

Holy Spirit Advantage Prophetic Ministries

Sabbath Sermon - October 20th, In the year of our Lord, 2012

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Passage Focus: Book of Luke - Chapter 19

Many of the prevailing words of Wisdom that Christ imputed or expressed to his followers when He was among us in the flesh, had much to do with how one should consider the importance of heavenly things over earthly things. Jesus encountered many rich men when He ministered unto the people in what we know as ancient Israel. At least a few of the people he preached to thought that they could gain access into the kingdom of God by way of money, or benevolent works. One man did falter when Jesus said that he should give away all that he had and follow Him. Jesus Christ was quick to correct them all on the matter of earthly riches, and riches in heaven. Furthermore, he made certain to help such people understand that the root of all evil is money; thus can be said about the state of the temple in Jesus' time. Abominations such as money-changing became the norm, and in some cases sons prioritized paying tribute to the Pharisees, over fulfilling their duties to their own parents.

In the beginning of Luke Chapter 19 we see a man named Zacchaeus make haste to find Jesus. Zacchaeus was considered to be a wealthy man; however, in this portion of the scriptures he was in pursuit of the opportunity to find Jesus, so that he could invite Him into his home. After locating Jesus, who was passing through Jericho at the time, this well to do man offered Jesus hospice at his abode.

Jesus consented to the offer and went with the man. Yet, when some saw that Jesus had allowed himself to be entreated by Zachhaeus some thought ill of it, saying that Jesus had had gone to be a guest in a sinful man's house.

When they arrived at his home Zacchaeus explained to Jesus how he was a very generous man and sought not to take advantage of others. He went on to say that if he'd ever done so, he would surely restore whatever he'd taken - fourfold. Then Jesus blessed him and told a parable.

In this parable Jesus spoke of 10 men who were bequeathed with certain funds by their master who was a nobleman. Although the nobleman was despised and many wished that he would not rule over them, he returned to his kingdom after embarking on a journey. Upon his return he commanded that his servants should show him how they handled the money that he'd given them. Some of these men had made much gain by investing their share in profitable or lucrative ventures. One of the men increased his share by ten fold of what he'd been given. Each man that made a good investment received a reward for their efforts; however there was one man who made no investment and no gains at all with his portion. This particular man said,

"Here is thy money which I kept for you in a napkin. I was afraid to invest it because you are a man who reaps what he has not sown and takes what he did not build."

The nobleman was upset when he heard these words and replied.

"I will use your own words to judge you, wicked servant. You knew that I am a man that takes what he does not build and reaps what he did not sow, so why didn't you give my money to the bank so that I could earn interest on it, at least?"

The nobleman said to them that stood in front of him.

"Take the share from the servant and give it to the one that multiplied his money ten times, making much profit. Unto everyone which hath shall be given; and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him."

Finally the nobleman made a proclamation that all the servants that murmured against him - wanting that he should cease to rule over the land should be brought before him and slain.

After he departed from Zachhaeus's house Jesus went up into Jerusalem and traveled close to Bethphage and Bethany. At that point he sent two of his disciples to find a specific colt which he knew would be tied to a fence at a certain place, at a certain time. Jesus rode the colt into Jerusalem and the people rejoiced when they saw him ride down from the Mount of Olives. It was at this point that Jesus was to fulfill the saying by David - "Out of the mouth of babes and suckling thou hast perfected praise."

The Pharisees heard of these tidings and came to rebuke Jesus. However, Jesus lamented and told them of a time when the temple would cease to exist. Thenceforth he went into the Temple and cast out all the money-changers by whipping them with reeds. Jesus proclaimed that such had made his father's house a den of thieves instead of a place of worship. Thereafter, he taught daily in the temple but the chief priests, scribes, and the chief of the temple sought to destroy him.

What can we learn from this portion of the scriptures?

When one examines it closely, they can certainly see how this parable resembles the process the Coming of Jesus Christ (First and Second coming), redemption, and judgment after the rapture. Like Jesus Christ, the nobleman in the parable was rejected by the people and they did murmur against Him. Jesus Christ's resurrection can be likened unto how the nobleman in the story left off to take possession of a kingdom (to prepare a place or a way). Jesus Christ always said that He would go to prepare a place in His Father's house. The Nobleman's subjects did not desire him to return when he went off to take hold of this kingdom. This is much like how many people in the world want nothing to do with Jesus Christ, His message, or His kingdom.

When he returned to his own country the nobleman heard word of the people and their talk of mutiny - to remove him from being their king. This is the same thing that we find all over the world and in America especially. Many seek to remove the worship of God from modern society and if they could

have their way, no one would ever utter the name of Jesus Christ. Witnessing to people has become dangerous in regards to certain laws that consider it to be an act of violence or genocide. It could also be construed as an act of harassment in certain courts.

In the face of what seemed to be a desire to have Him abdicate his seat of leadership the nobleman judged the ten servants he'd charged with certain talents or monies. The money that was given to the servants can be equated with the talents that we are all given, by the grace of God. In our lives we are expected to use these talents for the glory of the Kingdom of God. Yet at some point there will be a reckoning - when what we have done shall be recounted, so that we may be commended or reproached. Christ was certainly speaking of himself and how he would be judge over all on judgment day, when he recounted how the disobedient servants would be sentenced by the nobleman in the parable.

It is very clear that the parable which Jesus recounted with Zachhaeus was prophetic in regards to His resurrection and how he would later return to judge all of mankind. Though the connection summarizes the events of several generations of Israel, those who had been set to take charge over Israel had been given their instructions when God freed his people from the rule of Pharaoh, and brought them unto Mount Sinai. There He called them His people and the Hebrews agreed, serving Him as God.

Now the key thing that we must understand is that much was required of the Hebrews when God assembled them as a nation. However as generations passed the people became rebellious and were embittered against God, because they saw that the prosperity of other nations exceeded their own, in the ways that they lusted after: gold, cattle, and other material possessions. So, they disobeyed their Lord and eventually ceased to serve Him as their forefathers did.

In time the Lord grew tired of their disobedience, so he disbanded Israel for a certain time. With the plan to reconcile Himself with his people the Lord sent His only begotten heir to represent Him before Israel. This Heir is Jesus, and He came to gather the Lord's people unto Himself, so that they could be reconciled unto God and know that God wants all men to be saved through His Son.

The nobleman's journey and return symbolizes Jesus' Resurrection and Second Coming. When

considering the parable we can equate the money which was given to the nobleman's servant with skills, talents, or any gift that God gives to those whom He will. However, Jesus saw that no increase had been made with what the servants of God had been given. Instead of righteousness there was an abundance of sin, and instead of holiness there was corruption in the land. Furthermore, the Pharisees, chief priests and scribes had desecrated the sacrifices by imposing money-changing and other traditions that were not instituted by God. So, let us not confuse "gaining increase" with how the money-changers took advantage of the congregation in the temple; such practices were certainly a symptom of corruption. No, by considering the idea of *increase* we should think more on the spiritual, and in this particular chapter we can see that those who controlled the temple were not interested in serving God, so they served themselves instead.

For this purpose Jesus lamented over the city of Jerusalem and prophesied of its destruction. The servants had ruined His father's land - God's land. Therefore we see that where much had been given to the scribes, chief priests, and Pharisees, much was required (*increase* or a return on the Lord's investment for raising up the nation of Israel). Much like the servant in the parable who was found lacking in his works for earning increase, the representatives of God in Jerusalem chose to do nothing of spiritual gain with what they were given. This is what Jesus saw when he recounted their works several times in the Books of Matthew, Luke, Mark and John. Therefore, God sent His heir to give the ultimate gift to the Gentiles, so that they may do well with what the first children of the Kingdom had squandered. Jesus Christ shall judge all according to their works. In Christ's Second Coming we shall see the same course of events play out like they occurred at the end of Jesus' parable regarding the nobleman; the Lord's heir shall come and requite all who had rejected what they were given and reward those who dealt well with their gifts in God. The rebellious servant shall also be rewarded for their works with damnation.

Glory be to the Father, Son and the Holy Ghost.

Amen.