

## 1. Jesus Reigns and is Returning

## a. Goes to a Far Country

- i. The “farness” indicates a long trip
- ii. Therefore, a long time to return

- 1. This is why Jesus gives this parable: “because some thought the kingdom was going to come immediately”
- 2. It is interesting that the apostles still didn’t get this until after Jesus ascended and the Spirit was poured out at Pentecost (see Acts 1:6)

## b. To Receive a Kingdom for Himself

- i. He received the kingdom in the “far country”
- ii. It is already His in that far country

- 1. Matt 26:64 – you will see Jesus seated at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven *from now on*
- 2. Acts 7:55 – Stephen saw Jesus standing at the right hand of God
- 3. Heb 12:2 – Jesus’ trials and victory find him seated on the throne
- 4. Phil 2:9-11 – God exalted him and gave Him a name above all names that every knee should bow and tongue confess that Jesus is Lord

## c. to Return to abolish His enemies and purify His people

- i. the consummation of his kingdom is “not yet”
- ii. Jesus is returning to reign over all the renewed and restored heavens and earth

## 2. To Reject Jesus as Absolute Sovereign in This “In-Between” Time is to Make Oneself an Enemy of Christ

## a. “were hating him” (imperfect)

- i. This is a description of character, not merely a single event
- ii. They were continually hating that He rules, rejecting him, standing in opposition to him

b. They reject Jesus *as ruler over them*

- i. Sent a delegation to file complaint (Archaleus)
- ii. They did not want to be ruled by him (Ps 2)
- iii. These are those who are actively and persistently *opposed* to Jesus *as King over them*, having any dominion or claim on all of their lives
  - 1. John 19:19 – “We have no king but Caesar”
  - 2. There are many who accept a “kind” of Jesus that is tamable, without claims of deity or sovereignty or commanding moral imperatives different than their own.
  - 3. This is a rejection of Jesus, a hatred, a delegation of numbers trying to throw off his chains

c. Were slaughtered before the Nobleman-King upon his return *as enemies* of the King

- i. The reality is the Jesus is returning and will punish his enemies for their hatred and rejection of him
  - 1. Hell is not overseen by Satan, rather Satan is imprisoned there as well
  - 2. God is the bringer of death and destruction upon his enemies
- ii. Rejection of Jesus as King is not inconsequential, but cosmic barbaric violence against the most holy one, treason of the highest order, not merely ignorance
- iii. There is hope NOW, for God is more loving and gracious than you can even imagine, for he has moved heaven to rescue rebels, but he is ALSO just and will bring about terrible retribution for those who do not repent and entrust themselves to King Jesus

### 3. Jesus Calls His Followers to be Faithful to Labor for His Kingdom in the “In-Between” Time

#### a. Nobleman entrusted and empowered 10 servants to “do business” in his name

- i. In the “in-between time” of his leaving and his return, there are things to be done
  - 1. It is also necessary to note, that while Jesus is away *physically*, He has given us the Holy Spirit in this endeavor to empower and transform us to do works which we could never do apart from Him
  - 2. Thus, it is a hopeful and expectant calling to faithfulness for those who love the King
- ii. These things are primarily rooted in “bringing profit” to the honor of the King
  - 1. That is, to invest His resources in the flourishing of His kingdom
  - 2. To do it His way, for His honor, in His name, with His gifts
- iii. Hearing the gospel is a stewardship, an entrustment with the heralded message that Jesus is the King over all things
  - 1. Thus, each steward was given the same mina, not varying amounts
  - 2. Therefore, this mina does not represent giftedness, or talents, or abilities, but rather represents the gospel heard and entrusted
    - a. Every person within the Church, whether one is truly regenerate and believing or not, has been given the gospel as the means to produce honor for Jesus
    - b. The giving of the mina is NOT salvation, however, but rather the hearing of the gospel and the expectation of receiving with the joy to put it to work

#### b. Two Faithful Servants

- i. One succeeded astonishingly well
  - 1. He calls the initial mina “your mina”
  - 2. He knows to whom the power/resource belongs
    - a. “The reward of duty well done is duty given” (old Jewish saying)
    - b. Faithful in little, faithful in much (Luke 16:10, concerning use of wealth)
    - c. It is also true that the word “reward” is never used here.
      - i. The joy of the Master leads to more opportunities to honor the King joyfully
      - ii. Yet, even this is a gift of the King and not an expectation of reward

3. Faithful use and profit of the King's resources gives firm confidence in the King's approval and delight
  - a. The King responds with a joyful exclamation, "Excellent!"
- ii. One succeeded well
  1. He is also humble: "your mina produced..."
  2. Humble faithfulness receives the honor of service in His kingdom
  3. The joy of practicing your instrument, laboring to produce glorious music, is the joy of producing the glorious music, the reward for all the labor
- iii. Both of these servants were faithful because they loved the King and sought His great renown
  1. They considered Him worthy of such profit
  2. "Your mina has profited..."
  3. They were utterly and gloriously concerned with the furthering of the King's great name and great Kingdom and great honor, etc.
    - a. They were not comparing, but rejoicing that they could honor the King with whatever profit that *his mina* had produced
    - b. They were not concerned with cities or rulings, but with honoring the King, and this is the honorable and faithful service
- c. Faithless Servant
  - i. "Another" (of a different kind) didn't do anything for him
    1. This word, "another", means another of a different kind, not another of the same kind
  - ii. Not a true disciple
    1. I don't believe that this servant is a believer, because he didn't love the King, nor did He seek to profit the King, i.e. glorify Him
      - a. He was only concerned with Himself
      - b. He did not want to bring the King more, or to build his kingdom, but was only concerned about his own well-being
      - c. In the light of all that Jesus has been teaching about true discipleship, true faith, absolute dependence, this guy wasn't consistent with any of it
    2. It is also true that he really didn't know the King
      - a. He claimed to believe that he was harsh, but he didn't act accordingly to that claim
        - i. That is Jesus' meaning when he questions why he didn't go to a money lender
      - b. The implication is that this servant is not telling the truth, but has rather proven himself to be lazy and apathetic about the King's desires
        - i. Keeping the mina in a handkerchief was a careless way of caring for the mina, and was known in the ANE as being so

- ii. Thus, this man was not as frightened (although he is now that the King returned), but rather doubted that the King was returning at all, most likely, but kept the coin carelessly as "insurance"
- c. "He who has nothing..."
  - i. Jesus shows that this man never actually "had" the gospel, never received it for the valuable truth that it is

3. There are many who claim to be Christian, but are not

- a. John 8:31-32 – "If you abide in my Word, you are truly my disciples..."
  - i. There are true disciples, those whose hearts are submitted to Jesus, entrusting their lives to Him, and whose lives are submitted to His Word for all things
  - ii. There are, then, untrue disciples, who claim to love Christ but who reject some or all of His Word as their absolute authority
- b. 1 Cor 5:11 – "If anyone takes the name, 'brother,' but lives in sexual immorality, greed, etc...have nothing to do with him."
  - i. A brother's faith is proven by his desire to honor and please Jesus by abiding in His Word, i.e. obeying His words
  - ii. "You are my friends if you do what I command..." (John 14:15)
  - iii. There are those who claim to be friends of Jesus, but Jesus knows His friends by the kind of faith which obeys
- c. The faith of a true disciple is the *kind* of faith which entrusts all to Jesus, which is defined and proven by acts consistent with His Word
  - i. James 2:24 – not by works without faith, but neither by a "faith" which doesn't work
  - ii. Faith + Works = Justification (Unbiblical)
  - iii. Faith = Justification (Unbiblical)
  - iv. Faith = Justification + Works (Biblical)

iii. This one's mina was taken and given to the faithful one

- 1. He lost everything, even what he thought that he had
- 2. He never "had" it
- 3. Faithless use (unuse) and no profit from the King's resources gives no confidence in the King's approval or delight

4. Remember the Glorious King Whom We Serve, That We Might Love Him Faithfully

- a. Jesus desires, commands, and empowers faithfulness
  - i. Interestingly, there is no category of servant who invested the gift of the King, yet lost it all.
  - ii. I take this to mean that the gift of the king is so *kingly*, that if invested faithfully, it cannot be lost
  - iii. This is very heartening, for all we must do is trust the King's grace enough to faithfully put His gift to work, and it produces the profit

1. "Your mina produced..."
- b. The faith that truly depends upon Him, loves Him and seeks His honor and His reputation, labors for His honor *because He is worthy!*
  - i. Rev 1:4-6
    1. As the one who loves us and freed us by His own blood...
    2. He has made us a kingdom of priests *to our God*
  - ii. Thus, obedience to His commands is not mere law, but love
    1. Heb 12:28-29
    2. "Let us be grateful for we have received a kingdom that is unshakeable...remembering that our God is a consuming fire."
  - iii. It is *worship*, the highest expression of love and affection, seeking to honor, please, and delight the one whom you are affectionately committed
    1. Eph 3:20-21; Jud 1:24-25;
- c. This faithfulness is not about the amount of profit gained, but it is about the faithfulness to invest His resources for His gain
  - i. Thus, there is not a comparing of assets between the servants, but "your mina produced"
  - ii. There is only the desire to be faithful to invest "your mina" for his purposes
  - iii. Jesus gives this parable in order *to encourage* the disciples to remain faithful during the long wait until he returns
- d. So, what is so beautiful about God that makes Jesus Christ first before everything else?
  - i. He loves with the unique redemptive love of GRACE – THE GOD WHO DIES FOR HIS PEOPLE AND IS RAISED UP TO RULE THEM FOREVER AS THE KINDRED KING

Stepping into the kingdom only takes one step, but it must be taken with a face set like flint and with eyes fixed on the future glory and the promise of the presence of the returning Christ. For our hope is not set upon the things of this world, as beautiful and as good as they may be, but are set into the far country, where our inheritance is being kept by the power of God, guarded, to be revealed upon His return that all things might work to the praise of His glory and honor on that day. We live expectantly for His return, going about laboring for the business of the glorious King. We enter the kingdom no other way, for there is no other king.

We entrust ourselves to a King who died to bring us into His home. The stories are true. We have returning to us, in a place prepared by Jesus Christ, a kingdom that never ends, with no suffering or sorrow or pain or sickness or death. No separation and no sin. That is a glorious future of grace. And we receive this kingdom because the noble Son of God, with all the richness of His glory, laid aside His noble rights and picked up my cross to bear the price of all evil and horror and injustice, being crucified according to the sovereign plan of the Father who loves His chosen ones, you, so that you and I might worship Him in the fullness of joy forever and ever bringing great glory and honor to His name. We follow Him in this walk, our crosses come before our crowns, our labors before our glory. Yet, the stories are true. Let us remember the King who calls us to this stewardship is the same King who was tortured and died for our sins, that this

costly love might fix our eyes keenly upon His glorious face. Then, we, too, shall set our faces like flint in this in-between time that we might be faithful to the calling which we have received and never shrink back at his return.