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FAITHFULNESS TO OPPORTUNITIES.

Leuke 18:11-27—July 28.

"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."—Matthew 25:23.

We are not to confound the Parable of the Pounds with the Parable of the Talents. They teach totally different lessons. In the case of the talents, the amount given each servant differed. In the case of the pounds, the amount was the same. This parable, therefore, deals with something common to all the class referred to.

Jesus and His disciples were approaching Jerusalem, where shortly He was to be crucified. The disciples, on the contrary, supposed that the Messianic Kingdom would immediately be established. This parable was intended to inform them that a long time would first elapse.

The kings of Palestine were appointed by the Roman Emperor. One of the Herods had recently gone to Rome, seeking appointment to a kingdom. Some who hated him sent a message to Rome, declaring their preference for another king. Jesus seized upon this circumstance as illustrating His own case. He was the Appointee for the Messianic Kingdom; but He would go to Heaven, and there the Heavenly Father, Emperor of the Universe, would invest Him with authority. Later He would return to earth and exercise dominion. This is exactly the presentation of prophecy.—Psalm 2:8.

"Occupy Till I Come."

During the Master's absence in Heaven, He has committed to His disciples, His servants, one pound each, with full liberty to use their best judgment in His service. At His return, these servants will be reckoned with, and rewarded in proportion to their zeal and efficiency.

The parable distinguishes between these consecrated servants of God and the world. It shows that nothing is committed to the masses, and that no judgment, reward, is made in their case at the Master's return. Only His servants will be held responsible for either reward or punishment in respect to their faithfulness.

In considering what is signified by the pound, we must keep in memory that the fulfillment must show some blessing or responsibility given alike to all of God's consecrated people. We can think of but one thing given alike to this class. Their talents and opportunities are very unlike—wealth, mental capacity, environment, etc. None of these varied talents belong to this Parable of the Pounds.

The pound represents justification. The one thing which the Redeemer does for all His followers is to justify them freely from all things, leaving them on exactly an equal footing; for justification makes up to each in proportion as he is short of perfection.

"Be Thou Faithful Unto Death."

All who now become Christ's followers must receive from the Lord, as a basis for this relationship, the pound—free forgiveness of sins—justification. Because they are thus alike qualified, the results will show the degree of loving zeal controlling each servant.

As in the parable one servant gained ten pounds, so such noble characters as St. Peter, St. John and others counted all earthly things as loss and dross, that they might be pleasing to their Master, the coming King. These, and such as these, who have gladly spent themselves in the Lord's service, will have the highest rewards. The servant who reported a gain of five pounds represents a class who will receive a less influential place in the Kingdom.

"These Mine Enemies—Slay Them."

The servant who hid his pound represents those who have entered into a covenant with the Lord to be His servants, who have received justification at His hands, but who have not complied with their agreement to sacrifice self in His service. This class is represented by the foolish virgins, who failed to enter in to the wedding. These will fall to be come members of the Bride class.

Not until the Unfaithful Steward shall have dealt with His servants at His Second Coming will Messiah begin to deal with the world, and especially His enemies. This statement is borne out by numerous Scriptures. The work of the Gospel Age is merely for the selection and testing of His servants, to determine which will be found worthy of association with Himself in the Kingdom.



"Occupy Until I Come."

"Meaty" Truths

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