

The Parable of the Talents - Matthew 25:14-30

References:

- New Albany book pp 171-178
- Dawn book pp 53-55
- [R5386 "The Parable of the Talents"](#)
- [Tabernacle Shadows p 60](#)

1. In your own words, give a summary of the parable Jesus gave, as recorded in Matthew 25:14-30
 - a. Who are the four characters of the parable?
 - b. What descriptions does Jesus give of each character?
2. Matthew 25:14 records Jesus beginning this parable with the word "For." He intended the lesson of this parable to build on the lesson(s) of the previous parable – the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, recorded in Matthew 25:1-13.
 - a. When we discussed the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, what class did we interpret the wise virgins to represent, and what class did we interpret the foolish virgins to represent?
 - b. In your own words, what differentiating distinction between the two classes was Jesus emphasizing in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins?
 - c. Matthew 25:13 serves as a transitional verse between the two parables. In your own words, how does this verse convey the lesson/distinction of question (b) above?
3. Given the above considerations, what classes might each of the four characters antitypically represent?
 - a. If they are the same classes as the parable of the wise and foolish virgins, what similarities and what differences might you see in the aspects/characteristics of each group that Jesus was emphasizing in each of the parables?

Similarities between Matthew 25:1-13 and Matthew 25:14-30	Differences between Matthew 25:1-13 and Matthew 25:14-30
Example: In both parables, people are entrusted with resources. In the first parable, the virgins are entrusted with lamps and oil. In the second parable, the servants are entrusted with talents.	Example: There are two distinct groups in the first parable – the wise virgins and the foolish virgins. In the second parable, there are two groups again – the profitable servants and the unprofitable servant, but there are two subgroups of profitable servants (the servant given five talents and the servant given 2 talents).

4. In Matthew 25:20-21 and Matthew 25:22-23, the servant who was responsible for five talents receives the exact same reward as the servant for two talents.
- What point was Jesus trying to make by including this detail in his parable?
 - Can you think of other scriptures in the Bible that also convey this lesson?

Scripture	Supporting Notes

5. Pages 55-56 of the Dawn book is a reprinting of the subsection of [R5386 titled "The Parable of the Talents."](#) In this reprint, Brother Russell labels the two classes of servants as "faithful" and "unfaithful. "
- In Matthew 25:21 and 23, the servants responsible for the five talents and two talents are called "good and faithful" by their lord.
 - In Matthew 25:26, the servant responsible for the one talent is called "wicked and slothful." In verse 30, the same servant is called "unprofitable."
 - Thus, in the parable, none of the servants are called faithful or unfaithful. However, how do the characteristics and actions of the two groups of servants correlate to faithfulness and unfaithfulness? What scriptures can you provide to support your position?
6. In [Tabernacle Shadows page 60](#), Brother Russell applies Hebrews 2:15 to the group of the Lord's followers who do not fully execute their vows of consecration due to **fear**.
- How did the unprofitable servant express his fear in Matthew 25:24-25?
 - What is the contrast in behavior we see in the profitable servants?
 - What lesson(s) regarding fear and/or the use of our talents are suggested by this contrast?
7. What happens to the unprofitable servant at the end of the parable (Matthew 25:28-30)? What antitypical application might this judgement represent, and what application does this judgement **NOT** antitypically represent?
8. Is there any specific portion of this parable that resonates with you personally that you might want to share or offer a short testimony about, whether as an encouragement or as a warning?

From [R5386 "The Parable of the Talents"](#)

THE PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

In the parable of the Talents the Lord represented a man as going into a far country and leaving the talents in the care of his stewards. They were entrusted with these goods in a very special way. Thus it is with us. Each of us is entrusted with certain talents. At the time of consecration we gave our all to God. Having given all that we have and are to the Lord, He accepts our offering and appoints us His stewards over these goods – these things that we had. This would include our all – time, influence, various talents – for business, music, or what not. All these are the Master's after we have made consecration. We belong to Christ. He is the Head, He is Lord. But He commits to us as His faithful servants all these talents, to use for Him. And He says, "Occupy till I come."

This parable applies to all the Church all the way down this Age. Each servant is to be diligent in occupying the position of steward until he is released from it. The steward who would use his position merely to glorify himself would not be a faithful steward. The faithful steward would be the one who would desire to so use the talents as to increase the Master's wealth, the Master's glory.

The Lord gave an illustration of the faithful and unfaithful stewards at His Second Coming – before He will deal at all with the subjects of the Kingdom – mankind in general. He showed how He will call these servants to whom He has given the talents; for He has promised them that He will make them rulers with Him in His Kingdom, if they are faithful in the use of their talents. In the parable, the one who received five talents doubled them, and made them ten. The one who had received two talents made them four. But the one who had received one talent gave the excuse that he had buried it in the earth, because afraid. And he was declared to be an unfaithful servant.

This servant was not sent to eternal torment, but the talent was taken from him. It was of his own volition that he became a steward. Seeing that he had become a steward, he deserved to be punished because he did not use that which his lord had entrusted to him. That talent belonged to his lord.

An unfaithful steward will be punished for his unfaithfulness. Better that we should not enter into the Lord's service at all than that we should enter and then hold back, neglect our opportunities. If the one who had the five talents had held back, his simply doing nothing would have made him responsible. In showing how he dealt with the one who had the one talent, the Lord is emphasizing the matter the more. These talents represent our opportunities for service according to our several abilities. The one who had less ability was given less opportunity than the one who had more ability.

So with us. Some may have handicaps of various kinds. Some have more talents, or abilities; some have less. We cannot use talents we do not possess. It is required of a man that he be found faithful with what he has. This matter of using all the talents calls up the thought of full, complete loyalty of heart devotion. We should not say, I am doing better than somebody else, as the man with five talents might have thought had he used but three or four of them. But the one who is using his talents to the full capacity is specially pleasing to the Lord. Those who have two talents and use them faithfully receive the same commendation as the one who has five talents and uses the five.

From [Tabernacle Shadows p 60](#)

In this type of the two goats, both classes of those who *covenant* to become dead with Christ are represented: those who do really follow in his footsteps, as he hath set us an example, and those who, “through *fear of* [this] *death* are all their lifetime subject to bondage.” ([Heb. 2:15](#)) The first class is the “Lord’s goat,” the second is the “scape-goat.” Both of these classes of goats, as we shall see, will have a part in the atonement *work* – in bringing the world into complete harmony with God and his Law, when this “Day of Atonement,” the Gospel age, is ended. But only the first class, “the Lord’s goat,” who follow the Leader, are a part of the “*sin-offering*,” and ultimately members of his glorified Body.