

## THE LATTER PARABLES OF JESUS

### Message 6

Scripture: Luke 19:11-27

INTRO: We have looked at the first parable, in these messages. I view the general truth of this parable to be this: "The Jewish people who responded to the call of God before the eleventh hour of their history, will be last, because many were called but few were chosen; and the Jewish people of the eleventh hour will be first. So the last will be first and the first last. The last will be first in the kingdom and first in position."

Now, in this first parable that we looked at, Jesus was on the way to Jerusalem and He is nearing Jericho. Let me show you that on the slide once more (Slide 1). In my calculation of the days, in the last parable we were at Tuesday, Nisan 7. You may remember that the Passover was commemorated on Nisan 14, and on this coming Passover day, Jesus will be crucified.

We left off last message in Matthew 21:16, where we were told that the last would be first and the first last, and that would be because many are called but few are chosen. I want to now insert one parable from the Gospel of Luke, because this parable is given by Jesus between the parable we already looked at and Matthew's next parable. It is the parable of the minas.

In the last message I showed you the direction Jesus took on this seventh journey to Jerusalem. When Jesus left Jerusalem on this seventh trip away from and back to Jerusalem, He went through Samaria and somewhere in the Galilee area He crossed to the other side of the Jordon River and came back down on the far side of the Jordon. Somewhere between leaving the Galilee area and nearing Jericho, He told the parable we considered last Sunday.

How many of you watched the video I gave you a link to last message? You will have seen that there is an apparent discrepancy in the Gospels on Jesus visit to Jericho. Matthew and Mark say the healing of the blind man or men took place when they were leaving Jericho, and Luke says it took place when they entered Jericho.

If you watched the link, it explains the apparent contradiction of whether the miracle took place when they entered or when they left. But, there is another apparent discrepancy not covered on the video. The question is, was one blind man healed, or two? It

is the same question that is raised when Jesus cast the demons out of a man at Gadara. Matthew speaks of two demoniacs, and Mark and Luke speak of one. In both these cases, the situation is the same. While one Gospel indicates there were two, the other two Gospels focus on the most well known of the two involved. In neither case do any of the Gospels say there was only one and another says there were two. Anyone who has very carefully studied the harmony of the Gospels will gain a great respect for the accuracy of these Gospels.

Our first parable took place before Jesus arrived at Jericho. Our second parable now takes place after they leave Jericho and head for Jerusalem. On the video they said it was about a nine hour walk. But Jesus and His disciples do not go all the way to Jerusalem on this day. They only go as far as Bethany, which is just before you go over the Mount of Olives. Jerusalem is then just on the other side of the Mount of Olives and through the Kidron Valley. All of this was shown on the video.

## B. The Parable Of The Pounds

### 1. The Parable (Luke 19:12-27)

Well, this morning I want to slip in a parable related to the kingdom of heaven that Matthew does not give but which happened after Jesus left Jericho, but before He arrived at Bethany. It is found in Luke 19. You will remember that the first parable we covered in Matthew was given before they arrived at Jericho. This one takes place just after they left Jericho on the next day. I am including it here because chronologically, it is given between the first parable we covered last time, and the one we will cover next time in the Gospel of Matthew. So, let us begin by reading this second parable as found in Luke 19:12-27 (read). Now you can tell that apart from a context, a setting; this parable could be interpreted to mean a multitude of things. Once the setting is studied, the possibility of a variety of interpretations is significantly reduced.

Without a context, we might gather from this parable the teaching that servants should be faithful to their masters, and that is good and biblical. But what is the spiritual truth that this parable is laid alongside of? What is Jesus trying to teach in this parable? And so, to begin our interpretation, we must first go to the setting.

## 2. The Setting (Matthew 20:17-28; Luke 19:11)

Let me show you the order of events and why I want to do that. We left off last message in Matthew 20:16. Go now to that verse (read). Now look at verses 17-28 (read). We see here again that Jesus' followers are sure He is about to set up His kingdom. Everything is building up to some climax, and they are sure the Lord will put down the Romans, who are ruling, and set up the kingdom promised in the OT. They are not aware, though He has told them numerous times very plainly already, that He is about to die. He has indicated to them that there will be a change because the last will become first and the first last, and that will take place because many are called but few chosen.

As I have mentioned already, when the events of the first parable happened, Jesus is almost up to Jericho, coming from the Galilee area. The next day He will go up to Jerusalem. But when He gets to Jericho He heals two blind men, and Zachaus gets saved. And then the next day they head up towards Jerusalem. We are now at Nisan the 8<sup>th</sup> on the calendar. Jesus will die on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

So we go now to Matthew 20:29-34 (read). From here we go now to Luke 19 (read 1-10). Well, Jesus stays the night in Jericho, and the next day they head up to Jerusalem and look at Luke 19:11. (read). So here we have the setting of this parable. The mother of two of His disciples desired special positions for her sons because she was sure Jesus would now shortly set up the kingdom of God.

And so, as they go along, Jesus, understanding that the disciples have high hopes that the kingdom of God would appear immediately gave them this parable. The kingdom they were expecting was the millennial kingdom. In the parable we looked at in the last message, Jesus revealed some amazing truths to the disciples regarding the kingdom. The last would be first and the first last. And the disciples themselves would sit on thrones and be co-rulers with the Messiah.

And now, Jesus, knowing that the kingdom they were expecting would be postponed because many had been called but only a few had responded, He begins to correct their thinking with this parable.

### 3. The Interpretation

So, we go to the interpretation of this parable. Look now at verse 11 once more, as it is very important to the interpretation of this parable (read). We find in this verse two reasons why Jesus gave this parable. First, because they were near to Jerusalem; and second, because they thought the kingdom of God would immediately appear.

So, we must ask, what does being near Jerusalem have to do with giving this parable at this time? Well, when they get to Jerusalem, they will have a very busy time of it. And Jesus is already beginning to prepare them for what is going to happen by way of this parable. If He does not do this now, later He will have too many pressing things to teach and do, and then, on the Passover He will be killed.

The second, and main reason that is given why Jesus gave them this parable is because they thought the kingdom of God would immediately come. He must correct that thinking. You see, Daniel had prophesied of 70 weeks. In just a few days the 69<sup>th</sup> week will close, and the last 7 years of Daniel's prophecy will begin. But, because many were called, but few chosen, now the 70<sup>th</sup> week will be postponed. And in between the 69<sup>th</sup> and 70<sup>th</sup> week, at least 2,000 years will transpire. That time is not prophesied in the OT and is very different from the disciples expectations. And so, to correct their thinking, Jesus gives this parable.

So, let us go to the parable to see how He will show them that the kingdom will not be set up now, and what they are to do in light of that. It begins like this: "Therefore," that is because they thought the kingdom would immediately appear, "He said to them, 'A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for Himself a kingdom and to return.'"

So, let me give the spiritual truth, as I see it, that this story is laid alongside. We begin with verse 12 (read). I believe that 'the certain noble man' represents Jesus. He went to a far country to receive a kingdom for Himself. Here is the Church age on earth, while He is away in a far country, namely heaven.

Listen to what Jesus said to the disciples just a few days later in John 13:33, "Little children, I shall be with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, 'Where I am going, you cannot come,' so now I say to you."

Then in verse 36-38 Peter spoke with Jesus like this, "'Lord, where are You going?' Jesus answered him, 'Where I am going you cannot follow Me now, but you shall follow Me afterward.' Peter said to Him, 'Lord, why can I not follow You now? I will lay down my life for Your sake.' Jesus answered him, 'Will you lay down your life for My sake? Most assuredly, I say to you, the rooster shall not crow till you have denied Me three times.'"

So we go to verse 13 (read). In the parable, before the nobleman left for a far country, He gave a mina to each of His servants and told them to do business till He comes back. The total is ten minas. Is the number 10 significant here? I do not know. I am always very careful when it comes to the symbolism of numbers. But Ed Vallowe, in his book on numbers as used in the Bible says, "Ten has been a significant number in all historical ages. This is a number of testimony. Considered as twice five, then stands for responsibility intensified, signifying the measure of responsibility and its judgment or reward" (91). That conclusion certainly does fit here. I think it includes the responsibility of all who are called into the kingdom of God in our age. It is while Jesus is away, which is now, and it has been like this for some 2,000 years.

Now, remember that they are expecting Him to set up the kingdom now. But He is telling them He is going away and that He has given to each of them a job to do. And we are all reminded that we have a job to do, because we too are in this time when He is away. We could spend several messages on our responsibility as Christians while the Lord is away. This subject will also be expressed in other parables. May I ask you, what are you doing in the kingdom? What has the Lord given you to do?

Well, in light of what Jesus has said here, Ephesians 4:8 tells us this, "Therefore He says: 'When He

ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.'" When the Lord ascended, He gave gifts to men, that is He gave, and still gives spiritual gifts to believers. That is the responsibility of every believer to work with what the Lord has given them to do.

May I ask you this morning, what responsibility do you have? Do you fritter your time away on video games, television, or any host of things that are not related to the kingdom? Have you asked the Lord, "What would You have me to do?" Do you read the Word and study and seek Him? Jesus said in John 9:4, "I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming when no one can work."

But look now at verse 14 (read). It was very interesting to me that this verse was included in this parable. Notice it says 'his' citizens. The word 'citizens' is *politees*. We get our word 'politics' from it. If this certain nobleman pictures Jesus going to a far country, heaven, who are 'His' citizens? And it could then be none but the Jews. And we are told that it was HIS citizens that hated Him. And in just a few days from here, His own people will see to it that He is crucified. They hated Him. They said, "We will not have this man rule over us?" As a matter of fact, they, for the most part are still saying that today.

When we come to verse 15, the nobleman who went into a far country returns. Right here, in this parable we are introduced to a very important doctrine. It says, "And so it was that when he returned..." The nobleman returns. Here, no doubt, is the doctrine of the return of Christ. It is a huge and wonderful doctrine and I want to clarify how I understand this.

Go with me to Matthew 24 for a moment (read 1-3). Now notice that in Matthew's Gospel they ask three questions: 1 Tell us, when will these things be. 2 What will be the sign of Your coming? And 3, what will be the sign of the end of the age. I believe the original language does not allow question three to be a rewording of question two. These are three separate questions. To any listener familiar with the Greek NT, I am referring to Sharpe's Rule. Now the second

question, "What will be the sign of Your coming", the word for coming is *Parousia*.

And when this passage speaks of the return of the nobleman, it can speak of only one of two events; the rapture, or the second coming; or it may speak of both. And when I speak of holding one's views in an open hand, that is what I do here. But I give my understanding here (Slide 2).

Vine's Dictionary says the word *parousia* comes from the word 'para', meaning 'with', and 'ousia', meaning being. It is a 'being with.' Then he says it, "...denotes both an 'arrival' and a consequent 'presence with'." Look at this word in Philippians 2:12 (read). Now listen to Vine as he continues his explanation of this word. He writes, "When used of the return of Christ, at the rapture of the church, it signifies, not merely His momentary 'coming' for His saints, but His presence with them from that moment until His revelation and manifestation to the world. In some passages the word gives prominence to the beginning of that period, the course of that period being implied, 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1; Jas. 5:7-8; 2 Pet. 3:4. In some, the course is prominent, Matt. 24:3, 37; 1 Thess. 3:13; 1 John 2:28; in others the conclusion of the period, Matthew 24:27; 2 Thess. 2:8."

Well, let us go on in the parable. And when the nobleman returns, he calls his servants and rewards them according to what they have done. Clearly, when Jesus return He will reward believers for what they have done while He was away. So look at verses 15-27 (read).

I want you to notice that in the first parable we looked at they all received a denarius, no matter how long or hard they had worked. But here, each one receives according to what he has done. What is pictured by the minas is not salvation, as in the previous parable, but rewards for faithfulness.

Well, we go to verse 16 (read). The nobleman has returned and it is time to reckon with the servants. The first servant's mina had gained 10. And the Lord says to him that he is to have authority over ten cities. The second one had gained 5, and he was given

authority over 5 cities. When it says here that they are given authority over 10 cities or five cities, it is possible that that is literally how it will be in the millennium.

But when He came to the servant who feared his master and made sure it remained safe, but he did not do anything useful with it. This servant is judged and slain before his master. This, as I see it, happens at the end of the tribulation.

Now let me show you something that I see as important to understanding numerous of these latter parables. When we covered the various types of prophecy, the one type we looked at was telescopic prophecy. Let me show you that (Slide 3). In any given prophecy it may seem that the events given all take place at one time. But the prophet may see things that are distant from each other but they are similar in topic. This happens in a number of prophecies in the Bible. Sometimes in one sentence two things are separated by 2000 years. I showed you that in another message. So the righteous in our parable are rewarded some time after the time of the rapture, but the unrighteous are judged at the end of the tribulation.

Now let me interject a thought here for you to ponder as I have. In less than two months from the time in which Jesus told this parable, God removed His hand from Israel. That was fifty days after Jesus' resurrection, the day of Pentecost as recorded in Acts 2. And right there the Church age began. And the Lord, from there, reached out through the Apostles to the Gentiles and the Church age has been mostly a Gentile age.

Now in that great section of Romans 9-11 Paul said this. First in Romans 10:19, "But I say, did Israel not know? First Moses says: 'I will provoke you to jealousy by those who are not a nation, I will move you to anger by a foolish nation.'" Then in Romans 11:11 he writes, "I say then, have they stumbled that they should fall? Certainly not! But through their fall, to provoke them to jealousy, salvation has come to the Gentiles."

One of the reasons God reached out to the Gentiles, you and I, was to provoke the Jews to jealousy. Dr. J. Otis



Yoder used to say, "We have provoked them alright, but not to jealousy." But here is my question: When the rapture happens, and those two witnesses stand up in Israel right after the tribulation begins, will God use the rapture of the Church, which has then just happened, to accomplish this great goal of provoking Israel to jealousy? Does He accomplish this through the catching up of the Church? It could be.

Well, let us move on to look at verse 27 (read). It is my conclusion that any time you have those who are slain before the Lord or they are cast into hell and it is said there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, it does not refer to the rapture, but to the judgment that happens at the end of the tribulation, and we will see more of this in other parables.

Now in the parable it is not indicated whether the righteous and unrighteous are judged at the same time or not. But I believe the righteous are rewarded some time after the rapture, and the unrighteous are judged at the end of the tribulation. Let me show you how I see that on the next slide (Slide 4).

Now there is an important lesson for us in Luke 19:13-27. The major economic systems of today are capitalism, socialism and communism. One article I read said that Jesus was the first communist. But neither a study of God or a study of Jesus Christ reveals communism or socialism as a godly system. God's ideal is capitalism. Our parable here clearly reveals that. In capitalism, exchange of wealth is made by individuals, not government. God's judgment on each person will not be executed on the actions of the state or country in which a person lived, but on the actions of the individual. That is clearly what is shown in this parable.

So in the text the Lord rewards each one according to how much he prospered. And of the one who just took care of his one mina, the Lord says, "Take the mina from the one who would not work, and give it to him who has ten." And they complained about that and said, "But, he already has ten!" And the Lord said something like, the one who works and gains more will get more. Notice in our text that the Lord says, "Take the little the one who would not work has, and give it to him who

has much." Communism says, "Take away from the one who is rich, and distribute it among the poor."

But I want you to notice that the servant who was unfaithful is judged, and those citizens who would not have this man reign over them are also judged. And in verse 27, the Lord says they are to be slain before Him. And in other parables we will see that this always refers to the judgment at the close of the tribulation.

Let me show you that. Turn to 1 Thessalonians 4 (read 15-18). Now, notice first the word 'coming' in verse 15. It is the word 'parousia' we mentioned earlier. Here, very clearly it refers to the 'catching up', from which we get the word 'rapture'. And notice that there is no judgment given at this event.

But let me take you now to a clear passage that deals with the judgment at the end of the tribulation in Matthew 25 (read 31-32). You see, when Jesus comes here it is all the way to the earth. And before Him all nations are gathered. These are the people alive on earth when He comes. The righteous are invited, not to heaven, but to inherit the millennial kingdom (verse 34). Then in 41-46 we have the judgment of the unrighteous (read). Now notice that they are cast into hell. This is the judgment of the unsaved who are living at the time the Lord comes.

I encourage you to not take my word for these conclusions, but as much as possible, to study these things for yourselves. And if you should have questions, or another view with possibilities, I would be happy to consider those.

### 3. The Application

Now the text itself does not make an application. But the application can be made from the interpretation. So, here is the picture as I put it together. In this parable the Lord is giving His disciples this message: **I will not set up My kingdom at this time, as you are expecting. As a matter of fact, I am leaving for a far country, so it will take some time before I return. My own citizens, Israel, will now reject Me and I will be leaving. There will be a lengthy time, and then I will return. Before I leave, I am giving you certain**

responsibilities and I want you to be faithful with that which I endow you with until I return and then I will reward each one of you according to what you have done. The Jews who rejected Me, and My servants that were unfaithful will meet their just judgment when I deal with them.

CONCL: So, in conclusion, here is what we have so far. In the first parable, here is the heavenly meaning of the first shall be last and the last first. And I might add here, that these parables must be seen in their Jewish connection. So here is the meaning of the first parable as I see it: **"The Jewish people who responded to the call of God before the eleventh hour of their history, will be last, because many were called but few were chosen; and the Jewish people of the eleventh hour will be first. So the last will be first and the first last. The last will be first in the kingdom and first in position."**

And now, because the disciples thought the kingdom of God would be set up immediately, Jesus gave the second parable. And the heavenly meaning, as I see it, is this: **I will not set up My kingdom at this time, as you are expecting. As a matter of fact, I am leaving for a far country, so it will take some time before I return. My own citizens, Israel, will now reject Me and I will be leaving. There will be a lengthy time, and then I will return. Before I leave, I am giving you certain responsibilities and I want you to be faithful with that which I endow you with until I return and then I will reward each one of you according to what you have done. The Jews who rejected Me, and My servants that were unfaithful will meet their just judgment when I deal with them.**

And this morning, my question for you and for me is this: You and I are in that lengthy time in which the Lord is in the far country. He has left each of us with a mina. May I ask, what are we doing with our mina?