

The Parable of the Talents

📖 Matthew 25:14-30

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📅 November 30, 2016

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We are studying the details of the judgments that will take place when Jesus returns at the Second Coming. To be clear the Second Coming is not the same as the Rapture. The Rapture relates to the Church; the Second Coming relates to Jews and Gentiles who are left behind after the Rapture. These are three distinct groups not to be confused. As 1 Cor 10:32, "Give no offense either to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God..." Jews are a racial group descended from Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Greeks are simply non-Jews. The Church is believing Jews and Greeks in one body united by Spirit baptism. You want to keep these distinct in your thinking. The Church will be raptured before the Tribulation. It's complete at that point, never to be added to. That's pre-tribulationism. The Jews and Gentiles who are left behind may or may not come to faith but those who do are not part of the Church. They are simply tribulation saints. Then when Christ returns at His Second Coming He will enter into judgment with the living Jews and Gentiles to determine kingdom entrance and rewards. What we are dealing with in the Olivet Discourse is the judgment of Jews and Gentiles who are still alive at the Second Coming. We are not dealing with the Rapture of the Church. And I've actually been surprised at how many people read the Church and the Rapture into these chapters. Most of them are post-trib but also mid-trib, pre-wrath and even some pre-trib folks see the Church and the Rapture in these chapters. It's especially troubling to me that pre-trib folks see the Church in here because you would assume they understood the distinctions between Jews, Gentiles and the Church and the context as overwhelmingly the Second Coming. But they bring them in because they think the analogy with the Flood, one taken and one left sounds like the rapture. And when you point out that the Second Coming is being compared to the Flood, not the Rapture, they make the Second Coming into a multi-faceted event or two-phase event. That way they can include the Rapture in the Second Coming. To them it's just a matter of which phase of the Second Coming is in view and since the Rapture is one of those phases they think it's alright to find it in here. The reason they want to find the Rapture here is because Jesus says no one knows the day nor the hour and they think that the day of the Second Coming to earth can be known by simply adding 7 years of 360 days to the day the anti-Christ enters the treaty with Israel. However, this is a mistake of gargantuan proportions. Note that 24:42 says that those living in the tribulation time will not know the day. So to say they will know is a direct contradiction of Scripture. I would add to this that it is highly unlikely that they could calculate from the moment the treaty is signed because that moment will

take place behind closed doors. And finally I would say that even if they did know the chaos of cosmic disturbances in that time, which are unparalleled even by Hollywood imagination put to the screen, will cause people to lose track of time. So what is in view in this discourse is the day of the Second Coming of Christ to establish His kingdom even though similarities with the imminency of the Rapture exist. But you will never find the Church in the Olivet Discourse because the questions the disciples asked don't relate to the Church. And unless Jesus is a psychologically disturbed individual He would not bring in the Church. So the entire thing is about the sign of Second Coming to establish the kingdom over the face of the entire earth and cosmos. Jesus' answer is that a great sign of light will appear in the sky immediately preceding His coming like lightning in great judgment. The Church will not be present on earth during this time. The Church will have already been removed before the Tribulation, taken to the judgment seat of Christ for reward and then on to the Father's house and we will actually be returning with Him on that great day. The greatest day in the history of the world since the Creation. And when He returns to earth with us there will be Jews and Gentiles, some believing, some unbelieving, stunned by His awesome presence. He will take them to judgment to determine their fate of entrance or non-entrance into the kingdom of God. That entrance is based on faith alone in Christ alone, the rewards for those who have faith alone will be based on faithful service. The rest will be totally cast out of His presence forever and ever. So the judgments we are studying by way of parables relate to the division of believers from unbelievers as well as to the rewards issued to believers in that time for their faithful service on earth during the tribulation time.

Now a scriptural principle is that the Jews are a privileged people because God covenanted Himself to them. Therefore, because of their privilege they are also more responsible. As such judgment will be upon the Jew first. So the judgments described begin with judgment upon the Jews and end with judgment upon the Gentiles. Another scriptural principle is that the leadership of a people have greater responsibility and so they will be judged first among a people. As such the first judgment in 24:45-51 describes the judgment upon the leadership of the Jewish people. The description is given by way of the parable of the master and two slaves whom he put in charge of the rest of his slaves. The master is Jesus. The two slaves represent Jewish leaders. The other slaves represent the Jewish people. The first Jewish leader recognizes the signs of the times as indicating the nearness of Jesus' return and directs the Jewish people to faith in Him. He is a sensible leader, in that he himself got prepared with salvation by faith. He is also faithful, in that as a believer he prepared others in the nation. The second Jewish leader does not recognize the signs of the times and fails to direct the Jewish people to faith in Him. So the contrast is between Jewish leadership who believe and are faithfully preparing for Jesus' coming during the tribulation time and Jewish leadership who do not believe and are not faithfully preparing for Jesus' coming. So the first judgment when Christ returns will be upon the Jewish leadership. The second judgment is upon the Jewish people in general as described in 25:1-13, the parable of the ten virgins. This parable picks up the characteristic of sensible from the leader in the prior parable and develops it. The groom is Jesus. The five virgins who took extra flasks of oil represent sensible Jews who are prepared for Jesus' arrival. The five virgins

who did not take extra oil represent foolish Jews because they were not prepared for Jesus' arrival. To be prepared with salvation prior to Jesus' return is the main teaching. Those Jews who were prepared went into the kingdom. Those who were not were shut out. It is significant that all of the parables so far relate in some way to kingdom entrance. There are always those who enter and those who do not. This provides the context for the third parable, which also describes a judgment on the Jewish people in general in 25:14-30. This is the parable of the talents, perhaps the most difficult of these parables. It takes up the other characteristic of the Jewish leader who was faithful in 24:45-51 and develops it. Toussaint said, "In the first, spiritual preparation for the coming of the King is emphasized; in this parable, service performed in preparation for Christ's coming is set forth."¹ In other words, two parables are given concerning the judgment on the Jewish people in general. The first one emphasizes the need for them to have faith in Jesus in order to gain kingdom entrance and this second one emphasizes the need for them to live faithful lives in order to gain a rich kingdom entrance. The point of dispute is the identity of the third slave in this parable who buried his talent. Is he an unfaithful believer or is he an unbeliever? We'll deal with that.

We come then to the parable of the talents. In Matt 25:14, **For it is just like a man about to go on a journey, who called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them.** The word **For** which begins the sentence connects this parable with the prior parable. Since the prior parable was a kingdom parable then this one is also a kingdom parable. This means some comparison between things well-known and ordinary to life is being placed alongside some spiritual truth relative to the kingdom. The thing that was well-known was a master entrusting possessions to his slaves while leaving on an extensive journey. The spiritual truth is the importance of faithful service during the tribulation time because the exact day and hour of the King's return will be unknown. In this parable **a man was about to go on a journey.** This is similar to the parable in 24:45 where a master is also seen as gone on a journey but it also has differences. In that one, the master placed two slaves in charge over all the other slaves. In this one the master only has three slaves and he entrusts each with some responsibility. It says he **called his own slaves and entrusted his possessions to them.** The verb **entrust** is the key to understanding the parable. It means "to hand over" something of great personal interest. Embedded in this handing over is a responsibility to manage well. This master had great possessions and rather than putting all his eggs in one basket, so to speak, he dispensed varying amounts to his three slaves,

25:15, **To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.** The **talent** was a measure of weight, somewhere between 58 and 80 pounds. In verse 18 the last word "money" is the Greek word *αργυριον* which means "silver" and so the master entrusted varying amounts of silver to his three slaves. **To** the first **he gave five talents** of silver which is between 290 and 400 pounds of silver. At current silver prices that's between \$76,000 and \$105,000, a significant amount of money for the first slave to manage. But, according to the master's evaluation this amount was according to his ability to manage. **To** the second slave **he gave...two talents** of silver which is between 116 and 160 pounds of silver. At current silver prices that's between \$30,000 and \$42,000, a lesser but still significant amount of money

for the second slave to manage. But, according to the master's evaluation this amount was according to his ability to manage. **To the third he gave...one talent** of silver which is between 58 and 80 pounds of silver. That's between \$15,000 and \$21,000, a lesser but still significant amount of money for the third slave to manage. But, according to the master's evaluation this amount was according to his ability to manage. An important point is that there was an unequal distribution of silver but the distribution was according to the master's evaluation of the ability of each slave. And obviously the master expected a return on his money when he returned from the journey.

In 25:16 we come to the first slave and what he did with the silver. **Immediately the one who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and gained five more talents.** The word **immediately** indicates the slave's promptness in investing the silver, knowing that the longer the investment the better likelihood for a greater return. In the end he **gained five more talents**, thus doubling the master's silver allotted to him, a significant increase in the master's possessions.

In 25:17 we come to the second slave and what he did with the silver is stated to be the same. **In the same manner the one who had received the two talents gained two more.** Since he acted **in the same manner** then he too "immediately" invested the silver. He too reasoned that the longer the investment the better likelihood for a greater return. And he too doubled the master's silver allotted to him, from **two talents** to four talents, a significant return.

However, in 25:18 we come to the third slave and what he did with the silver is very different. The word **But** signifies a significant contrast. **But he who received the one talent went away, and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.** The verb **went away** seems significant when compared with the first and second who simply **went**. The words differ in the Greek, *πορευομαι* vs *απερχομαι*. The first seems to indicate going somewhere nearby whereas the second seems to indicate going a great distance. The ill intent of the third surfaces at this point. Then he **dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money**. Digging a **hole** was considered the securest location you could put money in the ancient world. It is the second indication that ill intent is involved, especially when we observe that it was **his master's money** and not his own. The question arises as to whether he was hoping to make it his own. Then we read that he **hid his master's money**. The word **hid** is the third indication that ill intent is the purpose of this third slave. In the end he went far away, dug a hole and hid someone else's money. It seems that this slave did not expect his master to return and so intended to make the money his own. These observations, though often overlooked, shed tremendous light on the identity of this third slave.

In 25:19, **Now after a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. The one who had received the five talents came up and brought five more talents, saying, 'Master, you entrusted five talents to me. See, I have gained five more talents.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the**

joy of your master. The first slave rose to the occasion of his responsibility and doubled the **five talents**, bringing the number to ten. He was eager to meet his **master** and show him what he had done with his master's silver. The **master** gave him a verbal commendation that involves three things, First, a simply **Well done, good and faithful slave**. The master's evaluation of him is that he was a **good** slave. The word *αγαθος* in this context means "having merit." The man had merit in the master's eyes because he had managed his possessions well. He is also said to be **faithful**. This word is the main word in the parable. It is used four times. It comes from the earlier parable in 24:45 and is the main point of this parable. It is the concept of "reliable, dependable." The first slave had shown himself dependable because he had managed his master's possessions well. Second, the master thus gave him charge over many things. **You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things**. For us \$150,000 wouldn't be just **a few things** but for this master it is virtually nothing as we will see. The master rewarded this slave's **faithfulness** by putting him **in charge of many things**. If \$150,000 is only **a few things** we can only imagine what **many things** must be to the master. In the kingdom he would manage many things. Though this passage does not directly relate to Christians it does in principle impact the reward ratio in the doctrine of rewards. It tells us that the investment we make here will be rewarded far beyond our wildest expectations in the kingdom to come. Therefore, we should make the most of every opportunity given us. Third, the master granted entrance to this slave. **Enter into the joy of your master**. He was given entrance into a joyous celebration of his **master**. What a delight!

In 25:22 we come to the second slave, **Also the one who had received the two talents came up and said, 'Master, you entrusted two talents to me. See, I have gained two more talents.'** His master said to him, **'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'** The word **also** indicates the second slave came in the same way as the first. The only difference is this slave had only **received...two talents** initially. But he doubled the money just the same as the first slave and so they began with a different portion but increased by the same proportion. As such this slave received the exact same verbal commendation as the first. Verse 23 is identical to verse 21. Both slaves had merit and dependability in the eyes of the master based on their management of His possessions. Both received a greater charge or responsibility in the kingdom. Both entered into a joyous celebration of their master. Wiersbe said, "It was not the *portion* but the *proportion* that made the difference."² Everything else is the same! This is also interesting for the doctrine of rewards as it shows that it is not how much we initially receive that makes the difference in the end but the proportion of increase...something to ponder...

Things change dramatically in 25:24 with the third slave and this is the individual that has caused so much contention. **And the one also who had received the one talent came up and said, 'Master, I know you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed. And I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what is yours. But his master answered and said to him, 'You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed. Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have**

received my money back with interest. Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.’ For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away. Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Notice in verse 24 that the third slave came to the master with a very different approach. Rather than an admission of the responsibility entrusted and an eagerness to show what he had done with the money he comes with a condemnation of the master. **Master, I know you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed.** It is doubtful that the master really was a hard man, despite the master repeating this formula in verse 26 because it seems in verse 27 that the master would have been pleased even with the trivial interest earned by putting the money in the bank. But this was the third slave’s perception of the master. He judged him as a hard man. That is a wrong perception of the master and hence he had a wrong response.

Verse 25 states his wrong response. **I was afraid, and went away and hid your talent in the ground.** He was **afraid** of the master. Neither of the two prior slaves showed any fear of the master. Both had a healthy evaluation and respect for their master. They understood that he was an exacting man and therefore action was needed but they did not view him as a hard man to fear in the sense of the third slave. They were excited to see him when he came and eager to show him their production.

The master’s response in verse 26 shows the futility of the third slave’s reasoning based on his flawed presupposition that the master was a hard man. **‘You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed. Then you ought to have put my money in the bank, and on my arrival I would have received my money back with interest.** In other words, on the basis of your own presupposition, which is a flawed one, but nevertheless, on that presupposition you still did not act accordingly. I’d like to make a major point here; unbelief cannot even function consistently within their own principles. This is so powerful and Francis Schaeffer saw this, as have others, and seized it with great prowess. Unbelief is internally inconsistent and because of that it is futile. It’s not a big point I want to go into now but it is a giant point and the master saw the inconsistency and seized it. If this is your presupposition, say A, that I’m a hard man, then logically B, you should have put the money in the bank, but this man did something inconsistent, C, hid it in the ground. The slave was condemned on the basis of his own standards. He ought to have done something else. The word **ought** signals a moral imperative. He failed.

Verse 28 describes the consequences. **Therefore take away the talent from him, and give it to the one who has the ten talents.’** This is interesting. The one **talent** was now added to the **ten talents** of the first slave so that now he had eleven. The explanation is verse 29, **For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.** There are winners and losers when Jesus comes back. The winners have everything and the losers have

nothing. But it's important to note that **everyone** at some point had something. All three of the slaves initially had been given something, some responsibility, but in the end only those who are good and faithful with what was given them or even only gained a little as if one put the money in the bank, will receive more so that they have **an abundance** and those who do not have, even what they did have **shall be taken away**.

Verse 30, **throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth**. The third slave did not enter into the joy of his master but was cast **into the outer darkness**. In that place there is no joyful celebration but **weeping and gnashing of teeth**. Before we have interpreted **the outer darkness** as outside the kingdom altogether and **weeping and gnashing of teeth** as a place of suffering and torment.

There is no question there is a contrast between the first two slaves and the third slave. The first two slaves were commended, given more responsibility and entered into the joy of the master. The third slave was condemned, lost everything and was cast into outer darkness and into suffering and torment. This is a contrast but what exactly is the contrast? Well, that's where lots of people go haywire. An important point to remember is that this is a parable and you don't build doctrine from parables. As Alva McClain warned years ago, "Even the most spiritual and well-taught among students of the Word may go astray here; and many an error has found its basis in some parabolic detail... It is never safe to use either a type or a parable to teach something not elsewhere taught directly and clearly in the Word of God." I think we would not have so much controversy on this parable if this principle was followed. It is not safe to originate doctrine in a parable based on some detail. There is always one major idea in a parable and the other details must support that one point and cannot be pressed into service to teach strange doctrines. Paul warned that in the last days of the Church people would swarm after strange doctrine. Don't be one of those people. Strange doctrines may sound interesting and tickle your ears but they are nothing more than myths. In terms of this parable I am amazed at how some of the details are picked out here and there and pressed into service while others are conveniently overlooked. To me it smacks of trying to find one's theology in the text rather than letting the text speak for itself.

With that precaution, in verse 14, who is the **man about to go on a journey**. It's the Lord Jesus Christ. He is going away on a journey. The nation Israel had rejected Him and He was going away until a generation of Israel repents. So where is He? The right hand of the Father. Who are **his slaves**? Individual Jews in the future tribulation. This is not Gentiles because they will be dealt with in the next parable under the sheep and the goats. What are the talents? All the working capital that God has given the Jews during the future tribulation. God is the author of life and He gifts all humans with a variety of resources to be used for His glory. This is true for both believers and unbelievers, although we would be quick to add that believers are given more resources at the moment of their spiritual birth. But we would not want to limit the talents. Constable said, "To limit the talents to spiritual gifts, natural abilities, the gospel, opportunities for service, money, or whatever, limits the scope of what Jesus probably intended."³ That is why I say the talents represent all the working capital that God

has given a person and as verse 15 suggests, this will vary from Jew to Jew in the future tribulation. And the fact that some will have more working capital means that they will have greater responsibility, but all have responsibility, whether believers or unbelievers in that time, because that is the nature of being human (Acts 17:24ff). Who's the first slave? He's a believing Jew who administers his faithful service well. Who's the second slave? Another believing Jew who had a lesser responsibility but who faithfully served in equal proportion to the first. The principle here is well-stated by Walvoord, "The principle that rewards are given according to faithfulness is illustrated well in this parable."⁴ Who's the third slave? Well, he's a Jew but let's look at the facts. He was given some working capital just like every human being. And just like every human being he was responsible to administer it well for the Lord. What did he do with his working capital? He took it to a faraway spot, dug a hole and hid it in the ground. What does this suggest? That he intended to keep it for himself. That he did not think that the master was coming back and therefore he would be able to keep the money for himself. Walvoord said, "...the wicked one-talent man likewise reasoned: *If my lord returns, I will be able to give him back his talent and cannot be accused of being a thief, but if he does not return, there will be no record that the money belongs to him, such as would be true if I deposited it in the bank, and then I will be able to use the money myself.*" His basic problem was that He did not believe Jesus was coming back. Is someone that does not believe Jesus is coming back a believer or an unbeliever? An unbeliever. I think that this is the crux of solving the problem. He did not want or think that Jesus was coming back to settle accounts. He did not believe that Jesus was the Messiah. What was his explanation for digging a hole and hiding the capital in verse 24? He thought the Lord was a hard master and He was afraid of Him. Is that a perspective of God of a believer or an unbeliever? An unbeliever. It's a misperception of who God is. This is exactly where all unbelievers are. They know God but they don't expect that Jesus is coming back to establish His kingdom. They are even afraid of God and their entire lives are organized around this fear of being exposed and found out by Him. This is a thoroughly penetrating look at the heart of an unbeliever. All that he has, all that he is, has been given to him by God but he does not use it for Him. And he hopes that He will never come back and he can use it all for himself. A more penetrating look at the lost human heart is hardly imaginable. To claim that the third slave is a true believer is to gloss these important details in the parable and to latch onto other less important details like he was a slave of the master, which can be explained much easier as we have. The Lord completely exposes the folly of his unbelief in verse 26ff by showing that he did not even act in accordance with his own principles, for if he had he would have at least deposited the assets in the bank. My thinking is that if he had at least deposited the talent in the bank it would have signified that the man was a believer but he would not because then he would have to admit that the assets he had were given to him by God and he did not want to admit that. He hid from God in the same way that Adam hid. Under no plausible scenario is this man a believer. Further, he is called wicked and lazy. He is cast into the outer darkness. He will not enter into the joy of the master. What is the joy of the master? It is the kingdom. He will not enter the kingdom. He will be in the same place as the evil Jewish leader in verse 51 where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. It is not only difficult to imagine that all of these evidences don't add up to saying this Jew is an unbeliever, but it is a travesty that interpreters have even imagined that he is an

unfaithful believer. Two or three other facts should be noted. Every parable beginning in 24:45ff grows out of the comparison in 24:37ff where the coming of the Son of Man in his kingdom is just like that of the Flood. The contrast at the Flood is between believers who were saved in the ark and unbelievers who were swept away in judgment. All of these parables ultimately share that same contrast. To say that this one does not involve an unbeliever is inconsistent with the other parables. To meet this inconsistency some of these expositors have said all of them are only about believers. I think the context completely demolishes that idea. There is no justification for bringing the Church and the rapture into this picture. The subject is the Second Coming. The audience in view are Jews and Gentiles. When Jesus returns all remaining Jews and Gentiles will be judged for entrance into the kingdom. All believers will enter the kingdom. Those with faithful service will be rewarded. Those who are unbelievers will not enter the kingdom. Other passages both in the OT and NT teach this same judgment at the Second Coming so we are on solid ground (e.g. Joel 3:2ff; Mal 4:1-3; Matt 21:43-44; 22:11-14;).

In conclusion, what can we learn? Just because these things relate to the tribulation time and the Church will not be here does not mean that there is no application for us. All Scripture is for us, though not all is directed to us. This is not to us but there are principles here for us. First, all people are given different amounts of responsibility. The three slaves were given five, two and one talent respectively. Some of us have been given more natural gifts than others and since we are believers we have been given greater or lesser spiritual gifts. Accordingly, we have greater or lesser responsibilities to fulfill. Teachers will face a stricter judgment than non-teachers. That is because of the nature of the word of God they are handling. But in the end, we are all responsible to use all the gifts God has given us for His glory, whether they are natural gifts like money, time and influence or spiritual gifts like insight, discernment or mercy. Even unbelievers are responsible to God to do something with what He has given them. The problem is that if they don't believe they will lose everything. Second, it is not the portion we receive that determines rewards but the proportion we use the portion. The slaves who received five and two talents both doubled and received the same reward. Some of us may have a much lesser portion but because of our faithfulness with the small portion will receive greater reward. So don't feel slighted if you don't think you are as gifted as someone else. That is not the issue in rewards. The issue is proportion of increase. Third, even the believer who does the very least with his gifts is still a believer. This is illustrated by the master's statement that he should have at least deposited the money in the bank. That at least would have yielded some return. On that point, it has been my suspicion for a long time that all believers will have something rewardable, even if it is miniscule and never seen by any other human. This does not mean anything like Lordship Salvation, the necessity of works to prove faith. It simply means that something will be there for all believers because the Lord is gracious and gives some increase, even if that increase is never seen by anyone else except Him. Ryrie suggested this when he said that at the least the thief on the cross had peace when he died. Peace is a fruit of the Spirit and rewardable. Fourth, the amount of reward is not proportional to the increase but many times greater. They were faithful with little but would be given much. You should know that the amount of increase for what you invest here and now will be far and away beyond your wildest imagination. We are here for ministry.

You are investing in people. All people have problems. All people need to be ministered to. I get reminded of this frequently. When someone explains their struggles it reminds me to pray and to keep teaching the word. At least while you are here listening to the word you are not focusing on your problem but on the Lord and that is ministry, it is getting our eyes off our problems and on Him who is the problem-solver. That is why it is so important to be in the word, it gets your focus on Him. Knowing that the rewards for faithfulness are so much greater than the investment in people's lives now should spur you on to invest in the things to come, to store up treasure in heaven. Fifth, just so the forest is not lost for the trees, the main teaching is living a faithful life with the gifts God has given you. Use them for His glory. Buy up the time. Use every moment. That is what you are here for. There is an urgency to my plea.

Pentecost said, and this could be possible, its slightly different than what I'm suggesting. But he said, "Christ in this parable revealed that the nation Israel, which had been set aside as God's servant (Exod. 19:5-6), received a responsibility for which they were answerable. In the Old Testament Israel was designed to be God's light to the Gentile world. The candelabra in the tabernacle was to be a perpetual reminder of Israel's function. Because Israel was faithless to that function, Isaiah promised that another Light would come to bring light to the Gentiles (Isa 60:1-3). Christ came as the "true light" (John 1:9; 8:12). God will set apart Israel again during the Tribulation, to be His light to the world (Rev 7:1-8). When Christ comes the second time, the nation will be judged to determine individual faithfulness to that appointment."⁵

¹ Stanley Toussaint, *Behold the King*, 286.

² Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 92.

³ Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Mt 25:15.

⁴ John F. Walvoord, *Thy Kingdom Come*, 198.

⁵ J Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, 409.