

## Biblical Forensics ©

### “Unbelief - Point of Reckoning” Part 7

Part 6 dealt with four problematic parables that present a dilemma for the Christian. Years ago I purchased the Trilogy of *Kingdom, Grace, Judgment: Paradox, Outrage, and Vindication in the Parables of Jesus* by Episcopal priest, Robert Farrar Capon. Today, it is published as a single volume and has greatly expanded from its original set of three paperback volumes. His work is foundational for the Biblical study of Jesus' parables. Rev. Capon categorizes all parables falling into one of three groups: 1. Kingdom, 2. Grace, and 3. Judgment.

Consider an interesting bit of Bible trivia and yet it is far more than mere trivia. There are **'46'** parables in the New Testament. Interestingly, the number **'46'** is found but once in the Bible, in Job 2:47: **“46 years was this temple in building”**. The human body is made up of **'46'** chromosomes – 23 from each parent, suggesting that the human body is the temple of God. The term **“temple of God”** is found just **“seven”** times in the Bible. John 2:20 makes reference to the **“temple being built in forty and six years”**. In Biblical mathematics, **'46'** is the number for the Second Death. Levi in Gematria has a value of **'46'**, and he is the third son of Israel. The underlying meaning of his name signifies a binding together similar to the notion of a man and woman uniting as described in Genesis 29:34. The DNA double-helix corresponds to the process of the joining together of a man and a woman. The interlacing of Biblical numerics, themes, people, and events moves us to appreciate the amazing layers of the Bible and the hidden treasures we find throughout its pages.

Let us take a closer look at the parables noted in Part 6 that address the issue of unbelief in ways not always scrutinized for their deeper message.

#### **Of the four parables, we see the following:**

- Ten virgins waiting for the bridegroom - five entered and five did not.
- Three servants with money - two wise were blessed and one was judged.
- Wedding invitation - man without a garment was expelled.
- Disobedient servant of the master - beaten with many stripes.

#### **Notice what kept them from their blessing:**

- The ten virgins - sleeping before his return and five not having extra oil.

- Three servants – one not using **finances** to advance the kingdom.
- Wedding – one guest not having a proper **garment** (garment of righteousness).
- Disobedient – didn't believe the Lord was coming – thought He would **delay His return**.

### **What was it that they should have been doing?**

- **Sleeping:** ***“Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.”*** –(Luke 21:36). For Jesus' followers to keep a constant watch and pray pictures an attitude toward life that seeks to stay away from evil and to follow and obey Jesus. Both watching and praying are volitional actions—as believers await Jesus' return, they work to further His Kingdom. Only with a focus on Him can believers escape the horrors to come. Only through obedience to Him will they be able to stand before the Son of Man when He returns.<sup>(a)</sup>
- **Finances:** ***“Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.”*** –(Matthew 25:27). His lord rebuked him as wicked and lazy. Having such thoughts of his master, why hadn't he deposited his money with the bankers to earn interest? Incidentally, in verse 26, the master is not agreeing with the charges against him. Rather he is saying, “If that's the kind of master you thought I am, all the more reason to have put the talent to work. Your words condemn, not excuse you.”<sup>(b)</sup>
- **Wedding:** ***“Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.”*** –(Revelation 3:4). Not every believer in Sardis was being condemned for complacency and compromise with the world. Christ pointed out that some had not soiled their garments with evil deeds. These believers were being faithful. It must have been encouraging to those few who had been attempting to live for Christ in this dead church that Christ was commending them as worthy of His name. Christ promises a threefold reward for these faithful few.

To be clothed in white means to be set apart for God, cleansed from sin, and made morally and spiritually pure. Revelation mentions white robes several times. –(Revelation 3:18; 4:4; 6:11; 7:9; 7:13; and 19:14). The white of these garments symbolizes the purity that comes when one has been “washed” in Christ's blood. Only those who have allowed Christ to cleanse them from their sins and clothe them in white will be able to reign with him –(Revelation 2:27).

- **Delayed coming:** ***“Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.”*** –(Matthew 24:42). Not only is no date given,

but we are expressly told that it is deliberately withheld. What then? Are we to dismiss the subject from our minds? Quite the reverse; for though the time is uncertain, the event itself is most certain, and it will come suddenly and unexpectedly. **No time will be given for preparation to those who are not already prepared.** True, there will be the sign of the Son of man in heaven, whatever that may be; but, like the other sign which was the precursor of Jerusalem's destruction, it will appear immediately before the event, barely giving time for those who have their lamps trimmed and oil in their vessels with their lamps to arise and meet the Bridegroom; but **for those who are not watching, it will be too late** - it will be with them as with those who lived at the close of the very first dispensation, who were "***eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. 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. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.***"<sup>(c)</sup>

There is an implied question before all of us. What happens to those who mock the return of the Lord, and teach that we will be here hundreds of more years, or are clearly in unbelief about the Second Coming of Christ Jesus? These are the scoffers the Bible warned about. What will happen to them when Christ Jesus returns for His Bride (Church)?

Consider the implications of general unbelief within the larger religious community. It is a known fact that **there is general unbelief now concerning the coming of Christ Jesus in the event of the Rapture within the religious hierarchy of most Protestant and Catholic bodies.** Pope Francis in 2015, told the public that Jesus was not returning, and that people should trust in the Roman Catholic Church of which he, the pope was the head. Some say the Rapture is a lie, some call it heresy, others say it will never happen, precisely as Pope Francis stated. Some even say that all was fulfilled in 70 A.D. If you see it but reject it, then it becomes a conscious act of **unbelief!**

### **If a person is in unbelief, they cannot inherit any of God's blessings!**

1. If a person says, "*I don't believe in salvation*", can they be saved?
2. If a person says, "*All of that talk about healing stuff is fake*", can they be healed?
3. If a person says, "*Giving is a trick and I'm not giving*", can they be blessed?

4. Without faith it is impossible to please God. -(Hebrews 11:6). **No amount of good works can compensate for lack of faith.** After all is said and done, when a man refuses to believe God, he is calling God a liar. **“He who does not believe God has made Him a liar”** -(1<sup>st</sup> John 5:10), and how can God be pleased by people who call Him a liar?

Faith is the only thing that gives God His proper place, and puts man in his place too. “It glorifies God exceedingly,” writes C. H. Mackintosh, **“because it proves that we have more confidence in His eyesight than in our own.”**

Faith not only believes that God exists, but it also trusts Him to reward those who diligently seek Him. **There is nothing about God that makes it impossible for men to believe.** The difficulty is with the human will.<sup>(b)</sup>

**There are numerous examples in Scripture that we should pay heed to:**

- Matthew 13:58 tells us that at Nazareth, Jesus could do no mighty miracles because of unbelief.
- Matthew 17:17 Jesus rebuked His generation for their unbelief.
- Matthew 17:20 we read that the disciples could not cast out a spirit because of unbelief.

These cases imply the necessity of reciprocity upon the part of the individual. Years ago, I discovered a concept that exists in Scripture where **an individual will not discover truth in unbelief**, but when one believes unconditionally in the Word of God, that God will reveal more truth to the believer. This is contrary to the cliché, “*I am from Missouri, show me and I will believe*”. The reverse of this statement is the true principle when it comes to the Bible.

What if a person says, “*I don’t believe in the coming of the Lord or the Rapture*”? Jesus told a story about a person who believed the Lord delayed His coming! **“Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. 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. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh. Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his lord when he cometh shall find as doing, Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming: And shall begin to smite his**

***fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; 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, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.***” -(Matthew 24:42-51).

The collective evidence presented in these segments on the “Sin of Unbelief” can be defined as synonymous with bringing terrible results of those holding a position of responsibility. ***“While it is said, today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. For some, when they had heard, did provoke: howbeit not all that came out of Egypt by Moses. But with whom was he grieved forty years was it not with them that had sinned, whose carcasses fell in the wilderness? And to whom swore he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that believed not?”*** -(Hebrews 3:15-18).

**Arthur T. Pierson emphasizes the seriousness of Israel's sin as follows:**

Their unbelief was a fourfold provocation:

1. It was an assault on God's truth, and made Him a liar.
2. It was an assault upon His power, for it counted Him as weak and unable to bring them in.
3. It was an attack upon His immutability; for, although they did not say so, their course implied that He was a changeable God, and could not do the wonders He had once wrought.
4. It was also an attack upon His fatherly faithfulness, as though He would encourage an expectation He had no intention of fulfilling.

Caleb and Joshua, on the contrary, honored God by accounting His word as being absolutely true, His power infinite, His disposition unchangingly gracious, and His faithfulness such that **He would never awaken any hope which He would not bring to fruition.**

**Conclusion:** It was unbelief that kept the rebellious children out of the Promised Land, and it is unbelief that keeps man out of God's inheritance in every dispensation. **The moral is clear: beware of an evil heart of unbelief.**<sup>(b)</sup>

The word “rest” carries different connotations; within the KJV Bible, it is mentioned in 11 verses of Hebrews 3 and 4. Rest in Greek is the same word that means “to lie down”. Rest in Hebrews 4:9 is **“sabbatismos”** and speaks of “a type of heavenly (*eternal*) rest”. This noun is related to the verb **“sabbatizo”**, and means to “keep the Sabbath”, “a Sabbath keeping” or “Sabbath rest”. It is used only once in the New Testament, in Hebrews

4:9. This is not an ordinary Sabbath rest because it marks ceasing from works done for oneself and giving attention to the work God has for us. When God completed His creative work He “rested”, that is, “ceased” His work of creation and gave himself to work in behalf of His creation. The nuance here is that God offers the same promise to those who remain faithful to Him.

***“Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation”.*** -(2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 3:3-4). The false teachers’ scoffing focused on Christ’s second coming. Jesus had promised that He would come back (Mark 13:24-27), but many years had passed and nothing had happened. The scoffers based their argument on the fact that everything has remained exactly the same since the world was first created.

Many first-century Christians believed that Jesus would come in their lifetime. When Christians began to die without experiencing the Lord’s return, some began to doubt. These were prime targets for the false teachers, who pointed out that perhaps it was all a lie and Christ was never going to return. The false teachers argued that ever since creation, the world has continued in a natural order, a system of cause-and-effect. They did not believe that God would intervene or allow anything out of the ordinary (such as miracles) to occur. Therefore, they scoffed at teachings about a Second Coming and the end of the world.<sup>(a)</sup> This passage is a common reference used as an attack on the Pre-Tribulation Rapture, and even the Second Coming itself. Do not be tricked into buying into this, the warning was not of His coming, but of the promise of His coming. This can easily escape the reader failing to make the distinction, albeit subtle. What do we know from Scripture about God’s promises? He honors and keeps them!

**Make no mistake - those unbelievers (in the promise) will NOT be taken in the Rapture!**

Pastor Bob

**Commentaries:**

- a. Life Application New Testament Commentary
- b. Believer’s Bible Commentary
- c. Expositor’s Bible Commentary