

Introduction:

- We began chapter 24 with two questions posed by the disciples: When will this happen? Regarding destruction of Jerusalem. And What will be the sign of your return (parousia)? Jesus gives signs leading up to destruction of Jerusalem. But regarding the second question he gives no sign. What he does give them is this: three short sayings which communicate the following.
 - The time of the parousia is unknown vs. 26
 - Therefore it will catch many people unaware. vs. 37-41
 - Therefore disciples of Christ must always live prepared. 42-44
- After the three short sayings driving home the three points just given, Jesus now launches into three lengthy parables to make the same point!
- The summary of 24:36-44 is summed up and the stage is set for the next sections. *"You also must be ready all the time, for the Son of Man will come when least expected."* (Matthew 24:44, NLT) Jesus now in the following verses begins to lay out how the disciple is to live prepared.

I. The Sensible Servant - Jesus Lays the Ground Work Mt 24:45-51**A. This section begins with a rhetorical question.** *"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?"* (Matthew 24:45, NKJV)

1. We don't know it is two slaves that is being spoken of or one slave with a hypocritical life.
2. What is true is that the point that Jesus is making is the same.
3. *"The master will return unannounced and unexpected,"* (Matthew 24:50, NLT) Sounds much like vow 36 and 44 - you better be ready!
4. Vs 51 become the result of not living ready and the Master returns.
 - a) Since the disciples are given the fact that no one knows the Day of Christ's return. They are challenged to live a life ready of the return of the Master.
 - b) Matthew is famous for the phrase: *"weeping and gnashing of teeth."* It is intended as a warning to live ready or else.
5. What does living ready look like? Ie. Sitting by the window watching? NO! It looks like getting the job done that he was given.
6. The whole theme of delay and immense of return are woven together and made to be the disciples responsibility of dealing with it.

B. A Sensible Steward

1. A steward is not the own but the one give responsibility of what belongs to the Master.
2. Has oversight of both people and resources in the Masters Kingdom.
 - a) They are trustworthy/faithful which we will see again in 25:21 and 23.

- b) They are sensible/wise which 25:1-13 is all about.
- 3. Vs 46 congratulates the wise servant and vs 47 is the payoff or the reward...trusted with more.
- 4. The reward is not easier service but greater demands. Again 25:21,23

C. The Sinister Servant vss. 48-49

- 1. The Delay - vs. 48 Chronizo (delay) also used in 25:5,19. The delay is essential to the stories, and to the point that Jesus is making...it may be a while.
- 2. The servants are tempted to abuse the fellow servants and abuse the Masters resources because he is delayed in returning. Jesus poses this situation so the the hears know that He is coming so don't fall into the temptation that He is not and take advantage of the situation.
- 3. This servant can only think of the present and not the inevitable end to his 'current opportunity.' Typical response of a narcissistic people.

D. Conclusion:

- 1. Neither slaves knows of the Master's return but it does not matter to the one who is wise and living prepared.
- 2. The sinister servant is the one who should worry but will be taken by surprised and punished.
 - a) The punishment is a metaphor for the horrific punishment dealt out in the OT. It is meant to shock the reader into responding!
 - b) Hypocrite is a word we are familiar with from chapter 23 that Jesus uses to relate to the failed religious leadership of Israel.
 - c) "If the same term can be used for the unfaithful disciple as for the failed Jewish leadership, the Christian reader is warned that merely belonging to the disciple community is not in itself a guarantee of ultimate salvation." France, R. T. (2007). NICNT Matthew (p. 946). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co.
- 3. It is very clear by now that there will be no hint as to His return but rather concern yourself with being ready for His return whenever that is!