

The Parables of Jesus

- The King's Return

- Luke 19:12-27

This parable is found only in the Gospel of Luke. We must take not that this is **not** the same parable as the "Three Servants Given Talents" that is found in Mathew 25:14-30. That parable was given later in Jerusalem in a totally different setting with a totally different meaning.

Jesus and His disciples are headed towards Jerusalem and ultimately His crucifixion. They would first enter and go through Jericho, which is just southeast of Jerusalem. This was a common way of journeying to Jerusalem. They would be taking the road known as the "Jericho Road." This road had been a roadway between Jerusalem and Jericho for at least one thousand years.

It was this road that David wrote in Psalm 23 concerning, *"though I go through the valley of death."* There was a section of this road where it went into a valley where there would be very little light, even in the daytime. The "locals" referred to as the "shadow of death." It was this road that Jesus used in his parable of the "Good Samaritan."

As they entered Jericho, they came across a man by the name of Zacchaeus, who was the "chief" among the publicans. In other words, he was the "chief" tax collector. Therefore, he would be very rich. (Luke 19:2) Being a tax collector, not simply a tax collector but the "chief tax collector," he was not liked much by many people, especially the religious leaders.

When Jesus had entered Jericho, Zacchaeus could not see him because he was small in stature. He ran to the nearest tree and climbed it so he could get a glimpse of Jesus. Jesus saw him and said to him that He would go and have dinner with him at his household. Jesus went and had dinner with him, an action that did not go over well with the religious leaders for they looked upon him as a "sinner." (Luke 19:7)

After meeting Jesus, Zacchaeus' life was radically changed. (Luke 19:8, 9) We see here a very noticeable difference between Zacchaeus, who was a dreaded, sinful publican and the "rich young ruler," who thought himself as a good man that we met in Luke 18. The rich young ruler was unwilling to change his heart and walked away from Jesus.

Here, as we see Jesus' interaction with Zacchaeus. We see that Zacchaeus was willing to change his lifestyle behavior because He had experienced the genuine love of Jesus. Jesus expressed that He, Himself, did indeed recognize the sincere change of heart of this "sinful" tax collector. (Luke 19:10, 11) He declares that His mission was always to "seek and save" the lost children of Abraham.

After that encounter and exchange with Zacchaeus, Jesus now turns His attention, as well as His disciples' attention, to the true reason why they were going to Jerusalem. Jesus had spoken very specifically to His disciples about His rejection, suffering, and death at Jerusalem. However, the disciples were not able to understand it this way. They were literally thinking that this time, when they entered Jerusalem, it would be the beginning of Jesus bringing forth His Kingdom. They had "visions of grandeur."

The closer they journeyed to Jerusalem, the greater their anticipation and expectations became. Jericho was only about 17 miles from Jerusalem, which meant to the disciples that they were getting close to experiencing and being a part of Jesus' rule on this earth as King. Their roles as His "right hand men" would also be beginning. They were correct in this but it would not be in the way they were thinking.

They had thought that the Kingdom was not only just a few miles away but they thought of it as just a few hours away. They believed the Kingdom of God was imminent. Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem at this time was thought by His disciples to be the official commencement of His Kingdom. The last thing on their mind was the fact that Jesus was going to Jerusalem to die, even though Jesus, time and time again, told them that this was going to happen.

However, Jesus knew their thoughts and He wanted to again, try to get them to grasp and understand what was truly going to happen this time in Jerusalem. It was going to be much different than they were thinking. Jesus proceeds to explain and get them to understand what was going to happen and how the Kingdom would actually be coming through the use of this parable.

The Parable of the King's Return" - Luke 19:12-27 - "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities. And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow. And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow: Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.) For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him. But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me."

Let's first review the "characters" of this parable.

- The "nobleman" who would become King - Jesus is clearly referencing Himself in this parable. He who would be leaving this earth for a while and going to a "far country" - His Father's Throne in heaven, to become King. Just as this nobleman left, Jesus would be leaving. However, just as this nobleman returned as a king, so would Jesus, when He returns as King
- The "ten servants" - This is referencing all of Jesus' disciples from the time of those first 12 listening to this parable, as well as all of Jesus' disciples throughout these last two thousand years until the time of His return. They are told to "occupy" until the return of the nobleman/king.

This term "occupy" literally means to rule and reign as a representative, or we can say an ambassador, of the ruling and reigning authority. It also gives a stronger meaning as it infers to "change" the old governmental system that was in place to that of the new government.

As disciples of Jesus here on the earth, we are given our "orders" to occupy until His return. We are to go forward throughout the earth and "overthrow" the existing corrupt spiritual governmental system of the devil and his ways. We are to exchange that evil "spiritual governmental system" with that of the Kingdom of God's system, which is pure, holy and righteous.

- The "citizens" - This is referencing all people of this earth, Jews and Gentile, but specifically the Jews who rejected Jesus as their King
- The "pounds" that were given to each of the servants - These "pounds" represent the "tools" or the "spiritual currency" to be used in this new Kingdom. They were given by Jesus to all of His disciples to use to expand His Kingdom until He returns. Notice, that he gave each servant the same amount. This expresses that we all have been given the same "tools," the same "spiritual currency" to do the work of the Kingdom upon this earth.

These "tools" include the "gifts of the spirit," as well as of course, the power and authority that Jesus gives to all His servants. The greatest "tool" is the power and fullness of the Holy Spirit within each born again child of God.

In the parable, a nobleman leaves for a foreign country in order to be made king. Before he left, he gave ten pounds to ten of his servants. The servants were told to use what was given to them and "**occupy**" until he returns. (Luke 19:12–13).

After the nobleman had left, the citizens of the land, who outwardly "hated him," sent a "letter" telling the one who would be making this nobleman a King, as well as the nobleman, himself, that they chose to refuse and acknowledge his kingship (Luke 19:14). This obviously, did not deter the inevitable. The nobleman was crowned king and returned to his land - not as just a nobleman but now as king.

Upon His return, this newly crowned king called the ten servants to give account of what they had done with the "pound" that was given to each one in "occupying" and representing him until he returned. They each were to give an account for what they did. We see that Jesus only used three of the servants to get his point across in this parable. (Why he did not use and speak of all ten, that you can ask Him when we meet Him face to face.)

The first servant showed that his pound had earned ten more. The king was pleased, saying, "*Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities.*" (Luke 19:17). The next servant showed that his pound had earned five more. The king again was pleased, saying, "*(Well, thou good servant...Be thou also over five cities.*" (Luke 19: 18–19)

Then came a servant before the king and reported that he had done nothing with his pound except hide it in a cloth (Luke 19:20). His reason: "*For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.*" (Luke 19:21) The king listens to the servant's description of him as "hard."

The king then responds with, "*Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant.*" He then repeats what the servant said in a way that is most sarcastic. He was saying if this is the way you really thought I was then you still should have done something with what I gave you. In other words this was a "lame" excuse. The contradiction between his words and his actions was obvious and became the basis for the king's judgment against him.

The king commanded that the one pound initially given to this third servant be given to the one who had the ten. Others who were standing by, probably the other servants that were giving account to the king, said, "*...Lord, he hath ten pounds.*" To that the king replied, "*... That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.*" (Luke 19:25, 26) At the conclusion of the parable we hear that finally, the king commanded that his enemies, the "citizens" who rejected him as their king from the beginning, were to be brought before him and they were executed (Luke 19:27).

What was Jesus trying to teach His disciples? As mentioned previously, Jesus was trying to dispel the incorrect notion by His disciples that when they entered Jerusalem it would signal the beginning of His Messianic rule and reign over Israel, the Romans and the world. Their thinking was that the Kingdom was imminent. After all, Jesus did say that the Kingdom of God was at hand and it was. However, it would not come in the way they had thought.

In this parable we see the primary theme that Jesus was trying to get the twelve disciples to understand was that He was going to be away from them for a while. Jesus' most basic point in this parable was that the Kingdom was not going to appear immediately - at least not in the way they thought. There would be a

period of time, during which the King (Jesus) would be absent from them before the Kingdom would be set up and His rule established.

We know that, of course, He was referring to His death, resurrection and then ascension unto the right hand of the Father. While He would be "away," His disciples, both at that time and today, are to be His representatives, His ambassadors, here on this earth. As His disciples, we are to "occupy" until He returns. He has given us all the "spiritual currency" that we need. He has given us each the same tools, the same "spiritual currency" for the purpose of changing the "spiritual governmental system" from that of darkness to that of Light upon this earth.

Upon His return, which would signal the Messianic millennial rule and reign on this earth, Jesus will call His servants, all His disciples, to give account of what they had done with what they were given while He was away. Those disciples who are found faithful with the "spiritual currency," the spiritual tools that they were given, will be "rewarded" for their faithfulness in proportion to their faithfulness while awaiting Jesus' return. They will be given authority to rule along with Him in His millennial Kingdom on earth in proportion to their faithfulness while He was "away."

It is important to note that the servant, who was not found faithful with what he was given, **did not lose his life** in this parable. However, he did lose his reward. It will be the same for those disciples that are not found faithful with what Jesus had given them to "occupy" while waiting for His return.

They may not lose their eternal salvation for they will experience the Messianic millennial Kingdom but they will not be used to rule and reign over this earth along with Jesus. They will forfeit that aspect in their experience of the millennial Kingdom.

We as believers must know that there will be a time of "reckoning." Yes, even for Christians. However, this judgment will be for the purpose of rewards and **not damnation**. In 1Corinthians 3:11-15, it tells us that some will suffer loss, but they themselves will *"...be saved; yet so as by fire"*

Finally, we see that Jesus' final act upon His return will be to deal with the "rebellious citizens," who did not want Him as their King - Those who rejected Him for who He is - the Messiah, King of kings and Lord of lords. We will see that the Jewish nation, in just a few short days during Jesus' trial, would reject Him and profess to have, "...no other king but Caesar." (John 19:15) When Jesus returns to establish His Kingdom, He will utterly defeat His enemies (Revelation 19:11-15). This includes the devil and all his forces of darkness, as well as all those who chose to reject Jesus for who He is, whether they are Jew or Gentile.

Jesus was telling His disciples, both at that time and today, to be ready for His return and His establishing of His millennial rule and reign. We are to "occupy" until He returns. We, as His disciples, are to faithfully be those representatives of Jesus to whomever we come in contact with and wherever we go.

One problem that we may encounter may be the faulty thinking that Jesus may delay, and causing us to therefore procrastinate in doing what we should be doing. Another problem that the disciple of Jesus may encounter is that they could be under the faulty idea that Jesus' return is imminent, just as the twelve did, and therefore think that there is no need to do anything.

If we get caught up in either one of them it may cause us to entertain incorrect thoughts that would lead us into an incorrect attitude of heart that would lead us in doing nothing in our role of "occupying" until He returns. We are simply to obey our King and use what He has given us to "occupy" until He returns, whenever that may be. It should not matter. We, like the twelve disciples must remember **all** of Jesus' parables and always **"watch and be ready."**