

Sunday May 12th 2013
Mothers' Day
One Taken, One Left
Part Two

1). Mt 24:37 *"But as the days of Noah were, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. 38 "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, 39 "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.*

a). 'The coming of the Son of Man' is a progressive event that begins with the resurrection/rapture of the church and continues through and includes the time when our Lord once again stands upon the earth to complete His dealings with His brethren according to the flesh, the nation of Israel, and the Gentile nations that have survived the Great Tribulation.

b). And as we saw last week, which is clearly presented in our scripture, the time preceding Christ's return will be 'as the days of Noah were' – Now there are all kinds of different ramifications contained in this statement, but suffice it to say that staying solely within our verses here, Jews, Gentiles and sadly the majority of Christians are continuing their everyday lives embroiled in the things of this world without thought to that which God is about to do.

c). This is the very thing we had seen with regards to Christians in our study of 2 Peter - 2Pe 3:3 ¶ *knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." 5 For this they willfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water, 6 by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded with water. 7 But the heavens and the earth which are now preserved by the same word, are reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

d). Although this complacency and deliberate forgetfulness pervades most of Christianity it is certainly not the case for all Christians – which is what we see in the parable the Lord gives in the verses that follow on from 'as the days of Noah were.....'

2). Mt 24:40 *"Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. 41 "Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. 42 "Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. 43 "But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.*

a). So then at the coming of the Son of Man we see 2 Christians about their business 'in the field' and 2 about their business 'grinding at the mill' – it is a self-evident truth that we are all going to be doing something in our daily routine when the rapture happens, and when it does, in the smallest particle of time – 1Co 15:51 ¶ *Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

In that 'twinkling of an eye' we will find ourselves standing before the Lord in Judgment and this is the experience of our 2 in the field and 2 at the mill – at one moment they are attending to whatever it is they are doing in the field and at the mill and the next they are before the Lord.

b). And as a result of their appearance at Christ's Judgment seat one is taken alongside the Lord as His intimate companion receiving adoption as a firstborn son and becoming part of the Bride, whereas the other is turned away from this position of intimacy and denied adoption as a firstborn son.

c). What we are seeing then is something that should be very familiar to us, we are seeing the outcome for faithfulness and unfaithfulness, for being prepared and being unprepared with respect to the Lord's return.

d). Preparedness for the Lord's return is the most pressing issue of the hour for all of us as we know that the Lord's return is imminent, and even if it wasn't, why would we choose to do anything else? Well we might find an answer to that question later on this morning, but for now –

Mt 24:44 *"Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.*

Lu 21:34 *"But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. 35 "For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. 36 "Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man."*

This is not a suggestion.

3). Being ready for the Lord's return is a subject continued in the next parable; a parable that provides commentary on the 'one taken' and the 'one left' that we have been looking at - Mt 24:45 *"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food [Lit. 'meat'] in due season? 46 "Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing. 47 "Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. 48 "But if that evil servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' 49 "and begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards, 50 "the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, 51 "and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

a). The picture here is taken from an eastern household where the master of the house, the householder, has gone on a journey and has appointed servants over the business of the household in accordance with the master's instructions while he is absent – all is to be done then as he left them instructions to do – this is exactly what we see in - Lu 19:13 *"So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, 'Do business till I come.'*

And we can see that the master's instructions are to give 'meat' in due season.

b). And we would I hope immediately see that v45 takes us back to Chapter 13 of the Book of Hebrews - Heb 13:17 *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*

c). 'To give them 'meat' in due season' and 'they watch out for your souls' are synonymous ideas and would refer to the proclamation of the whole counsel of God, with particular attention to that which constitutes the 'meat' of the word, teaching concerning Christ and His coming Kingdom and all that is involved with that, which as we saw in Hebrews focused on Christ's coming Melchizedek Priesthood - Heb 5:9 *And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him, 10 ¶ called by God as High Priest "according to the order of Melchizedek," 11 of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing. 12 For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food [lit 'meat']. 13 For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the*

word of righteousness, for he is a babe. 14 But solid food ['meat'] belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

d). The whole of the parable then has to do with activity in the 'master's house' during the time of the master's absence with its focus on the master's return and this activity has to do with the teaching of the 'meat' of the word of God.

e). There is the activity associated with the teaching of the 'meat' of the word as it relates to the ministry of pastor/teachers and there is also activity as it relates to those who receive this ministry, which is fully developed in the next parable.

f). For the pastor/teachers who continue to give 'meat' to those entrusted to their care, they will, at their Lord's return, be made ruler over 'all his goods' – such a person will be granted a position of rulership in Christ's Kingdom – in one sense this would equate with the 'one taken' from the previous parable - 1Pe 5:4 *and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.*

g). But on the other hand if the same servant, the same pastor/teachers speak evil in their hearts by saying, *'My master is delaying his coming,'* and as a consequence of this, *begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunkards,* - then there is a far different outcome.

h). 'To eat and drink with the drunkards' speaks of conforming to the ways and practices of the world, siding with the enemy if you will, instead of giving 'meat in due season'. And to do this is likened to beating 'his fellow servants' – the word translated 'beat' is used in the sense of a blow to the body.

i). The idea being conveyed in this is that if the servant is not giving meat and instead is conforming himself to the patterns of the world which inevitably finds its way into his teaching then this would be like a slap in the face to those entrusted to his care.

j). The souls of those entrusted to his care are at stake and he has been appointed to 'watch out' for their souls, so the failure to do this is met with the direst of consequences - 50 *"the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, 51 "and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*

k). Being cut in two, literally, was a common form of execution in the 1st century and so this graphic description adds weight to the seriousness of this

judgment. Instead of receiving 'the crown of glory' this individual will have 'his portion with the hypocrites' – the unfaithful, the unbelieving. This will be his reward.

l). And as we view this graphic description of being 'cut in two', in a figurative sense, we would inevitably arrive at - Heb 4:12 *For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.*

m). Here then is a graphic portrayal of the seriousness of losing the salvation of our soul – here then would be the 'one left'.

n). Now when we studied Hebrews 13:17 we had seen that failing to obey and be in submission to those who 'rule over you' would be 'unprofitable for you' – and so we realize that there are two sides to this coin.

o). As the pastor/teachers give the 'meat' in due season this is to be properly received and acted upon with the result that fruit for the Kingdom is produced in the lives of those who hear this word.

p). At the Lord's first advent He came looking for fruit in His vineyard, for fruit in the nation of Israel, but He of course found none – Mt 21:19 *And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves,* Producing fruit was an important facet of John the Baptist's message concerning the Kingdom being at hand - Mt 3:7 ¶ *But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 "Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, 9 "and do not think to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones.*

q). Now we will remember that the Lord's vineyard was taken from Israel and given to 'other vinedressers', and when the Lord returns, when we appear at His Judgment Seat, He will expect to see fruit – if we have no fruit then it would certainly be unprofitable for us.

r). Now we will also remember that the lack of fruit within the nation of Israel was a direct consequence of the failure of the religious leaders to give 'meat in due season'. And we have just seen that pastor/teachers in this dispensation can begin to 'eat and drink with the drunkards' – a course of action that must have the same consequences as that seen with regards to Israel.

s). All of this leads us to an interesting question, 'If those who rule over us have such a profound influence on the salvation of our souls then how much individual responsibility do we have in this?'

t). Needless to say the scripture is clear on this as we shall see as we look at the parable that follows on from the householder and his servant.

4). Mt 25:1 ¶ *"Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 "Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish. 3 "Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, 4 "but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. 5 "But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!' 7 "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9 "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.' 10 "And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.' 13 "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.*

a). The word translated 'then' at the beginning of the parable is a 'correlative adverb' in the Greek language which demonstrates this parable's direct connection with the parables that have just preceded it and with the parable that is to come after it.

b). Consequently then the parable of the 10 virgins deals with exactly the same subject as seen in those 'taken' and 'left', and in the householder and his servant – we are once again dealing with faithfulness and unfaithfulness on the part of servants in the household, Christians, during this dispensation as they follow or fail to follow the commands of the Master in His absence; all with a view to the Master's return and the reckoning that will take place with His servants when he does with regards to their receiving or being denied a position as a co-heir with Christ in the rule from the heavens over the earth.

c). And as we would know from previous studies 10 is the number of ordinal completion signifying 'all' who are in view, all virgins, all Christians.

d). And all Christians fall within one of two categories, either faithful – having faith to the saving of the soul, or unfaithful, not having such a faith, and

within the context of the parable those who are faithful are described as 'wise' whereas those who are unfaithful are described as 'foolish'.

e). Foolish is a translation of the Greek word 'moros', which we have transposed into the English language as the word 'moron' – Christians then are either wise or they are morons, not in a general sense, we are not dealing with natural mental acumen, but they are wise or morons with specific regard to preparedness in readiness for the Lord's return.

f). Pr 11:30 ¶ *The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, And he who wins souls is wise.*

Pr 12:15 ¶ *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.*

Mt 7:22 *"Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' 24 "Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 "But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish [moros – moron] man who built his house on the sand: 27 "and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall."*

g). According to the first verse of the parable all the virgins had lamps which were burning and therefore all had a supply of oil in them and all went out to meet the Bridegroom – The supply of oil here, contained in the lamp, speaks of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which is the common experience of all Christians – we are all in-dwelt by the Holy Spirit at the point of our eternal salvation – oil being used in scripture as a type of the Holy Spirit.

g). They also all go out to meet the Bridegroom – they all have a knowledge that one day the Lord will return, so we are dealing here with preparedness for His return.

h). What distinguishes these two groups is that the wise have an extra supply of oil whereas the morons don't – this is a supply of oil, a supply of the Holy Spirit, over and above the indwelling of the Spirit – this then is what we see in - Eph 5:18 *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be [continually] filled with the Spirit,*

All Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, but not all Christians are continually filled with the Spirit. And clearly from our scripture it is being continually filled with the Spirit that has the attribute of being wise.

i). So then within the context of both groups knowing that the Lord will return one group is continually filled with the Spirit and the other group isn't.

j). And being filled with the Spirit comes as a result of giving 'meat' in due season.

5). Mt 25:5 *"But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept. 6 "And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!"*

a). The bridegroom being delayed speaks to the time of the Lord's absence from the earth – there are 2000 years that must be completed before He will return, and during this time the whole world lies in the sway of the wicked one, under the influence of - Eph 6:12*the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.*

b). This then is a time of darkness, a time associated with the night – Ro 13:12 *The night is far spent, the day is at hand.*

Eph 5:11 *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness,*

c). It is this time of spiritual darkness, spiritual night, that is exemplified through the idea of 'they all slumbered and slept' – all Christians, the wise and the foolish must go through this time of darkness, associated with the night, as we await the Lord's return.

d). There is an admonition found in the Book of Ephesians that would apply specifically to the 'foolish' of our parable that leads directly into the necessity of being filled with the Spirit - Eph 5:14 *Therefore He says: "Awake, you who sleep, Arise from the dead, And Christ will give you light." 15 See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*

e). In order to navigate our way through the darkness of this age we must have light, the light that Christ gives us - Ps 119:105 ¶ NUN. *Your word is a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.*

f). It is being continually filled with the word of God alone that provides us with the light to successfully navigate through this time of darkness. To have this is wise.

g). 6 *"And at midnight a cry was heard: 'Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!'"*

Now from the original language here we would know that the cry that was heard was a cry concerning 'midnight', not a cry heard 'at midnight' - 'midnight' is used in scripture to typify Judgment, which is first seen in Exodus Ex 12:29 ¶ *And it came to pass at midnight that the LORD struck all the firstborn in the land of Egypt,*

We have also seen this in Ruth - Ru 3:8 *Now it happened at midnight that the man was startled, and turned himself; and there, a woman was lying at his feet.*

h). This cry concerning midnight then is a warning of impending Judgment at the Judgment Seat upon the Lord's return and therefore the necessity of being properly prepared for it.

i). Although such a warning has been given for 8 years from this podium, this is not a common message throughout Christendom as a whole, but interestingly within the parable all the virgins heard this cry.

6). Mt 25:7 *"Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. 8 "And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' 9 "But the wise answered, saying, 'No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.'"*

a). It is once the cry concerning midnight, concerning judgment, is heard that all the virgins 'trimmed their lamps' and it is only at this point that the foolish realize that their lamps are going out and they have no extra supply of oil - without the necessary light, produced by the oil, it is impossible to go through this time of darkness and avoid shipwreck - without allowing the word of Christ to dwell in us richly in all wisdom there can be no lamp for our feet and light for our path.

b). We would be easy prey for the roaring lion's deception, easily overcome by the world, the flesh and the devil.

c). And as we see from the verses in our parable we cannot have the filling of the Spirit that others have, they can't give us some of theirs - the solution is 'go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves'.

d). Well, where do we go to buy for ourselves? There is only one source for the extra supply of oil - the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh - the scriptures.

e). And do we really have to buy this? Well, not in a monetary sense, but there is a price to pay and for some it is a price too high to pay -

Mt 16:24 ¶ *Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.*

2Ti 2:15 *Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Heb 4:11 ¶ *Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.*

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 we could go on.

7). So the question for this morning is a simple one – considering that which we have studied so far are you closer to being wise or closer to being a moron?

8). We will have to try and conclude this next time – if the Lord is willing.