

# Matthew 25:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then he which had received the one talent came and said,  
Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where  
thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not  
strawed:

## Analysis

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**Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man**—Sklēros ei anthrōpos (σκληρὸς εἰ ἄνθρωπος): 'You are a harsh/austere man.' The servant's theology is catastrophically wrong—he views his master as cruel and exploitative. This reveals the root problem: not inability, but a distorted view of God's character. Fear rooted in false belief produces disobedience masquerading as caution.

**Reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed**—The accusation (therizōn hopou ouk espeiras, θερίζων ὅπου οὐκ ἔσπειρας) paints the master as unjustly profiting from others' labor. But this is slander—the master gave the talents, providing the seed. The servant's warped theology led to paralysis: if God is harsh and demanding, why try? This is the lie that neutralizes countless believers.

## Historical Context

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Absentee landlords were often despised in first-century Palestine for extracting profit while peasants did the work. But this master wasn't a landlord—he entrusted his own wealth to servants for their opportunity to profit. The servant projects cultural stereotypes onto a generous master, revealing how cultural assumptions can distort our view of God.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Hebrews 11:1** — Definition of faith

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 John 4:8** — God is love

## Study Questions

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1. Do you secretly view God as harsh and demanding, making obedience feel like drudgery rather than joy?
2. How have false beliefs about God's character paralyzed your spiritual initiative?
3. Where do you accuse God of being unfair when He's actually been generous?

## Interlinear Text

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προσελθὼν	δὲ	καὶ	ὁ	τὸ	ἐν	τάλαντον
<b>came</b>	<b>Then</b>	<b>and</b>	G3588	G3588	<b>the one</b>	<b>talent</b>
G4334	G1161	G2532			G1520	G5007
εἰληφὼς	εἶπεν	Κύριε	ἔγνων	σε	ὅτι	σκληρὸς
<b>he which had received</b>	<b>and said</b>	<b>Lord</b>	<b>I knew</b>	<b>thee</b>	<b>that</b>	<b>an hard</b>
G2983	G2036	G2962	G1097	G4571	G3754	G4642
εἶ	ἄνθρωπος	θερίζων	ὅπου	οὐ	ἔσπειρας	καὶ
<b>thou art</b>	<b>man</b>	<b>reaping</b>	<b>where</b>	<b>not</b>	<b>sown</b>	<b>and</b>
G1488	G444	G2325	G3699	G3756	G4687	G2532
συνάγων	ὅθεν	οὐ	διεσκόρπισας			
<b>gathering</b>	<b>where</b>	<b>not</b>	<b>strawed</b>			
G4863	G3606	G3756	G1287			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Luke 15:29** (Parallel theme): And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

**Jeremiah 2:31** (References Lord): O generation, see ye the word of the LORD. Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness? wherefore say my people, We are lords; we will come no more unto thee?

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