

REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

Luke 12:49-59
Yeshua §111

As we turn to Luke 12:49-59 remember Jesus is in the final six months of His earthly ministry. Jesus continues to reach out to His people, the Israelites, the Jews, with the good news He is their promised Messiah. Jesus is preaching in those towns and villages His 72 disciples discovered were still open to His ministry.

Part 1.	The Coming of the King
Part 2.	The Authentication of the King
Part 3.	The Controversy over the King
Part 4.	The Training of the Twelve by the King
Part 5.	The Opposition to the King > Instruction of the Disciples
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Part 10.	The Death of the King
Part 11.	The Resurrection and the Ascension of the King
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Jesus is also using these remaining months to train His disciples. He has taught them how to defeat persecution fear (12:1-12); how to defeat anxiety by trusting their Heavenly Father (12:2-34); and He's taught them to be vigilant and faithful during His absence (12:35-48).

In our passage today Jesus both trains His disciples and appeals to the unbelieving crowd.

STUDY PASSAGE (LUKE 12:49-59)

49 “I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled! 50 I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished! 51 Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. 52 For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

54 He also said to the crowds, “When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once, ‘A shower is coming.’ And so it happens. 55 And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, ‘There will be scorching heat,’ and it happens. 56 You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?

57 “And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right? 58 As you go with your accuser before the magistrate, make an effort to settle

with him on the way, lest he drag you to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and the officer put you in prison. 59 I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the very last penny.”

In verses 49-53, Jesus is speaking to His disciples.

What is Jesus teaching His disciples?

Jesus is teaching His disciples...

THE GOSPEL MESSAGE WILL DIVIDE JEWISH FAMILIES (12:49-53)

49 “I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled! 50 I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished!

When *fire* is used figuratively it refers to judgment, or purification, or the Holy Spirit. Jesus seems to be using fire to refer to judgment. In context, this judgment is tied to His baptism and what follows His baptism.

The core meaning of *baptism* is “to identify with”. Jesus is not referring to His water baptism. This baptism is future and is distressing to Jesus. We believe Jesus is referring to His crucifixion, burial and resurrection. Through His crucifixion, burial and resurrection, Jesus will completely identify with humanity’s sin and spiritual death becoming sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21) and experiencing separation from the Father (Matt. 27:46).

Jesus confesses this baptism distresses Him. Jesus was fully human. Anticipating the pain and shame of the cross filled Jesus with dread. But the amazing thing is Jesus did not waver. He was faithful. Jesus was not a surprised victim of the cross; He knew from an early age it was His mission. Though it distressed Him greatly, Jesus was faithful to His Father’s will.

This baptism, when accomplished, will not bring peace to Israel. It will bring judgment; it will divide and tear Jewish families apart.

51 Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division. 52 For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

This division within Jewish families is a consequence of Israel's rejection of Jesus. Based on the overwhelming evidence Jesus provided proving His claim to be Messiah, there should not be one unbelieving Jew in all Israel. Even when given the greatest proof of all, the resurrection, many will continue in stubborn unbelief. The division of Jewish families will be another aspect of God's judgment on Israel for rejecting Jesus, their Messiah.

Thus, in the days and years to come, the gospel preaching of the disciples will divide Jewish families tearing them apart. In one family, a son and his wife will hear the gospel and believe. They will be branded traitors to family and Judaism. They will become "dead" to their family. This judgment will be extremely painful for the Jews.

But this judgment need not have happened if the Jews had done what Jesus tells them to do in verses 54-59.

ACCEPT WHAT THE EVIDENCE PROVES (LUKE 12:54-59)

54 He also said to the crowds, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you say at once, 'A shower is coming.' And so it happens. 55 And when you see the south wind blowing, you say, 'There will be scorching heat,' and it happens. 56 You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky, but why do you not know how to interpret the present time?"

Jesus is calling the crowd to account. They are fully capable of good thinking. They are capable of logical thinking. Experience has taught them a cloud in the west means rain showers are coming. They can look at the facts and come to the correct conclusion.

But when it comes to Jesus, they act like their too stupid to figure out what the miracles say about Jesus. In this they are hypocrites; they are fully capable to discern what the evidence proves. But they act like they are incapable. Instead of thinking for themselves, they turned to the Pharisees to tell them what to think about Jesus. The Pharisees in turn came up with the brilliant conclusion that Satan is empowering Jesus to undo the works of Satan. All the good things Jesus is doing is empowered by the evil one. That's the absurd answer many are believing rather than thinking for themselves.

In verse 57 Jesus admonishes the crowd to get their minds right and to think for themselves.

57 “And why do you not judge for yourselves what is right?”

Jesus was born of a virgin, in Bethlehem of Judea, of the house of David, His birth signaled by a miraculous star, all in fulfillment of Hebrew prophecy. At twelve years of age Jesus confounded the most brilliant Jewish scholars with His knowledge of God and the Scriptures. Jesus healed the sick, raised the dead, cast out demons, calmed the wind and waves, fed thousands with but a few loaves, walked on the water, taught with authority and lived a perfect, righteous life without sin full of compassion and mercy for sinners.

Those are the facts.

What is the right conclusion based on these facts?

Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah.

Jesus is admonishing this crowd to believe what the facts prove. If they continue to refuse to look at the evidence for themselves, they will suffer God’s judgment. Verses 58-59 illustrate His point.

**58 As you go with your accuser before the magistrate, make an effort to settle with him on the way, lest he drag you to the judge, and the judge hand you over to the officer, and the officer put you in prison.
59 I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the very last penny.”**

The man being taken to court is guilty; the evidence against him is clear. It would be better for the man to admit what the evidence proves and reconcile with the person he’s wronged rather than continue to deny the evidence and suffer punishment.

Those who refuse to accept what the evidence so clearly proves about Jesus will suffer punishment. They will suffer division within their families. They will suffer the terror of the Roman invasion of 70AD and ultimately they will suffer separation from God in the Lake of Fire.

Jesus continues to divide families.

Perhaps you’ve been rejected by your family for your faith in Jesus. May the Lord bless you for your faith and endurance. For brothers and sisters who suffer rejection by their families, we need to be their family. We need to love them and care for them like the family we’re called to be.

Jesus brings peace to our hearts, but not necessarily to our circumstances. This is because so many people reject what the evidence proves. Or they just don’t

know and don't care. Be that as it may, you are responsible to look at the evidence and accept what the evidence proves about Jesus. I know many of us have and are convinced Jesus is the Messiah and Savior.

If you are not yet convinced but have questions, we are here to help. We encourage you to ask questions. We would never tell you to believe because we "told you to". But at the same time, we encourage you to think right and accept what the evidence proves about Jesus; He is the promised Messiah and Savior of the world.