

Sunday July 12th 2015
Matthew Chapters 24-25
Part Five

1). As we begin today let's firstly review some things we ended with last week in order to take us into our next parable - Mt 25:14 ¶ *"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them.*

a). Two things that we need to note as we begin this next parable – firstly the words underlined here have been added by the translators and are not present in the original manuscripts and secondly that this, as with the others, is a parable that is to be seen alongside the previous parables.

b). Without going into the details of the Greek language at the beginning of v14, suffice it to say that a more accurate translation of what is found here would be, 'For it [the previous parable] is just as a man travelling to a far country.....' and we will remember the word translated 'Then' at the beginning of the parable of the 10 virgins links that parable to those that have come before it and so we will clearly see that we cannot properly understand any of the parables that the Lord gives in relation to the Church in these chapters of Matthew apart from looking at all the parables together.

c). Now the 'man' in this parable is the 'bridegroom' from the previous parable and 'the master of the household' seen previously and the time period covered by this parable is the same time period covered by the parable of the 10 virgins and the other parables – it is the time when the 'man' is absent, therefore this present dispensation, and it deals once again with what is to be done by 'his own servants' during the time of his absence in the certain expectation of his return to settle accounts with them.

d). In the parable of the talents we see that the 'Man' calls all His own servants and delivers His goods to them in order that they should carry out His business during the time of His absence.

e). If we connect this back to the parable of the 10 virgins we will realize that it can only be those who are continually making the proper preparations, who are continually watching and continually making themselves ready, who are continually being filled with the Spirit who can be in any position to carry out the Lord's business until he returns.

f). And within the parable of the Talents we are shown 3 individuals, who are representative of all Christians - Mt 25:15 *"And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.*

And what we will want to note here is that it is not the amount that the Lord gives to each servant that determines the outcome for them but rather what they then do with what they are given.

g). Mt 25:16 *"Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 "And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. 18 "But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money.*

We see then that the first 2 servants make a profit of 100% on that which they are given and as we would think about this increase it will inevitably lead us to the parables in Matthew Chapter 13, remembering that the context for the parables in this Chapter is clearly stated in - Mt 13:19 *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom,*

With this in mind, hearing 'the word of the Kingdom', we then find this in - Mt 13:23 *"But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."*

h). Trading with the talents and producing fruit are just 2 ways of saying the same thing - that which the Lord has given us, His Word, must be heard, believed and acted upon thereby producing a harvest in our lives, just as we see here with Abraham in - Jas 2:23 *And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.*

i). And in conjunction with this verse from James we will remember the Lord's command given to us in - Mt 6:33 *"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

j). All then has to do with a present work amongst the eternally saved in response to the offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens with a view to being found worthy to occupy a position of rulership with Christ in that Kingdom.

2). All that being said let's go back to the start of the parable once again and add some more detail - Mt 25:14 ¶ *"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. 15 "And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. 16*

"Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. 17 "And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. 18 "But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. 19 "After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

a). This parable of the talents, seen here in Matthew, needs to be placed alongside the parable of the minas in Luke as both essentially deal with the same thing, but just from slightly different perspectives - Lu 19:12 *Therefore He said: "A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. 13 "So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'*

b). Here in Luke the 'man' is seen to be 'a certain nobleman', and the nobleman travels to a far country 'to receive for himself a kingdom and to return'. And prior to the time of his absence he calls 10 of his servants, therefore all of his servants, and delivers to them 10 minas, therefore all that belongs to him, with instructions that they should 'do business till I come'.

c). Both the talents and the minas are monetary units and the reason for using these symbolically in these parables is to demonstrate the expectation that during the time of the man's absence his servants are to work with what has been given to them in order to make a 'profit', to be fruitful.

d). In the parable of the talents a different amount is seen to be given to each servant, 'according to his own ability' and in the parable of the minas each servant is given exactly the same amount. This may seem confusing but there is no contradiction here but rather 2 facets of the same picture.

e). Now in the parable of the talents the phrase, 'according to his own ability' must not be thought of in any natural sense, this is not according to natural ability, but according to the degree of willingness and openness to be taught by the scriptures, or to put this another way, by doing what is necessary to have the extra supply of oil, by being continually filled with the Spirit after the fashion that we see in - Col 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.*

Jas 1:21 Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

And so the more willing we are to engage correctly with the Word the more of the Master's goods will be given to us – and obviously our willingness is demonstrated through time and effort, through our faithfulness to it, not just through wishful thinking.

f). And then in the parable of the minas, where we see every servant being given the same amount, we can know that no one is left out – all servants, all Christians, have exactly the same opportunity to produce a profit as they all have access to exactly the same word and are all indwelt by the same Spirit, but as we would know from the foolish virgins, the one left, and the evil servant, not all Christians will choose to do so - 2Ti 4:3 *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.*

3). Now in order to understand the nature of the Master's goods, that which is represented through the talents and the minas, and how we are to do business with them, we need to go to the foundational type found in Genesis Chapter 24. This is the Chapter we will remember that deals with the search for a bride for Abraham's son Isaac made by Abraham's oldest servant – a foundational type that pictures for us the present work of the Holy Spirit amongst the eternally saved to procure a Bride for God's Son – Ge 24:10 ¶ *Then the servant took ten of his master's camels and departed, for all his master's goods were in his hand. And he arose and went to Mesopotamia, to the city of Nahor. 11 And he made his camels kneel down outside the city by a well of water at evening time, the time when women go out to draw water.*

a). We will notice straight away that there are 10 camels containing 'all his master's goods' – the same picture seen through the talents and the minas.

b). And it will not escape our notice that the oldest servant positions himself 'by a well of water at evening time when the women go out to draw water'. The well of water here is available to all in the family, but it is Rebekah whom we find coming to draw from the well and it is as a result of this that the oldest servant selects her to be the bride for Isaac – the parallel with the wise and foolish virgins here should be obvious – drawing water from the well and being continually filled with the Spirit are one and the same thing.

c). Ge 24:53 *Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah. He also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother.*

We see here that the servant gives precious gifts to Rebekah, described as jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold and clothing. We also see that precious things are given to her brother and her mother, but these are in no way comparable with that which is given to the one who will marry Isaac.

d). And as we think about that which is given to Rebekah it will no doubt cross our minds that these are exactly the things we see in relation to Christians at Christ's Judgement Seat as recorded in - 1Co 3:11 ¶ *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

That which the Holy Spirit makes known, in the antitype of the oldest servant giving jewelry and clothing to Rebekah, is then seen to become works associated with gold and silver and precious stones for those who will have been faithful with what they had been given, but, for the unfaithful, there is a stark contrast made to the gold, silver and precious stones, through the use of the words 'wood, hay, straw' to describe works that are of no value, works that will be burnt up.

e). The clothing given to Rebekah is an allusion to the wedding garment to be worn by the Bride, a garment that is described for us in - Re 19:7 *"Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.* The wedding garment then is made up of 'the righteous acts of the saints' – continuing acts of righteousness, the same acquisition of righteousness we had seen earlier with respect to Abraham and his faith in – Jas 2:23 *And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God.*

That which we see here with regards to Abraham and what we see regarding the righteous acts of the saints all come from 'believing', from having 'faith' to the saving of the soul – which itself can only come by hearing the word of God and then allowing that word to dwell in us richly in all wisdom, being continually filled with the Spirit.

f). Just as Abraham's oldest servant showed Rebekah all his master's goods so the Holy Spirit shows us, or at least those with eyes to see, all that

God the Father has placed in the hands of God the Son - Joh 16:13 *"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*

g). These verses here from John Chapter 16, as well as the parables of the talents and the minas should also be seen in conjunction with - 1Co 2:9 *But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.*

h). Hopefully we are beginning to see here that doing business till He comes, performing continuing acts of righteousness, is not a frenzy of religious activity, such as most Christians are engaged in, but rather our process towards spiritual maturity, towards the renewing of our mind, towards putting to death the deeds of the flesh and walking in the Spirit; all of which will position us correctly in order to relate to one another and to others in a correct scriptural fashion – doing our share, being a joint that supplies to the rest of the body, providing meat in due season.

i). Let's remember one more time - Ro 10:17 *So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*

Ro 12:1 ¶ *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

Jas 1:21 *Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*

2Ti 2:3 *You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No one engaged in warfare entangles himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who enlisted him as a soldier. 5 And also if anyone competes in athletics, he is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules.....15 Be*

diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

4). Mt 25:19 *"After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them. 20 "So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' 21 "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 22 "He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' 23 "His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' 24 "Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. 25 'And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.' 26 "But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. 27 'So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. 28 'Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. 29 'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

a). As we study these final verses from the parable of the talents there is one salient fact that we must not overlook, *After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.* The day is coming, after a long time – 2000 years, when we will all stand before the Lord and we will be judged according to what we have done with that which we have been given – and in that day, based upon that which we have done we shall receive a just recompense of reward – in other words we will get exactly what we deserve. We shall be judged with absolute justice and absolute righteousness, just as the individuals seen in the parables of the talents and the minas.

b). And as we clearly see here from the verses of our parable, if we have been faithful with that which we have been given, according to our ability, and have therefore made a profit, we will receive a reward, being made a ruler in the Lord's house.

c). But should we choose to be unfaithful such as the servant we have seen previously there is only one outcome - *'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'* A condition that will be experienced day and night for 1000 years.

d). With this in mind then we need to make sure that we are never unoccupied or idle with respect to our pursuit of the Kingdom and that we are always working in the correct field just as Ruth did - Ru 2:8 *Then Boaz said to Ruth, "You will listen, my daughter, will you not? Do not go to glean in another field, nor go from here, but stay close by my young women. 9 "Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Have I not commanded the young men not to touch you? And when you are thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn."..... 15 And when she rose up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean even among the sheaves, and do not reproach her. 16 "Also let grain from the bundles fall purposely for her; leave it that she may glean, and do not rebuke her." 17 ¶ So she gleaned in the field until evening, and beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley.*

e). Boaz commanding his young men to, 'let grain from the bundles fall purposefully for her' contains the same idea as the 'Man' and the 'Nobleman' placing all His goods in His servants' hands – God has provided that with which we are to work and in the antitype of Ruth beating out the grain, we are to work with that which we have been given so as to separate that which is worthless from that which is of value.

f). And to look at one example of what this looks like for us we will go to Eph 4:31 *Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ forgave you.*

That which God has given us is His word, the word of the Kingdom and we are to allow this Word to work in us - 2Pe 1:3 *as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, 4 by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

And as this work takes place there must be a separation – all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor and evil speaking, with all malice is to be put away and as it is put away only that which is of value will remain, 'be kind to one

another, tenderhearted, forgiving' – this is what beating out the grain looks like; this then is how we are to do business with that pictured through the talents and the minas - Ro 8:13 *For if you live according to the flesh you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." 16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 ¶ and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

The bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, all malice also correspond to the wood, hay, straw from 1 Corinthians Chapter 3 and the kindness, tenderheartedness and forgiveness correspond to the gold, silver and precious stones – doing these things are the righteous acts of the saints making the wedding garment - I hope we are beginning to see how all of this fits together.

g). We will continue with this next week – if the Lord is willing.