



Matthew 25:14-30

# TALENTS ON LOAN FROM GOD

*Readers of this parable [Matt 25:14-30] have traditionally interpreted the money as representing natural aptitudes or abilities, and so "talent" has come to be used in English in that transferred sense, which has completely eclipsed the original literal meaning. It is thus hard for the English reader to set aside the covert interpretation embodied in the very word "talent." However, the "talents" do not represent individual ability but are allocated on the basis of it. They represent not the natural gifts and aptitudes which everyone has, but the specific privileges and opportunities of the kingdom of heaven and the responsibilities they entail. The parable thus teaches that each disciple has God-given gifts and opportunities to be of service to their Lord, and these are not the same for everyone... The kingdom of heaven is not a "one-size-fits-all" economy. God's people are different, and he treats them differently: "much will be expected of those to whom much has been given" (Luke 12:48).*

—R. T. France

In the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24-25), Jesus addresses two questions:

### **When will the world end? And how will the world end? (24:3)**

In 24:4-31, Jesus describes how the world will end, detailing the future tribulation, prophesied in the OT as the *time of Jacob's trouble* (Jer. 30:7), the *day of the Lord* (Joel 3:1-16), and *Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> week* (9:27).

In 24:32-25:30, Jesus answers when the world will end—*no one knows except God* (24:36). Instead of setting dates, Jesus uses seven parables to teach His disciples how to live in light of His imminent return—which may be sooner than expected or later than expected.

### **THE SERVANTS' RESPONSIBILITY (25:14-15)**

- The lord represents \_\_\_\_\_.
- The servants represent \_\_\_\_\_.
- The talent was a unit of measure equal to about \_\_\_\_\_ lbs. of gold or silver. It was worth \_\_\_\_\_ denarii (i.e., days' wages).



*What great treasure has God given to each of us, in different measure?*

*Some Christians are privileged to live and work closely with others of like faith and are continually encouraged and exhorted by fellow believers. Other Christians, however, are the only believers in their families or even in their community. God knows intimately the abilities, gifts, opportunities, and circumstances of every person, and He graciously assigns responsibilities accordingly.*

—John MacArthur, Jr.

*Our gifts, our influence, our knowledge, our money, our health, our strength, our time, our senses, our reason, our intellect, our memory, our affections, our privileges...all, all our talents. All that we have is a loan from God. We are God's stewards. We are God's debtors. Let this thought sink deeply into our hearts.*

—J.C. Ryle (1816-1900)

*Wherever man may stand, whatever he may do, to wherever he may apply his hand...he is constantly standing before the face of God (coram deo), he is employed in the service of God.*

—Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920)

The lord assigned his servants the same overall task (cf. Luke 19:13) but different responsibilities based on their individual uniqueness. The lord knows them, loves them, and entrusts them with His abundant riches.

### THE SERVANTS' RESPONSE (25:16-18)

- **The 5/2 Talent Servants**
- **The 1 Talent Servant**

### THE LORD'S RETURN (25:19-25)

- **The 5/2 Talent Servants**

*"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." (25:21, 23)*

- **The 1 Talent Servant**

He sees the lord as a \_\_\_\_\_.

He sees the treasure as a \_\_\_\_\_.

He sees the lord's return as \_\_\_\_\_.

### THE LORD'S RETRIBUTION (25:26-30)

- The lord exposes the servant's true \_\_\_\_\_.
- The lord removes all of his \_\_\_\_\_ from the servant.
- The lord casts the servant into outer darkness (cf. 8:12; 22:13).

### PERSONAL APPLICATION

- I am to see all that I have as a great \_\_\_\_\_ from God.
- I am to live all of my life in thankful \_\_\_\_\_.

*The works of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they may be, do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks, but that all works are measured before God by faith alone.*

—Martin Luther (1483-1546)

**Faithful.** Greek, *pistos*, "reliable, trustworthy." Related to Hebrew, *aman*, "made firm, sure, lasting."

**Faithfulness.** *Being true to one's word or commitments, to what one has pledged to do or professes to believe.* (dictionary.com)

Faithfulness is Christ-centered devotion displayed in godly character, day by day, over time.

*A wife who is 85% faithful to her husband is not faithful at all. There is no such thing as part-time loyalty to Jesus Christ.*

—Vance Havner

*Who can really be faithful in great things if he has not learned to be faithful in the things of daily life?*

—Dietrich Bonhoeffer

*Faithfulness in little things is a big thing.* —Chrysostom (347-407)

**Hard.** Greek, *skleros*, "harsh, cruel, merciless, stern, intolerable."

*The 1-talent man did not believe his lord was coming back. Thus, it is clear that his basic problem was that of being an unbeliever, not simply being unfaithful in service.*

—John F. Walvoord

*His failure betrays his lack of love for his master which he masks by blaming his master and excusing himself. Only the wicked servant blames his master.* —D.A. Carson