

Matthew Series

Lesson #159

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Dean Bible Ministries

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MATTHEW

JESUS: KING OF THE JEWS

**The Parable of the
Wicked and Righteous Servants
Matthew 24:45–51**

Why do we observe Easter on different days between the Eastern church, the so-called “orthodox” churches, and the Western church, which includes both the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches?

And why is the date sometimes different from Passover?

The *Quartodeciman* Controversy

The early church in the east celebrated communion on the *date* of the crucifixion; 14 Nisan on the Jewish (lunar) calendar and the resurrection two days later.

The West emphasized the resurrection on the *day* of the crucifixion; the Sunday following the March full moon.

Problem: When 14 Nisan fell on the day to celebrate the resurrection.

The *Quartodeciman* Controversy

ca. 153—Polycarp, bishop of Sardis, disciple of the apostle John had a sit down with Anicetus the bishop of Rome. Friendly, but no resolution.

ca. 190—Victor bishop of Rome attempted to impose Roman tradition on Polycrates of Ephesus. Irenaeus, bishop of Lyon, and disciple of Polycarp, intervened.

325—Nicean Council settled it in favor of Rome.

The *Quartodeciman* Controversy

“This council considered it unbecoming, in Christians to follow the usage of the unbelieving, hostile Jews, and ordained that Easter should always be celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon succeeding the vernal equinox (March 21), and always after the Jewish passover. If the full moon occurs on a Sunday, Easter-day is the Sunday after. By this arrangement Easter may take place as early as March 22, or as late as April 25.”

~Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church*, 1.218.

The Calendar Change

Due to problems with the Julian calendar, in effect since 45 BC, the seasons were moving and by the 16th century were 10 days off.

In 1582 the Gregorian calendar replaced the Julian calendar to correct the problem.

However, Eastern churches still use the Julian calendar to determine some ritual dates. Currently a 13-day difference.

Thus Eastern churches determine their dates differently.

1 Cor. 15:3, “For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

1 Cor. 15:4, “and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

1 Cor. 15:5, “and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve.

1 Cor. 15:6, “After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.

1 Cor. 15:7, “After that He was seen by James, then by all the apostles.

1 Cor. 15:8, “Then last of all He was seen by me also, as by one born out of due time.”

1 Cor. 15:13, “But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ is not risen.

1 Cor. 15:14, “And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty.”

Matt. 24:45–51

- 1. Review: Key things to remember.**
- 2. What is the meaning and significance of the parable of the fig tree?**
- 3. Who are the key people? Master, servants**
- 4. What is the failure?**
- 5. What is the judgment?**

Matt. 24:3, “Now as He sat on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, ‘Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?’ ”

Matt. 24:45–51

1. Review: Key things to remember.

Matt. 24:23–31

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- a. Jewish background—Jesus is not talking about the Church or the Church Age.**
- b. All of the events described in vv. 4–31 take place within the 7-year period of the Tribulation or Daniel’s seventieth week. Jesus is talking to “this generation” who sees “all these things”, vs. 33.**
- c. Matt. 24:32–35 opens an excursus addressing that generation of Israel living during the Tribulation to warn them to be ready and to be prepared.**

Matt. 24:23–31

1. Review: Key things to remember.

- d. That generation is warned that they can only know the time is near, and they cannot know the day or the hour.**

Matt. 24:36, “But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.”

2. What is the meaning and significance of the parable of the fig tree?

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Matt. 24:42, “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour (cf. 24:43) your Lord is coming.”

γρηγορέω *grēgoreō*

pres act impera 2 plur

to be or become alert, awake,
watch for something

Matt. 24:42, “Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming.

Matt. 24:43, “But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.”

Matt. 25:13, “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.”

Matt. 24:43, “But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.”

The “thief” imagery in relation to a coming of Christ is used only seven times only in the New Testament

(Matt. 24:43; Lk. 12:39; 1 Thess. 5:2, 4; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3; 16:15).

In each case it describes the sudden, unexpected arrival of divine judgment.

“The thief in the night imagery never applies to the rapture. Such language usually is descriptive of unbelievers and God’s wrath or judgment related to the tribulation or second coming. The picture painted by a thief in the night shows it is the unbeliever who is caught off guard since he never really believes God is actually going to judge in history.”

~Thomas Ice

Rev. 16:15, “Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.”

**Matt. 24:44, “Therefore you also be ready,
for the Son of Man is coming at an hour
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Matt. 25:10, “And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.”

ἑτοιμος *hetoimos*

nom fem plur

ready, prepared, a state of readiness or preparedness

Matt. 24:45–51

- 1. Review: Key things to remember.**
- 2. What is the meaning and significance of the parable of the fig tree?**
- 3. Who are the key people? Master, servants?**

Matt. 24:45, “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?”

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The Master = Jesus the Messiah who was leaving on a journey to Heaven;

The slaves = Israel, God’s people;

The faithful and wise = the good leaders, the good shepherds;

The evil servants = the Pharisees and evil shepherds

Matt. 24:45, “Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?”

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nom masc sing
(verbal) faithful,
reliable, trustworthy

φρόνιμος *phronimos*
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wise

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Matt. 24:46, “Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.”

μακάριος

makarios

Adjective nom

masc sing

blessed,

fortunate,

happy

Matt. 24:47, “Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods.”

Matt. 24:45–51

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Matt. 24:48, “But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’

Matt. 24:49, “and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,

Matt. 24:50, “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,”

Matt. 24:45–51

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Matt. 24:51, “and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

**Hypocrites = False religious leaders,
specifically the Pharisees.**

**Matt 6:2, 5, 16; 7:5; 15:7; 7× in chap. 23
“Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees,
hypocrites!”**