights in weeping from grief, and in vainly gnashing his teeth from indignation.

The image expresses the fact that the wicked that are lost will be shut out from the light of heaven, and from peace, and joy, and hope.

They will weep in hopeless grief, and will gnash their teeth in indignation against God, and complain against his justice.

What a striking image of future woe!

Go to a damp, dark, solitary, and squalid dungeon; see a miserable and enraged victim; add to his sufferings the idea of eternity.

And then remember that this, after all, is but an image, a faint image of hell!

Matthew Chapter 24 Third Continued Questions

1. Whose days will the coming of the Son of man be compared to?
2. What were the people doing then, as now?
3. What comparison can be made to Noah and the believer?
4. When did Noah know for certain the flood was near?
5. What comparison of the world, then and now, could be made?
6. Give one line of the song about Noah.
7. What is our faith?
8. What can the people, who are not raptured, expect?
9. How does Jesus make it clear that salvation is individual?
10. Who would have been prepared, had he known the exact time the thief would come?
11. Besides our love, what does God want from us?
12. Why should we not wait for salvation till tomorrow?
13. Who is the servant in verse 45?
14. Who will be made ruler over the people?
15. What does the evil servant say?
16. What specific sin does he get into?

17. How is compromise coming in the church?
18. What is the beginning of knowledge?
19. We may witness to the lost, but what must we not do with them?