

Session 1 The Forerunner Message in Matthew 24 and Luke 21

I. JESUS' PRIMARY TEACHING ON THE END TIMES (MT. 24-25)

- A. The best teaching on the forerunner message in the Bible was given by Jesus in “one teaching” that is recorded in four chapters—Matthew 24-25, Mk. 13, Lk. 21—which are to be studied together. These four chapters plus Jesus’ teaching in Luke 17 give us a foundation for His end-time teaching. The most complete record is in Matthew 24-25— Mk. 13 and Lk. 21 give a shorter version of it.
- B. **Outline of Matthew 24**
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| 24:1-3 | The disciples’ questions about the temple and Jesus’ return |
| 24:4-14 | Signs of the times indicating Jesus’ return |
| 24:15-20 | The saints will see the abomination of desolation |
| 24:21-22 | The Great Tribulation |
| 24:23-28 | Do not be deceived about Jesus’ return |
| 24:29-31 | The second coming of Christ |
| 24:32-36 | The parable of the fig tree |
| 24:37-42 | The command to watch: Most will not recognize the signs |
| 24:43-44 | The parable of the thief |
| 24:45-51 | The parable of the faithful and wise servants |
- C. Matthew 24-25 is called the ***Olivet Discourse*** (because Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives when giving this prophecy). Matthew 24-25 highlights various signs of the times (24:5-14), important warnings (24:15-28), the responses He wants from His people as seen in five parables (24:32-25:30), His response to them (25:21), and then He concludes by describing Himself as a King sitting on His earthly throne, judging the responses of each person and nation (25:31-46).
- D. The interpretation of Matthew 24 and Luke 21 focuses on two events: the destruction of the temple in AD 70 and Jesus’ return. The Spirit has intentionally connected these together in the narrative set forth by Matthew, Mark, and Luke—instead of clearly distinguishing between these two events.
- E. Matthew 24 and Luke 21 were partially fulfilled in context to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 and will be completely fulfilled in context to Jesus’ second coming and the great troubles that Jerusalem will experience during the Great Tribulation (Joel 3:2, 12; Zeph. 3:8; Zech. 12:3; 14:2).
- F. Jesus gave 14 exhortations in Matthew 24—8 exhortations are related to “knowing” the biblical narrative for the end times (24:15, 32 [2x], 33) or to not being deceived (24:4, 6, 23, 26).
- G. Jesus revealed Himself as ***Bridegroom*** (Mt. 25:1), ***King*** (Mt. 25:31), and ***Judge*** (Mt. 25:32-46). He is a King with power, a Bridegroom with desire for deep relationship, and a Judge with zeal to remove everything that hinders love. In the end times, the Spirit will emphasize these three aspects of Jesus’ personality and ministry (Mt. 25; cf. Ps. 45; Isa. 61-63; Rev. 19). The Church is best prepared to thrive spiritually in pressure by encountering Jesus as Bridegroom, King, and Judge.

II. THE DISCIPLES' QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TEMPLE AND JESUS' RETURN (MT. 24:1-3)

- A. Jesus prophesied the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 *and* the end of the age in one prophecy. The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70 paralleled what will occur in the generation Jesus returns.
- ¹Then Jesus went out and departed from the temple, and His disciples came up to show Him the buildings of the temple. ²And Jesus said to them, “Do you not see all these things?... I say to you, not one stone shall be left here upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” ³Now 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?” (Mt. 24:1-3)*
- B. **The context:** Jesus left the temple, walking east toward the Mount of Olives. His disciples heard Him say, “Your house (the temple) is left to you desolate” (23:38). In the end times, Israel’s leaders will receive Him, saying, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord” (23:39; Ps. 118:26).
- ³⁸“See! Your house [Jerusalem temple] is left to you desolate; ³⁹for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’” (Mt. 23:38-39)*
- C. **Show Him the buildings of the temple:** The temple was adorned with beautiful stones (Lk. 21:5). Some of the stones used in the temple were 40 feet long, 12 feet high, 12 feet wide, and weighed about 25 tons. It was one of the wonders of the ancient world. Some say it was the greatest building in the world at that time. The disciples were perplexed when He said it would be desolated.
- D. Herod the Great began building the temple complex in 20 BC. It was not completed until AD 64. Herod’s building program for the temple complex took about 85 years to complete (50 years before Jesus’ prophecy of it being torn down plus 35 more years afterwards before it was completed).
- E. **Not one stone shall be left here upon another:** In AD 70, the Roman army under General Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the temple. Earlier, Jesus had pronounced judgment on the temple in Luke 13:35 and then again in Luke 19:41 when He entered Jerusalem on Monday. He cleansed temple on Tuesday, prophesied against it here on Wednesday, and ate His Passover meal on Thursday.
- F. **He sat on the Mount of Olives:** They crossed the Brook Kidron to the Mount of Olives and looked at the beautiful temple as a sign of God’s favor and a guarantee of their future (24:1).
- G. **The disciples came to Him privately:** Peter, James, John, and Andrew came to Him (Mk. 13:3). Since the temple was to be destroyed, they hoped for a new and better one to be built (Zech. 6:12).
- H. **Two questions:** They asked two questions—when will the temple be destroyed? What will be the sign of Jesus’ second coming and “the end” of the age (24:6, 14)? They assumed these occurred at same time. Their second question had two parts, thinking Jesus’ coming was at the end of this age.
- I. The destruction of temple paralleled end-time siege of Jerusalem and the abomination of desolation. The disciples associated the destruction of the temple with Jesus’ return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city and temple since it was clear in the Scripture that Jerusalem would be violently attacked in the end times (Zech. 14:1-2) at the very time that the Messiah would come to deliver them (Zech. 14:3-8) and then establish His worldwide kingdom in power and glory (Zech. 14:3-11).

III. SIGNS OF THE TIMES INDICATING JESUS' RETURN (MT. 24:4-14)

- A. In Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21, Jesus identified **22 signs of the times**—20 are negative. Jesus taught on 22 important themes that He wants His people to understand and proclaim. He highlighted **12 negative trends** as the “beginning of birth pains” that will increase throughout the generation that He returns (24:4-8; Lk. 21:8-11) and highlighted an additional **5 negative trends** that will escalate during the final 7 years of this age (24:9-12). After that, Jesus identified another **5 signs** that will occur in the 3½ years of the Great Tribulation (24:14-28).
- B. To be able to “see” (Mt. 24:33) global events implies technology not available before AD 70.
³³So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! (Mt. 24:33)
- C. Jesus gave **12 negative sign trends** as “the beginning” of sorrows or birth pains that will bring distress to the nations and indicate the generation of His return (Mt. 24:4-8; Lk. 21:11, 25).
⁵“For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many. ⁶And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars...⁷For nation will rise against nation [ethnic conflict], and kingdom against kingdom [economic warfare]. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes...⁸These are the beginning of sorrows [birth pains; ESV].” (Mt. 24:4-8)
⁹“But when you hear of wars and commotions...¹¹And there will be great earthquakes in various places, and famines, and pestilences; there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven ...²⁵And...on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring. ³⁵It will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth.” (Lk. 21:11, 25, 35)
- D. Jesus gave 12 negative sign trends as “the beginning” of sorrows or birth pains.
1. *Deception and false christs*: Many will come in Jesus’ name and deceive many (24:5).
 2. *Wars*: There will be military and political conflict (24:6; Mk. 13:7; Lk. 21:9).
 3. *Rumors of war*: Rumors will stir fear that has many implications—financial, social, political.
 4. *Ethnic conflict*: Civil disorder and racism will occur, nation (*ethnos*) against nation (24:7).
 5. *Economic warfare*: Economic-related hostility, aggression, and conflict (24:7)
 6. *Famines*: Massive food shortages will occur (24:7) that will distress the nations (Lk. 21:25).
 7. *Pestilences (disease)*: Biological warfare will bring disease to a new intensity (24:7).
 8. *Great earthquakes*: Lk. adds *great*—in destruction and loss of life (24:7; Lk. 21:11)
 9. *Commotions*: There will be chaotic events in society and creation (Lk. 21:9).
 10. *Fearful sights*: Terrorizing happenings, or that which causes one to be struck with fear
 11. *Great signs from heaven*: Signs in the sky and related to the weather (Lk. 21:11)
 12. *Perplexity at the roaring of the sea* (Lk. 21:25)
- E. Matthew described 8 trends (24:4-5) and Luke 21 identified 9 trends (21:9-11, 25)—5 trends mentioned in Matthew 24 plus an additional 4 not seen in Matthew 24—*commotions* (21:9), *fearful sights* (21:11), *great signs from heaven* (21:11), and *perplexity at the sea* (21:25).

- F. In Matthew 24, Jesus identified 5 *negative trends* that will increase “after” the beginning of birth pains. They include the *martyrdom of believers* (24:9), *social anarchy* as hatred, betrayal, and offense dominate society (24:10), *false prophets* or social commentators who undermine God’s Word (24:11), *abounding lawlessness* (24:12) and *love growing cold* due to many having a seared conscience (24:12; 1 Tim. 4:2). There will be intense resistance against God’s people (24:9-10).
⁹“Then they will deliver you up to tribulation and kill you, and you will be hated by all nations for My name’s sake. ¹⁰And then many will be offended, will betray one another, and will hate one another. ¹¹Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. ¹²And because lawlessness will abound, the love of many will grow cold. ¹³But he who endures to the end shall be saved.” (Mt. 24:9-13)
- G. Lawlessness and lovelessness (perversion, betrayal, and cruelty) will abound in society (24:12). Lawlessness with its moral decay will create the context for hatred as love grows cold in society as we get closer to the end. Sin will reach its fullest expression (24:12; Rev. 14:18; cf. Dan. 8:23).
- H. There will be intense resistance against believers (24:9-10). Believers will be killed in all nations—even nations with a Christian heritage. There will be unprecedented persecution against believers in the generation the Lord returns (Dan. 7:21, 25; 8:24; 11:33-35; 12:7, 10; Mt. 10:21-22, 28; 24:9; Lk. 12:4-7; 21:16-19; Rev. 6:9-11; 7:9, 14; 9:21; 11:7; 13:7, 15; 16:5-7; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2).
- I. After the beginning of birth pains, during the first half of the final 7 years of this age, the Harlot Babylon systems will cause multitudes to be drunk, or intoxicated, with the blood of the saints who expose her (Rev. 17:6). The Harlot religion will be resisted boldly by the prophetic Church.
- J. The most-repeated warning in Scripture about the end times is *not to be deceived*—deception will cause many to fall away from Jesus (Mt. 24:11; 2 Thes. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1-7; 4:3-5). The warning not to be deceived is an exhortation to prepared spiritually and in understanding of the biblical narrative for what is occurring. There will be so much deception and false narratives about what is happening. We must be grounded in the Scripture first and foremost, but we must also diligently study the 150 chapters in which the primary theme is what will happen in the end-times.
- K. In Matthew 24, He identified 5 *more signs* occurring in the 3½ years of the Tribulation (24:14-24). They include two positive trends in *the gospel being preached to all nations* (24:14) and the *Sabbath being restored* in Israel (24:20) and one terrible event—the *abomination of desolation*, (24:15) along with two more negative trends—*unprecedented number of deaths* (24:22) and false prophets doing *great miracles* (24:24).
¹⁴“And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached...to all the nations... ¹⁵When you see the ‘abomination of desolation’... ¹⁶then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains... ²⁰And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹For then there will be great tribulation... ²²And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved [survive]... ²⁴For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive...” (Mt. 24:14-24)
- L. The gospel will be proclaimed in power to all nations (24:14; Mk. 13:10; Rev. 5:9; 7:9; 14:6; 15:4). There are approximately 12,000 distinct ethnic groups, all of which are now being targeted.

IV. THE SAINTS WILL SEE THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION (MT. 24:15-20)

- A. The abomination of desolation is the primary sign that the Great Tribulation has begun (24:15).
¹⁵“...when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (...let him understand), ¹⁶then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. ¹⁷Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹But woe to those...who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath.” (Mt. 24:15-20)
- B. ***Abomination of desolation:** When you see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place. Two components of “the abomination” are the *image* and the *mark* of the Beast (Rev. 13:15-18). Many see the desolation of the temple in AD 70 as anticipating its ultimate end-time fulfillment.*
- C. There is a strong similarity in the language between Matthew 24:15-20 and Luke 21:20-22. Both mention desolation in Jerusalem, fleeing to the mountains, warnings to nursing mothers, etc.
²⁰“When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies...²¹let those in Judea flee to the mountains...²²For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. ²³But woe to those...nursing babies...²⁴And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. ²⁵And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the star...with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; ²⁶men’s hearts failing them from fear...the powers of the heavens will be shaken... ³⁵It will come as a snare on all those...[in] the whole earth.” (Lk 21:20-26, 35)
- D. ***Jerusalem surrounded by armies:** Jesus returned to their question about the temple (21:7, 20). Jesus’ prophecy of the destruction of the temple was a preview of a far-greater destruction in the future when Jerusalem is surrounded by hostile Gentile armies in the end times.*
- E. ***Days of vengeance:** The “days of His vengeance” is an important phrase used repeatedly in the prophets referring, not to the nations’ vengeance against Israel, but to God’s final vengeance on, or judgment of, the nations who participated in the destruction of Jerusalem.
²To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God... (Isa. 61:2)*
- F. ***All things which are written may be fulfilled** (21:22): The Old Testament predicted that the nations will attack Jerusalem at the end of the age (Joel 3:2, 12; Zech. 12:3; 14:2; Zeph. 3:8; cf. Ezek. 38:4).
²For I will gather all the nations to battle against Jerusalem; the city shall be taken, the houses rifled, and the women ravished. Half of the city shall go into captivity... (Zech. 14:2)*
- G. ***Led away captive into all nations:** The subject of Israel and the body of Christ going into captivity in the end times is a very sober reality. Moses’ prophecy of Israel being scattered and in captivity (Deut. 28:64) was partially fulfilled in the invasions by Assyria (721 BC), Babylon (586 BC), and Rome (AD 70). The ultimate fulfillment of this will occur in the end times (Ps. 102:20; Isa. 11:11-14, 16; 14:1-3; 19:23; 27:12-13; 40:11; 42:7, 16, 22; 45:14; 49:9-12, 21, 24-26; 60:10, 12, 14; 61:1, 5; Jer. 30:3, 8, 10, 17; 31:16, 23; Ezek. 39:23-29; Hos. 11:11; Joel 3:1-2, 8; Amos 9:14; Mic. 2:12-13; 4:6-7; 5:6; 7:12; Zeph. 3:19-20; Zech. 9:11-12; 10:10-11; 13:8; 14:2; Mt. 25:43; Lk. 21:24).*

- H. **Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles:** In the end time, Jerusalem will be trampled (Rev. 11:2).
²**But leave out the court which is outside the temple [in Jerusalem]... for it has been given to the Gentiles. They will tread the holy city [Jerusalem] underfoot for forty-two months. (Rev. 11:2)**
- I. **The times of the Gentiles:** Jerusalem will be trampled until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled (21:24) The “times of the Gentile” oppression of Jerusalem will end **after** the Tribulation. Some see the modern state of Israel (1948 or 1967) as the time that “the times of the Gentiles” ended.
1. The times of the Gentiles began in 605 BC, under Babylon’s leader Nebuchadnezzar when he surrounded Jerusalem with his armies. Jerusalem has never been fully free of Gentile control since that time. They have had momentary reprieves, but never have had total freedom from the Gentiles. Even Israel’s freedom today is related to the help of Gentile powers (USA).
 2. Luke 21:20-24 was partially fulfilled in AD 70. However, attention to details of this text make is very difficult to find its total fulfillment in AD 70.

V. THE GREAT TRIBULATION (MT. 24:21-22)

- A. The Great Tribulation will be the most difficult yet the most important 3½ years in history. Jesus referred to Daniel 12:1, saying, “Such as has not been since the beginning of the world...”
- B. There will be two severe waves of death—the first will claim one-fourth of earth’s population (Rev. 6:8), the second an additional one-third (Rev. 9:15)—totaling 50% of the earth’s population.
²¹**“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. ²²And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved [from death]; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.” (Mt. 24:21-22)**

VI. DO NOT BE DECEIVED ABOUT JESUS’ RETURN (MT. 24:23-28)

- A. There will be an abundance of false claims about seeing Jesus in a special place (24:23-26).
²³**“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or ‘There!’ do not believe it. ²⁴For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect...²⁶Therefore if they say to you, ‘Look, He is in the desert!’ do not go out; or ‘He is in the inner rooms!’ do not believe it. ²⁷For as the lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.” (Mt. 24:23-27)**
- B. The emphasis that Jesus gave to this warning indicates how convincing some deceivers will be.

VII. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST (MT. 24:29-31)

- A. Jesus’ second coming will be visible to all (24:29-31; Mk. 13:24-25; Lk. 21:25-26).
²⁹**“Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” (Mt. 24:29-31)**

- B. *All will see Jesus*: Literally everyone will see Jesus coming on the clouds with great glory (24:30).
- C. *The sign*: In my opinion, the sign of the Son of Man is the royal second-coming procession (24:30).
- D. *Angels will gather the elect at the rapture*: His angels will be involved in the rapture of the Church.

VIII. THE PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE (MT. 24:32-36)

- A. Jesus gave 5 parables highlighting how we are to respond to Him with vigilance (24:32-25:30).
- B. Parable #1: *The parable of the fig tree* (24:32-36; Mk. 13:28-31). Jesus commanded His people to recognize the signs of the times. Here, He gave three commands (24:32-42)—to *learn* the parable of the fig tree (24:32), to *know* that His coming was near (24:33), and to *watch* (24:42).
³²“Now learn this parable from the fig tree: When its branch...puts forth leaves, you know that summer is near. ³³So you also, when you see all these things, know that it is near—at the doors! ³⁴Assuredly...this generation will by no means pass away till all these things take place... ³⁶But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only.”
(Mt. 24:32-36)
- C. *Learn the parable of the fig tree*: The lesson is easy to understand. The fig tree loses its leaves in wintertime and does not sprout till late in the spring. When the leaves of a fig tree begin to sprout, we know that summer is near. In the same way, when prophetic sign events and trends make global headlines, then we know that the end of this age is near.
- D. *When you see all these things*: His people are meant to see “all these things”—the 22 signs in 24:4-28 and Luke 21:11, 20-28 and recognize them as signs He graciously gave His people (24:32-36).
 - 1. There is only one generation in which God’s people will see *all* of the trends and events of 24:4-28 making headline news on a global basis. Jesus commanded His people in that generation to *know* that His coming was near. For the first time in history, most of these trends are happening in an alarming measure at the same time on a global basis.
 - 2. They must occur in a way that commands unusual attention or makes headline news. As the fig leaves signal to anyone paying attention that the summer is near so these 22 signs will make headline news worldwide and communicate a message from God to the body of Christ.
 - 3. “All these things” in 24:34 refers to “all these things” of 24:33. All 22 signs of the times are meant to convince God’s people of the nearness of Christ’s return, since all the things that He predicted here did not happen within the lifetime of His original disciples. The signs that occurred in AD 70 did not make global headlines convincing us that the end of the age is near.
- E. *Know it is near*: Jesus commanded the generation of believers who “saw all the signs” to know that they were, in fact, living in the generation when He will return.
- F. *No one knows the day or hour*: Jesus distinguished between the command to know the generation and the warning about presuming to know the day or hour in which He will return.

- G. Jesus compared the wicked people just before He returns with those in the days of Noah (24:37).
³⁷*“But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ³⁸For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left.” (Mt. 24:37-41)*
- H. **One will be taken:** The disciples asked Jesus “where” the people were “taken” (Lk. 17:37).
³⁴*“...there will be two men in one bed: the one will be taken and the other will be left. ³⁵Two women will be grinding together: the one will be taken...” ³⁷They...said to Him, “Where, Lord?” So He said to them, “Wherever the body is, there the eagles will be gathered together.” (Lk. 17:34-37)*
- I. I see those who are “taken” speaking of wicked people being killed in context to Jesus’ return (13:41-42; Lk. 17:37; Rev. 9:15; 19:19). Some see them as the righteous being raptured (24:31). Jesus will return at the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:15) soon after one-third die in the sixth trumpet (Rev. 9:15).
“The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into...fire” (Mt. 13:41-42).
¹³*The sixth angel sounded...¹⁵angels...were released to kill a third of mankind. (Rev. 9:13-15)*
¹⁹*And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered...to make war against Him...²¹And [they]...were killed...and all the birds were filled with their flesh. (Rev 19:19-21)*

IX. THE PARABLE OF THE THIEF (MT. 24:43-44)

- A. Parable #2: *The parable of the thief* (24:43-44). We are to be faithful during the time of His delay. Jesus urged His people to *watch* so as to be spiritually ready and avoid suffering loss.
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. ⁴⁴Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” (Mt. 24:42-44)*
- B. Jesus called His people to *watch* (24:42; 25:13; Mk. 13:9, 33, 34, 35, 37; Lk. 21:36; Rev. 16:15).

X. THE PARABLE OF THE FAITHFUL AND WISE SERVANT (MT. 24:45-51)

- A. Parable #3: *The parable of the faithful and wise servant* (24:45-51) teaches us that there are two types of Christian leaders who confess to follow Christ those who are wise and those who are evil.
⁴⁵*“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? ⁴⁶Blessed is that servant whom his master...will find so doing. ⁴⁷...he will make him ruler over all his goods. ⁴⁸But if that evil servant...⁴⁹begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, ⁵⁰the master of that servant will come... at an hour that he is not aware of, ⁵¹and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Mt. 24:45-51)*