

“Unbelief - The Point of Reckoning”

Part 6

In the past few segments we have been covering the concept that **the Rapture is not a blessing necessary for salvation**. Quite to the contrary, the evidence reminds us that the Rapture is a blessing or reward for our faithfulness. **Heaven is the reward for salvation**. The Rapture, being a one-time special event, is a reward or blessing to the born-again believer **who has committed their life to serving the Lord**. That may seem problematic for many; however, Scripture affirms this idea by both Scripture, the theme itself and is illustrated in several parables used by Jesus Christ. In Part 5, five passages of Scripture affirm the validity of this concept.

Consider a few of His statements below:

- ***“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed;”*** –(John 8:31). Jesus made a distinction between those who are disciples and those who are disciples indeed. A disciple is anyone who professes to be a learner, but a disciple indeed is one who has definitively committed himself to the Lord Jesus Christ. **Those who are true believers have this characteristic—they abide in His Word**. This means that they continue in the teachings of Christ. They do not turn aside from Him. **True faith always has the quality of permanence**. They are not saved by abiding in His Word, but they abide in His Word because they are saved.^(a)

- ***“Let that therefore abide in you, which ye have heard from the beginning. If that which ye have heard from the beginning shall remain in you, ye also shall continue in the Son, and in the Father.”*** –(1st John 2:24) The pronoun used for emphasis at the beginning of this verse is, *“But as for you,”* in contrast to the aforementioned false teachers, ***“you let that therefore abide in you which ye heard from the beginning.”*** The point is, they (the false teachers) did not. They at one time subscribed to the true doctrine concerning the Person of the Lord Jesus, but they departed from it (1st John 2:19). **“Abide” is “menō” “to remain.”** The exhortation is that the saints should allow the teaching into which they were brought when they were saved to remain in them. **They are to continue to hold it fast**. They must not allow themselves to become entangled in the Gnostic heresy regarding the Person of the Lord Jesus. But the word **“menō” (abide)** has in it **more than the idea of “to remain.”** The exhortation includes more than that the saint should allow the basic teaching concerning the Person of our Lord to remain in Him. **He should have that attitude towards it that it will also feel at home in him, have ready access to every part of his life**. In other words, it is the responsibility of the believer to nurture the stability

and growth of those doctrines by a holy life and **a determination to cling to them** and remain true to them. All this is included in the content of meaning of the word "**menō**".

John now proposes a hypothetical case. "**Shall remain**" is aorist subjunctive. The translation reads, "**If in you there remains (abides: menō) that which from the beginning you heard.**" That is, if the true doctrine relative to the Person of our Lord is abiding in the believer, that is **an indication that he is saved and will as a saved person continue to abide both in the Son and in the Father.**

Translation: "As for you, that which you heard from the beginning, in you let it be constantly abiding. If, in you there abides that which from the beginning you heard, both in the Son and in the Father you will abide. And this is the promise which He Himself promised us, the life, the eternal (life). These things I wrote to you concerning those who are leading you astray."^(b)

- "**Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?**" -(Matthew 24:45). As in the case of the man without the wedding garment, a single servant is taken as representing a class; and who constitute this class is made quite clear, not only by the fact that the servant is set over the household, but also by the nature of the service: "to give them their food in due season" (R.V). The application was evidently first to the apostles themselves, and then to all who in the future should be engaged in the same work of providing spiritual nourishment for those under their charge. The very pointed way in which the parable is introduced, together with the fact that only one servant is spoken of, suggests to each one engaged in the work the most **careful self-examination. "Who, then, is a faithful and wise servant?"** The underlying thought seems to be that such a one is not very easily found; and that therefore there is a special benediction for those who through the trying years are found both "faithful and wise," faithful to their high trust, wise in relation to the momentous issues depending on the manner in which they fulfil it. The benediction on the wise and faithful servant is evidently easy to miss and a great thing to gain.^(c)
- "**His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.**" - (Matthew 25:21). We are responsible to use well what God has given us. The issue is not how much we have but how well we use what we have. Each believer should faithfully carry out the duties entrusted to him or her by God and multiply his or her God-given gifts for the sake of the Kingdom.^(d)

- ***“Moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.”*** -(1st Corinthians 4:2). A major requirement in stewards is to be found faithful. Man values cleverness, wisdom, wealth, and success; but God is looking for those who will be faithful to Jesus in all things.^(a)
- ***“These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.”*** - (Revelation 17:14). Being called they remain "faithful": the meaning is, either that they have faith, or are believers in Christ; which faith they have bestowed on them in the effectual calling, as a fruit of electing grace; and by this they overcome the world: or else, that they are persons of integrity and uprightness, that are on the side of Christ; they are the faithful in the Lord, and are made so by him; and they are faithful to him, and abide by his Gospel and ordinances, and in his cause and interest, even unto death; and so **this character is expressive of the perseverance of those who are chosen and called, even unto the end.**^(e)

These are merely a handful of passages that imply a special blessing for faithfulness. Faithfulness is the opposite of the “sin of unbelief”. When I addressed this issue of the “sin of unbelief,” the purpose was to reconcile passages of Scripture that appear at the outset as contradictory.

This conflict is no more evident than in the parables. In the parables, some are ready, and some are not. Some go and some don't. Yet, the ten virgins are **ALL** virgins, the unprofitable servant is called a **servant**, and those in the wedding are all **supposed** to be there, but a man is thrown out! We don't necessarily picture the parables as having anything to do with the Rapture. Let's look at four parables that contain more than we commonly associate with the parable.

1. **The parable of the ten virgins in Matthew 25** breaks down:

- Ten virgins went out to meet the Bridegroom; there were ten lamps with oil.
- Ten virgins - He delayed and they **all slept**, - and at midnight the call came - **all arose**.
- Ten virgins - five were wise and five foolish, five had no spare oil - the Bridegroom returned.

“And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, “Lord, Lord, open to us”. But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I

know you not. Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh". -(Matthew 25:10-13).

The question that has to be answered is as follows, Why did five go to the wedding and five did not?

2. **The parable of the nobleman and his servants** in Luke 19 breaks down:

- A Nobleman went away to receive a kingdom - he left all with his servants.
- The Nobleman gave ten pounds (English money) to them; they were told to occupy (do business) until I come back.
- The Nobleman received the kingdom and then returned - an accounting of the money he left them was required.
- Upon the Nobleman's return:
 - The first servant: 1 pound had gained 10.
 - The second servant: 1 pound had gained 5.
 - The third servant: 1 pound in a napkin (hidden in the ground).

"Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds". -(Luke 19:23-24).

The question that remains before the reader is, what is the real reason for being harsh with the conservative protector of the talent given him?

3. **The parable of the faithful and unfaithful steward** in Luke 12:42-48 - another problematic parable used by Jesus.

"But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, which shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more". -(Luke 12:45-48)

- Note here the beating with stripes will be in the Tribulation and not in heaven.

- Note here the more one knew and disobeyed the more punishment is required.

4. **The parable about the King's wedding** in Matthew 22:11-13 - another problematic parable.

“And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he said unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth”. -(Matthew 22:11-13)

Notice this statement about **outer darkness**. This draws our focus to something that is not very good.

- The king's son's wedding - **First invitations** given - invited guests would not attend.
- **Second invitations** given - those invited made light of it; some were too busy to attend.
- The king destroyed the city (Jerusalem) - servants go into the highways compelling them to come.
- The wedding was furnished with guests (here the Gentiles were invited in).

This picture compares a nuptial festival that occurred at night, but the guests were inside with light. Those that were outside were in darkness, and the gate entrance to the house was narrow and guarded. We find three references to being cast into outer darkness: Matthew 8:12; 22:13; and 25:30. The first applies to a future kingdom; the second to the wedding of the king's son; and the final to the unprofitable servant.

The issue of concern is a reference **to the outer darkness or hell**. This is an image of future punishment. It is not probable that the image was taken from Roman dungeons or prisons that were commonly constructed beneath ground. They were shut out from all light. They were damp, dark, unhealthy, and filthy. Slave masters were in the habit of constructing such dungeons for their slaves, where prisoners lived without the normal accoutrements of life. The imagery is that **the wicked who are lost will be shut out from the light of heaven** and from peace, joy, and hope; they will weep in hopeless grief and gnash their teeth in indignation against God.

In Biblical and theological studies, essentially all parables fall into one of three main groups or categories:

1. The Kingdom
2. Grace
3. Judgment

While not immediately obvious, each parable fits into one of these three categories. In the next segment the focus will be on:

- What these four parables represent
- What their implications suggest to us in this larger **“theme of unbelief”**.

Pastor Bob

Commentaries:

- a. Believer’s Bible Commentary
- b. Wuest’s Word Studies
- c. Expositor’s Bible Commentary
- d. Life Application New Testament Commentary
- e. John Gill’s Exposition of the Bible