

"On the Way" 365 Bible Reading Plan

MATTHEW 25

Matthew 25

Matthew twenty-five is the continuation of the Lord Jesus teaching on the Mount of Olives, known as the "Olivet Discourse." Two parables are told that relate to followers of Jesus, both true and false. The first parable of the wise and foolish virgins has to do with faithfulness to follow and always be prepared for the sudden coming of Jesus the Bridegroom. The second parable has to do with a follower being faithful to maximize the gifts, abilities, and opportunities given by the Master, no matter what those gifts, abilities, and opportunities are, whether great or small.

The first parable of Matthew 25:1-13 is the setting of an ancient Jewish wedding ceremony. While it is not the purpose of this commentary presently to convey the various aspects of a Jewish wedding, it would be a great topic for further study by anyone willing to invest the time. The ancient Jewish wedding is used over and over again to help us understand the way of the Bride and Bridegroom so that we may better understand the symbolism of the relationship between the Lord Jesus, the Bridegroom and His bride, and the Church, made up of both Jew and gentile. The purpose of this entire parable is to put forth the concepts of faithfulness and readiness or preparation.

The second parable is that of the "talents," a denomination of measuring money in the days of Jesus. The parable is related as much of Matthew's gospel to the idea of the Kingdom of God, and the Son of God, the Lord Jesus, and Master and Ruler of all of His creation. Three individuals are given various sizes of talents, and evidently, no instruction is given on what to do with them. The individual is assumed and expected to know his Master well enough to know that with the talents/gifts would come accountability and reckoning when the Master returned from his journey into a far

country. "After a long time..." the Master returned from his long journey, and the assumed time of accountability and reckoning came. Notice that the criteria of accountability was not how much each was given but rather what each had done with what they were given. Two of the servants were faithful in what they had been entrusted with and went out into the marketplace to multiply what they had been given. They were faithfully taking opportunities that were given to them and making the most of those opportunities. The Master was pleased and rewarded them with more and greater responsibilities. It is worth repeating that ***the rewards were not based upon what they started with, but rather what they did with what they were given.*** The unfaithful and slothful servant, when called to account for how he used the one talent given to him, began to blame the Master and the Master's attitude and behavior toward those who served him. The Master immediately revealed the servant's motives. Only God knows the heart, and the Master called the servant wicked and lazy. He had a bad attitude and bad work habits, and that is a deadly combination in service to another.

Jesus ends the recorded "Olivet Discourse" by revealing that He would return and judge the nations at the proper time, and it would be from the place where they were being taught. The prophet Zechariah tells us that from the Mount of Olives and the Kidron Valley, also called the "Valley of Jehoshaphat, Jesus, the Son of Man, will judge the nations. He will judge the nations in direct relationship to how those nations had treated the Jewish people during the time since the Master had left and the time He returns, but specifically during the days of the great tribulation. More on this topic as we walk through the rest of the New Testament together.

Prayer and Action Steps

Lord, thank You for giving me talents, time, and treasure of various kinds. Please help me to be faithful to use those for Your glory and to share with others the greatest gift of all, the message of love, forgiveness, and salvation. Amen