This is the second tape on the series of the allotted discourse of our Lord Jesus Christ, found in Matthew chapters 24 and 25. A series by Dr. Charles L. Feinberg, dean of Talbot theological seminary in La Mirada, California. We come now to the fourth section of this allotted discourse as the days of Noah, Matthew 24 verses 36 to 51. In the previous section of this vital prophetic discourse the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, dwelt upon the glory and power of his coming again, the universal nature of that appearing and the nearness of the event. Now, our Lord continues on the thought of the uncertainty of the time, as well as the need to be ready. The passage reads, "But of that day and hour knoweth no man. No, not the angels of heaven but my father only. But as the days of Noah were [so sure] also the coming of the son of man be. What is in the days that were before the flood? They were eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage until the days that Noah entered unto the ark and knew not, until the flood came, and took them all away. [So should] the coming of the son of man be. Then shall two be in the field, the one should be taken and the other left, two women shall be grinding at the mill, one shall be taken and the other left. Watch, therefore, for you know not what hour your Lord doth come but know this, that if the house holder had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched and would have not allowed his house to be broken into. Therefore, be also ready for in such an hour as you 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 food in due season. Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily, I say unto you that he shall make him ruler over all his goods but 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 drunkards. The Lord that servant should come at a day when he looketh not for him and at an hour that he is not aware of and shall cut him a sunder and point him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." In this remarkable portion on consideration of this portion of scripture we notice that the Lord is speaking in the first place of the suddenness of the coming, verses 36 to 39. The suddenness of the coming again of the messiah of Israel is made most impressive by the word that the time is known to no one except the father. The father has reserved this knowledge to himself, you may be sure that what neither the angels nor the son knows has certainly not been revealed to mortal man. There is divine wisdom in withholding this information from man. The Lord used clear and strong language to declare that he gives no [intimation] of the time of his coming. The coming is certain, the time of it is uncertain. Noah and his age are given as examples because history does repeat itself. That time, the time of Noah was one when the world was indifferent and careless. There was the enjoyment of material things, none of these sinful in itself. They cared for the needs of life, personal and physical and social but there was no thought for the spiritual, hence those were days of corruption, violence, and unbelief. Noah preached to them on repentance, Hebrews 11:7 tells us that, 2 Peter 2:5 confirms it. But its contemporaries perished in their sins. This states clearly that the world would not be converted or believing when messiah returns. We do well to remember that Noah lived at the end of an age and entered into a new age after the flood. His day was like the age to come when lawful pursuits and endeavors will be counted on but no concern for preparation for the coming of the son of man. Noah's contemporaries were eating but not the bread of life, they were drinking but not the water of life, they were marrying but not any heavenly bride/groom, so they went on until the calamity overtook them. 120 years of warning meant nothing to that generation.
They all had ample warning just as those in the end time will, Matthew 24:14, but they considered not and cared not until they were taken away and the waters of death and judgement because of the suddenness of the messiah's coming, they are warned beforehand. We're told that some years ago, the people of Paris were warned of the river Seine, which flows through their city, would overflow its banks. Men who were skilled in measuring rivers knew that it was rising rapidly, they knew that the heavy rains and the melting of an unusually large fall of snow would soon bring an immense amount of water down the river. They would tear away bridges and flood the city. The French people made fun of their prophecies as they crossed the bridges, they called out [galley] to one another, "Look out or you'll get your feet wet!" But the flood came, it destroyed property valued at millions of dollars, made thousands of people homeless, caused very great suffering. So in the coming day there will be a similar heedlessness as spoken of here by our Lord. In the second place, the Lord is solemnly declaring the truth of the separation at his coming, verses 40 and 41, there will be separations in the field and in the home, neither occupation nor sex will change the balance here. It's to be a universal separation, twice at stake of the certain ones who will be taken while others will be left. Now, that's for emphasis. The taking away is not to be with a king, that's not the same as the taking away of believers in the rapture where they are taken away to be with the king in Noah's day. No, no they were taken away in the judgement, in the flood waters, nor is it to be a removal into the cure of angels. It'll be a taking away judicially and in judgement. The one's left will enjoy the blessings of Christ's reign on earth just as Noah and his family were left to continue life on earth. This is the opposite of the rapture where those who are left go into the judgement of the great tribulation. As in Noah's day, the unbelieving will be taken away in judgement, the righteous are preserved for the new age through the storm and flood of judgement. The separation will be decisive. The
separations are eternal here, there will be no reunion. Finally, the Lord sets forth the importance of the watching for the coming, verses 42 to 51. The emphasis is on watchfulness throughout this portion, there to be always expecting. Vigilance is commanded and then illustrated from the figure of the thief. Now, if a man had reliable information of the coming of the thief, he would watch his home all night if he knew the watch or the hour of the night that the thief was coming, he would be all the more alert so that there would be no entry by digging under the house. So, must the followers of the messiah be, they are to be ready at all times. We're told that an evangelist in a home, where he was entertained, once asked his guests if they knew whether the Lord was coming that very day and their answers were uniform and standard, "I think not, I think not, I think not". Then he solemnly quoted, "Therefore be also ready for in an hour that you think not the son of man cometh, watchfulness is now enjoying from the figure of a servant". Servants are warned against carelessness, indifference, and self-indulgence. The two qualifications of a servant are faithful in performing his duties and wise, not to be led astray in some other effort and thus not looking for his coming master. These servants knew their master would return, the householder was not certain of the coming of the thief. In verse 43 our Lord indicates the blessedness of being found occupied with the right thing, such faithfulness in service is rewarded by promotion to higher and greater responsibility, Luke 19:17 tells us the same truth. The evil servant in this passage is a hypocrite, that means his words and deeds reveal his evil heart. His manner of life is wicked indeed, he began to reflect in his heart that his Lord was towering, his master was delayed. It wasn't just a mistaken doctrine or a doctrinal error, it was the condition of his heart, he was fully content that that master should stay away. Well this outlook gripped him fully, he began to beat his fellow servants, he assumes arbitrarily a place of authority, never given to him by his master. He's taking the place of the master instead of the servant. He displays
self-will, self-promotion, his conduct in the household is shameful enough, but look at his behavior with those outside, that's particularly blame-worthy. He eats and drinks with the drunkards. His life is not exemplary at all, what a poor example and pattern he is. He consorts for the world. He lives after their pattern until the master comes suddenly, unexpectedly, yes and unannounced. The master cuts that wicked servant a [thunder]. That's a practice that was known among the Babylonians and the Egyptians and Persians. He's called a hypocrite, because he was one of them, not a servant of God. He was a slave of Satan. The two servants just considered are different in heart. One believes in the Lord's coming, the other does not. They're different in act, one nourishes the household, the other uses severity toward the faithful and laxity toward the unbelieving and they're different in final destiny. One is made ruler over all his masters goods, the other suffers eternal loss and perdition, all to be watchful. Edinburgh Castle, in Scotland its related, was captured only once in all of the history, the glorious history of Scotland. How did that happen? Well, its the offenders thought that the steepness of the rock, on one side, made it inaccessible, [inaudible word], invincible, so they put no centuries there but in the grey mist of the early morning, a little party of the enemy crept up the steep slopes at the risk of their own life and surprised the Garrison into surrender. It was captured, Edinburgh Castle that we've seen, beautiful beautiful castle there in Edinburgh, Scotland. It was captured where it was considered strongest. Oh, it cannot be urged upon you dear friend too earnestly that you must be ready. The Lord's coming is sure, the hour is not, how we must tell others too, to trust him and be confident of the future. Ask them, are you ready now? We don't dare leave it to chance, we don't dare leave it to an after thought because eternal issues are at stake and men's souls are in peril until they decide. We come in the great allotted discourse now to the fifth section. The parable of the ten virgins, Matthew 25:1-13. The twenty fourth and twenty fifth chapters of Matthew are
inseparably connected. They formed together the greatest prophetic discourse ever delivered by
the Lord Jesus Christ, our savior. Here is the greatest prophetic Bible conference ever to have
taken place, that ever would take place on earth. The parable at the beginning of chapter 25 and
the parable that follows it are in the gospel of Matthew, only they're not in Mark 13, they're not
in Luke 21. Now in these two parables, of Matthew 25, the qualities of faithfulness and wisdom,
remember then we heard the word, who then is a faithful and wise servant? In these two parables
we have these qualities then of faithfulness and wisdom emphasized and the parable of the ten
virgins that needed wisdom is stressed. In the parable of the [tellers], the need of faithfulness is
emphasized. Now we think that throughout this prophetic section that events of the end of the
Jewish age are spoken of, and we want to repeat this. This is so important that we dare not
overlook it. We shall make confusion out of this marvelous portion if we do not get this basic
principle correct. Poetry, painting, drama have made much of this beautiful but solemn parable
of the ten virgins. The passage is oh so well known and it reads this was in Matthew 25:1-13,
"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened under ten virgins who took their lamps and went
forth to meet the bridegroom and five of them were wise and five were foolish. They that were
foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them but the wise took oil in their vessels with their
lamps. While the bridegroom [tarried], they all slumbered and slept and at midnight there was a
cry made, behold the bridegroom cometh. Go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose
and [trimmed] their lamps and the fool said unto the wise, give us some of your oil for our lamps
have gone out, but the wise answered say, not so lest there be not enough and you but go rather
to them that sell it and buy for yourselves. 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 ye not watch therefore for ye know neither the day nor the hour in which the son of man cometh." In this parable of the ten virgins, we are taught three important features, the parable touches very clearly on three factors. First of all, on the matter of the two kinds of virgins, verses 1 to 5. At the time of the Lord's return to the earth, to his people Israel, to set up the messianic kingdom, the ten virgins represent those who are eager to enter the kingdom of the son of David and to enjoy his rule on earth. In the previous parable, it was servants waiting for their master, here its virgins waiting for their bridegroom. Ten is a comprehensive number, such as the ten commandments, the instruments with ten strings, among the Jewish people ten men constitute a congregation, a [minion], and you remember there are going to be ten kingdoms in the last days of the times of the gentiles. Marriages were invariably celebrated at night in the near east so there was need of lamps. The lamps signify, in this parable, the light of outward profession. The virgins went forth to meet the bridegroom in the attitude of expectant faith. In meeting the bridegroom, they were to conduct the bride, according to the opinion of some, to the bridegrooms home when he appeared and to be present at the marriage. Rather, he is leading his bride to his own home. They went forth, these virgins did, to meet the bridegroom and the bride. As in the parable of the [married supper], the bride is not in view at all in this parable but she assuredly understood what kind of a wedding would it be. Some ancient translations of the new testament, specifically the Syriac and the Latin [Vulgate] and the [inaudible word] so that verse one reads, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be liken unto ten virgins who took. These ten virgins who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom and the bride." Now the addition of these three words, and the bride, is not on good manuscript authority but the sense is correct. Well, you notice it first of all all were virgins, secondly they all had lamps, and third they all had the same purpose. They all went out to meet the bridegroom. Outwardly, they all had
The foolish virgins were such in the spiritual sense, it wasn't a matter of intellectual comprehension or grasp. It wasn't that they hadn't had enough training, that they hadn't had enough degrees, they hadn't been to universities or colleges or other institutions of learning. They were not spiritually prepared as they should have been. The wise virgins were such, in the spiritual sense, they were fully prepared. They were spiritually ready. The number five does not mean that half of those who profess to know God and the messiah in their day are actually unbelievers. Oh no, no no, its just a picture of a large portion, where in the foolishness and wisdom consisted, seen in the next verses. Now, since both of them had lamps, there was a common profession to both but the foolish lacked the essential preparation for meeting the bridegroom. The supply of oil was lacking in the case of the foolish virgins. Now that oil must represent heart appropriation, heart reception of the grace of God. Oil, in the Bible, stands for the spirit of God. You remember Zechariah in the fourth chapter where he sees the great candelabra with an abundant supply, so much oil coming right out of the olive trees at the sides of the candelabra. Then we read in Zechariah 4:6, "Not by might nor by power but by my spirit saith the Lord. I am trying to show you by this abundant supply of oil that it means the supply of the power of the spirit of God." So oil represents the spirit of God. The wise had the spirit of God and were saved. The foolish didn't have the spirit and were lost. The same is the evil servant of the previous parable. Both wise and foolish virgins slept. Luke 18:8, we're told that we should be alive and alert, saints and professing ones often sleep side by side. The root of the condemnation isn't there but we do need to heed the warning awake and vigilant. A lady once said, we're told, she once said, the Roland Hills evangelist, she knew she was a child of God because she had dreams such and such a thing. The famous preacher said right away, "Never mind, Madam, what you do or what you have done when you're asleep. Let's see what you do when you're awake."
When we are awake is the time to fill the lamp with oil to receive the Holy Spirit by trusting the Lord Jesus in his death for our sins on Calvary. In the second place, the parable speaks eloquently of the coming of the bridegroom, verses 6 to 10. At midnight, why the very time you would least be expected, the bridegroom appeared. It was a most inappropriate, inconvenient, time to get what they had admitted. His coming would take many on earth by surprise. There is hardly a gap between the cry and the arrival of the bridegroom. The suddenness of the coming has already been foretold. It's been likened to a flash of lightening, to the flight of the vulture, to the fast sweeping floods in Noah's day. Matthew 24, verse 27, 28, verse 37. At the outcry, the wise and foolish virgins awoke and began to trim their lamps. Up to this point they all seemed the same and acted the same. Now the foolish ones realized how unwise they were not to have brought oil in their lamps. Now they recognize the wisdom of the wise virgins, their wicks were lit but there was no oil of the lamps of the foolish virgins. The wise virgins indicate they cannot give of their oil to the others. It was not a lack of will to help, as though selfish, but it was a lack of power. They would have to buy for themselves. It can only be obtained by personal acquisition, by personal experience, by personal transaction. My friends, every soul must deal directly with God. Get it in the proper way. Oh, every one that thirsteth come into the waters and buy wine and milk without money and without price. How can you buy anything without money, without price? By getting it free. Yes, Revelation 3:18, "Christ is knocking at the door of the individual heart," each individual himself must respond personally. We can't make this to [emphatic], each one must respond for himself, you cannot do it for your wife, your wife cannot do it for you. You cannot do it for the children, the children cannot do it for the parents. No one can do it for someone else, every soul must deal directly, personally, straightforwardly with God. He must get redemption in the proper way, every man, woman, and child must take salvation for
himself and herself. No one else can do it for them, must be bought on gospel terms without money, without price, by simple genuine faith. The righteousness of one believer cannot save another. Now, those foolish virgins took the good advice to go and buy for themselves but it was too late. When they returned the door was shut and they could not enter. The door was shut and they could not enter. The door was shut. These are some of the saddest words in the Bible, they were almost saved but lost. The incident is the told of a young woman who laid dying. She said to her father, "Why didn't you tell me there was a lost world?" "Oh," he said, "God is merciful, he's loving, he's benevolent, there's no such place as a lost world, as a lost perdition." "Ah but I know there is," she said, "I feel it now, my feet are slipping over the brink. Why did you not tell me?" It's a terrifying time when the lost realize there condition but all too late. God forbid that any one of you listening should have been led astray into thinking there is no such place as a lost eternity. Finally, the parable sounds out with a trumpet call. The warning to watch, verses 11 to 13, "When the foolish virgins returned they called out loudly, 'Lord! Lord!'" Their profession was correct, it was flawless to the very end but just to enter doesn't avail now, the omniscient all wise Lord tells them he knew them not. They were not children of God. It's true now as it was then that if any man have not the spirit of Christ he's not at his. Romans 8:9, "The shepherd knows his own, of that we can be sure, the messiah had said I am the good shepherd and I know mine own and mine own know me," John 10:14. These foolish virgins claim to be friends of the bridegroom but actually they were not even acquaintances in the spiritual sense. Again, the purpose and the lesson of the parable are impressed upon all. That duty of watchfulness is stressed once more. Watch therefore for ye know not the day nor the hour, no, which one? In which the son of man commeth. Oh, my friends, the warning to watch. The way to be sure you're not wrong at the last is to be right at the first except Jesus, as savior now, then you can wait and
watch with the redeemed ones for his coming, for his bride in the rapture. One day a Christian worker visited a godly Christian friend who was a servant in a home. She told the visitor her master mistress were away on a trip. It was uncertain, unknown, when they would return. Then the friend, being weary, went into rest and to prepare for self for dinner afterward. Thinking he had misunderstood his friend he said, "So your mistress is coming home today?" Oh the girl said, "I haven't heard anything to that affect but since the time is uncertain, I always have everything ready each day." And when going over the house afterwards he found the truth of her words everywhere. This is how the believer ought to order his life, everything ready for the coming of the master. Are you ready? The preparation is so simple, yet so vital. God makes it clear to overlook or slide it. It's eternal loss at misery and woe that can never be rectified. The Bible says believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shall be saved, thou and thy house. No preparation yet devised by human reasoning, or thinking, can avail here. God has given us the one and only way and we read any, none others, Acts 4:12, "And in none other is there salvation, for neither is there any other name under heaven that is given among men. Wherein we must be saved." We come now to the sixth section, section six, in the allotted discourse of our Lord Jesus Christ, Matthew 24 and 25. The parable of the talents, it's in Matthew 25, verse 14 through 30, "For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling into a far country who called his own servants and delivered him his goods and under one he gave five talents, to another two and to another one. To every man according to his ability and straight way took his journey. Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same and made other five talents, and likewise he that had received two, he also gained other two, but he that had received one went and dug in the earth and hid his Lord's money. After a long time, the Lord of those servants cometh and reckoned with them and so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents
saying, "Lord, thou delivereth unto me five talents, behold I have gained besides them five talents more." His lord said unto him, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, thou has been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy lord." He also, that had received two talents, came and said," Lord, thou delivereth unto me two talents, behold I've gained two other talents besides them." His lord said unto him, "Well done good and faithful servant, thou has been faithful over a few things. I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of thy lord." Then he that had received the one talent came and said, "Lord, I knew thee, that thou [a] hard man, reaping where thou has not sown and gathering where thou has not spread and I was afraid and went and hid thy talent in the earth. Low there, thou has what is thine." His lord answered and said unto him, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou kneweth that I reaped where I sowed not and gathered what I have not spread, thou ought to therefore put my money to the exchangers and then in my coming I should have received mine own with interest. Take therefore the talent from him and give it unto him who hath ten talents for unto anyone that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance but from him that hath not, him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath and cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." The parable of the talents here resembles a great deal that of the ten pounds found in Luke's gospel, chapter 19 verses 12 to 27. They're not the same, they were not spoken on the same occasion, this parable before us shows clearly that watching for the Lord's coming does not mean idleness. It stresses the need of faithfulness in service, just as the first parable in chapter 23:1 to 13, the emphasis was on vigilance, here it is on diligence. The Lord expects his own not only to be watching but working as well. The parable of the ten virgins describes the inward spiritual life of the believer waiting for his Lord, this parable indicates the outward activity that the visions of
the parable are clear. In the first place, the Lord Jesus Christ is pointing out the commitment, verses 14 and 15. The man of this parable is the same as the bridegroom in the previous one. The idea of a long absence is implied in the words another country and expressed in the words of verse 19 after a long time. In delivering his goods to his servants during his absence, the master was following a customary procedure. It was nothing unusual, the goods and trusted are called talents. The original meaning of the word has been completely changed by our usage. One talent was worth about 1000 dollars in our money. We today when we speak of a talent, taken to mean what it represented there, abilities, special capacities, endowments, [inaudible word] from God. It does stand for all that God has committed or entrusted to our care. We are first, last, and always his stewards.