

Yahweh, the Almighty God of Israel, is with us
"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet,
and shew my people their transgression,
and the house of Jacob their sins." Isaiah 58:1

The Parables

Study Prayerfully & Study Carefully

Talented Servants

Readings:

Matthew 25: 14-30 or Luke 19: 13-26

Introduction

The Hebrew **talent** was a measurement of weight. Authorities differ as to a talent's exact weight or worth. Suffice it to say that it was a considerable sum. Figuratively speaking **'talents'** are generally reckoned as being **inherent abilities** or possessions such as *intelligence, musical ability, wealth and property etc.* This use of the word **'talent'** is misleading because many believers, when examining themselves, conclude that they just do not have any talents. They have no **riches**, no great **mental powers**, no **musical ability** and no **recognizable advantages** in life, so they incorrectly conclude that these two parables about talents do not apply to them. *'These parables apply to talented people;'* they say *'but since I do not have any talents, they do not apply to me.'* This is a serious misunderstanding, because the fact is these parables apply to all believers. **Every servant in these parables was given at least one talent.** With that vital fact in mind let us look at the first parable.

1. The Traveler and His Goods

Matthew 25: 14: *"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them **his goods**.*
15. *And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to **every man** according to his **several ability**; and straightway took his journey."*

This verse is fairly well understood; the traveller is **Yeshua the Messiah** and the servants are his professed followers. But take note of that word **'goods.'** In other words the talents throughout this parable are **not inherent abilities** such as: intelligence, wealth, good appearance or musical skills. To be sure in normal conversation one may refer to these as talents. But in these parables **human ability** is not what is meant. The **'talents'** mentioned here are the Saviour's most valuable possessions called **'his goods,'** which he entrusts to his servants. What, you may well ask, are the Master's **'goods?'** I list a few:

- **Yahweh's Word:** The inspired writings of the prophets and the Apostles. The LORD God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel has entrusted us with His **Word**, the **HOLY BIBLE:** a possession of inestimable worth.
- **Yahweh's Law:** The commandments given through the patriarch Moses.
- **The Everlasting Gospel:** This is undoubtedly one of the Almighty's prize possessions.
- **Spiritual Gifts:** Apostleship, Prophecy, Healing, Helps, Tongues, etc.

- **Prayer:** The privilege, yea the **priceless right**, to call upon Him at any time and in any place.
- **Testimony:** The opportunity to testify to others about the saving power of the Almighty and His only begotten Son Yeshua.

These are the **‘talents’** in this parable. These are the **‘valuable goods’** which were delivered by the Master to his servants. To be sure some servants have more **‘goods’** than others; more knowledge of His Word and His law, more spiritual gifts, more opportunities to testify etc.; but the point to remember is that every servant has **at least one** of the above talents and possibly several more. Check yourself against the above list.

2. According to His Ability

Another point to remember is that every servant is given **‘according to his/her ability.’** Everyone knows that some people are more inherently able than others. Because we humans cannot accurately assess our own abilities (we usually have inflated opinions about ourselves) the Master has already decided who gets more talents and who gets less.

*And unto one he gave **five talents**, to another **two**, and to another **one**;
to **every man according to his several ability.** (verse 15)*

In other words there are two separate entities being described in these parables:

- **The Master's Goods:** His Word, His Law, The Everlasting Gospel, Spiritual Gifts, the right to Pray and Testify etc.
- **Each Servant's Natural Ability:** This is the God-given aptitude each servant possesses to make use of the talent/s mentioned above.

A servant's inherent abilities, whatever they may be - much or little - must not be confused with the Master's **goods**. They are two separate things. One the **goods** belongs to the Master, the other **inherent ability** belongs to His followers. This is an important point. **Remember it.**

3. Every Servant Received the Same

The second parable concerning talents and servant responsibility is found in the Gospel of Luke. In it you will notice that each servant receives exactly the same as the next - **one pound**.

Luke 19:

- 12: *“He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return.*
- 13: *And he called his ten servants, and delivered them **ten pounds**, and said unto them, Occupy till I come.*
- 14: *But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.*
- 15: *And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.*
- 16: *Then came the first, saying, Lord, **thy pound** hath gained ten pounds.*
- 17: *And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over **ten cities**.*
- 18: *And the second came, saying, Lord, **thy pound** hath gained five pounds.*
- 19: *And he said likewise to him, Be thou also over **five cities**.*
- 20: *And another came, saying, Lord, behold, here is **thy pound**, which I have kept laid up in a napkin:*
- 21: *For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.*
- 22: *And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou **wicked servant**. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow:*
- 23: *Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?*
- 24: *And he said unto them that stood by, Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten*

pounds.

25: (And they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds.)

26: For I say unto you, That unto every one which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him.”

In this parable each servant received exactly the same amount - **one pound**.

4. The Final Reckoning

What are these two parables concerning talents teaching us? The answer is: They are teaching us several vital lessons. I list them:

- The Master has entrusted **every one** of his servants with a portion of his goods: his **Holy Word**, his **Law**, the **Everlasting Gospel**, the **Privilege of Prayer** etc. These things are called the **Master's Goods**. Believers normally call them **'talents.'** It matters little, so long as we realize that they belong to the Master, not to us.
- The second point is that every servant has been given at least one talent, **one pound!** So dispel from your mind any notion that you are untalented. Because it's just not true. All believers are talented.
- The third point is, there is coming a **Day of Reckoning**, when every servant will need to give an account of what he/she has done with the Master's goods; that *'He might know how much **every man** had gained.'*
- That there will be **exceedingly generous rewards** for the diligent; far in excess of anything any believer can remotely imagine.

5. Misjudgment

The servant who did nothing with his Master's goods misjudged several things.

- Perhaps he thought that he was inherently as good, if not better, than the other servants. He had received, we are told, **'according to his ability;'** but he thought that he had deserved better. He was wrong.
- He thought that his Master was a hard man, reaping the benefits of other people's work. His words were: ***'I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed.'*** Again he was wrong.
- He thought that the best thing to do was to hide the single talent he had received and to return it to the Master. Perhaps he reckoned that he was being honest. But he was wrong again. He had mistaken his hurt pride and wickedness for honesty.

Oh what a series of tragic mistakes this servant made.

6. The Judgment

When the Master returns to earth you can be sure he will not take his talents back. They will remain ours for all time. They and the benefits they bring in their trail are forever ours. The Master's rewards to his servants in these two parables are worth noting.

The Good Servant

Matthew 25: 21: *“His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, **I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.**”*

Luke 19: 16: *“Then came the first, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds.*

*17: And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, **have thou authority over ten cities.***

18: And the second came, saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds.

*19: And he said likewise to him, **Be thou also over five cities.**”*

The Wicked Servant

It is quite impossible to imagine the grief of believers who are represented by this last servant. It will be tragic to say the least.

Matthew 25: 26: *“His lord answered and said unto him, Thou **wicked** and **slothful servant**, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed:
27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.
28: Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents.
29: For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.
30: **And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**”*

7. The Joy of the Lord

These parables point to an eternity of matchless joy for those servants who make good use of the talents they receive. They will enter the **Kingdom of Heaven** when their Master says: ***‘Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!’*** Are you going to be amongst them? Are you using the talents Yahweh has given you? Or are you burying them in the **world - the earth**? Make sure you are putting your talents to use. It matters little how many talents you have, or how few. The important thing is to **use them**. The Apostle Paul wrote shortly before his death:

2 Timothy 4: 6: *“For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.
7: **I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:**
8: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day:
and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.”*

May God grant that all of us here can echo those words and hear the Master say:

“Well done good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.”

AMEN!

**In the Son's Name — For the Father's glory.
Elder: Max W. Mader**

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