



April 19, 2020

F260 Bible Reading Plan

Week 15 (4/13/20)

1 Samuel 1-2
1 Samuel 3, 8
1 Samuel 9-10
1 Samuel 13-14
1 Samuel 15-16

Week 16 (4/20/20)

1 Samuel 17-18
1 Samuel 19-20
1 Samuel 21-22
Psalm 22, 1 Samuel 24-25:1
1 Samuel 28;31

SCRIPTURE

Luke 19:11-27

¹¹ While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once. ¹² He said: "A man of noble birth went to a distant country to have himself appointed king and then to return. ¹³ So he called ten of his servants and gave them ten minas.^[a] 'Put this money to work,' he said, 'until I come back.'

¹⁴ "But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'

¹⁵ "He was made king, however, and returned home. Then he sent for the servants to whom he had given the money, in order to find out what they had gained with it.

¹⁶ "The first one came and said, 'Sir, your mina has earned ten more.'

¹⁷ "'Well done, my good servant!' his master replied. 'Because you have been trustworthy in a very small matter, take charge of ten cities.'

¹⁸ “The second came and said, ‘Sir, your mina has earned five more.’

¹⁹ “His master answered, ‘You take charge of five cities.’

²⁰ “Then another servant came and said, ‘Sir, here is your mina; I have kept it laid away in a piece of cloth. ²¹ I was afraid of you, because you are a hard man. You take out what you did not put in and reap what you did not sow.’

²² “His master replied, ‘I will judge you by your own words, you wicked servant! You knew, did you, that I am a hard man, taking out what I did not put in, and reaping what I did not sow? ²³ Why then didn’t you put my money on deposit, so that when I came back, I could have collected it with interest?’

²⁴ “Then he said to those standing by, ‘Take his mina away from him and give it to the one who has ten minas.’

²⁵ “‘Sir,’ they said, ‘he already has ten!’

²⁶ “He replied, ‘I tell you that to everyone who has, more will be given, but as for the one who has nothing, even what they have will be taken away. ²⁷ But those enemies of mine who did not want me to be king over them—bring them here and kill them in front of me.’”

COMMENTARY

19:11. Having made His way up the dangerous winding mountain road from Jericho, Jesus came to the entrance of Jerusalem. The crowds were following Him and listening to His teaching. They made it clear to Jesus that they thought the moment had arrived. It was time for Him to bring in the kingdom. Evidently, they thought He would enter Jerusalem as a conquering king, ready to throw out the Roman government and take charge. He could use the miraculous powers He had shown and call on God to send the angelic army, and a son of David would once more occupy the throne of David. Jesus sought to dash such expectations. He used His normal method: telling a parable.

19:12-14. In the parable a man traveled to another country to be crowned king of the country where he had been living. To test their responsibility, the king gave each of his ten slaves one mina. It took sixty minas to make a talent. The man entrusted almost nothing from his standpoint to the slaves, but each of them had over three months’ pay. Would the slaves wait idly while the master was gone, living on the unexpected windfall? Or would they obey the master and put the money to use and earn a profit?

The man seeking the kingship had to deal with other people besides the slaves of his household. He had citizens of the kingdom. These people were not slaves. Rather, they claimed power and influence in the kingdom. They had resources of their own, independent of this king. They used these resources to send their own delegation to the

far country, trying to prevent his appointment as king. They did not want this man as king.

Certainly, behind such an image stood the Pharisees and other religious leaders of Israel. God sent His Messiah to be their King. They rejected Messiah and even collaborated with enemy government officials to prevent Him from gaining the kingship. They did not realize that Jesus never intended to establish an earthly kingship. Rather, God used their opposition to Jesus to achieve His plan of redeeming the world through the blood of His Son.

19:15. The opposition failed. The man became king in the far country and returned to rule. This again parallels the kingdom of God. Jesus journeyed to heaven after His death. There the resurrected Lord sits on the throne at God's right hand. He is king, but His opponents cannot see that. They think they have won the victory. Instead, Jesus is on His way back. He is coming. One day His kingdom will be evident to all the world. Then what will happen? The story tells us. He summons His slaves to whom He has entrusted responsibility. He wants to know how they have done with His resources.

19:16-19. The first slave passed the examination with flying colors. He had earned one thousand percent on his investment. Now the king rewarded him with even more responsibility and power. The least on earth, a slave, became powerful and great because he was a faithful steward, responsible over all he received. The second slave made only five hundred percent profit. Again the master rewarded him with more authority and responsibility.

The Greek word usually translated faithful in the New Testament, has two grammatical usages. First, in the passive sense, the word means "to be faithful, trustworthy, dependable" and thus "to inspire trust or faith." Paul used the term most often in this sense. He referred to God as faithful (1 Cor. 1:9), Christ's servants as faithful (4:2), himself as faithful (1 Tim. 1:12), and the gospel message as faithful (Titus 1:9). Second, in the active sense, the word refers to "the act of trusting or believing." For example Paul stated that Abraham had faith (Gal. 3:9), meaning he believed God. On the other hand, Jesus rebuked Thomas because he did not have faith (John 20:27), meaning he did not believe Jesus. With regard to people, then, the word describes both the act of being faithful and the act of believing. Further, 3 John 5 commends Gaius for showing his faith by what he did. The verse shows that to do a faithful work is to do what is worthy of a faithful person. This seems to be Jesus' challenge to the disciples in Luke 19:17.

19:20-21. The story does not follow each of the original ten. It simply illustrates the two extremes: great faithfulness and utter failure. The third slave exemplifies the latter. He knew the king's habits and feared what would happen to him if he should lose his money. So he gave the king back what he had received. But this was not faithful obedience. This was not responsibility. This was lazy, fearful idleness. He did not put his money to work as the king ordered (v. 13).

Verse 21 makes interpretation of the parable difficult. If God or Jesus is seen as the returning king, then this description hardly fits. It is a caricature of the king who so graciously gave the money before he left and who so richly rewarded some of his slaves when he returned. This is the only servant who attempted to describe the king, and his description was wrong. He represents the worst side of the Jewish religion of his day—a side that thought it had to obey God at any cost and in the smallest detail of the law.

Otherwise, God would become the angry judge, throw the book at them, and punish them beyond imagination. This is the natural outcome of legalistic religion. It changes God from a gracious redeemer who gives laws because He knows the life that is best for us to a mean tyrant who forces us to obey laws for His own pleasure and cheats us out of what rightfully belongs to us. Legalistic religion concentrates so heavily on the religious system that it gets out of touch with the God it claims to represent.

19:22-23. The king took the disobedient slave's words at face value. This is not to say the king accepted such a description. What monarch would publicly admit to such a character profile? The king simply says, "If this is the system he is seeking to follow and this is the god he is trying to please, then he will be judged on that system." That system makes even more demands for obedience. Why did he not follow the command of the king rather than retreating in fear? If nothing else, let someone else do the work. Just put the money in the bank and receive common interest on it. Then he would have had something to give the master.

The slave's excuse makes no sense. Similarly, the judgment scene in Matthew 25 shows people totally unaware of how false their religious conceptions are and how wrong their expectations of heavenly reward. The religious system Jesus found in place in Israel did not work. It was not based on intelligent reasoning, consistent actions, or a true understanding of God. The people who practiced it faced judgment.

19:24. The judgment involved taking away what the slave had. The most faithful of the slaves got even more reward and responsibility. The evil slave was left with nothing. His whole system disintegrated. What he thought he controlled, he lost. So the Jewish religious system would face terrible judgment in A.D. 70 with the destruction of the temple, but the individuals would face ultimate judgment when the Messiah returned in all His glory.

19:25. The crowd, or perhaps the other slaves, saw this as unfair. Why take away what little the one had to give to the one who had enough? This represents the response of legalism, a system built on eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth, absolute justice. Jesus' kingdom represented an entirely different type of system. It was a system of grace to the faithful and trusting, but judgment for those who trusted themselves rather than leaning on God's grace.

19:26. This summarizes the story in proverbial form (see 8:18). Jesus divided people into two classes: those who have and those who do not. The latter class includes very religious people who think they know God and believe they have the only way to gain

His rewards. In reality, they do not know God at all. They are evil. They will lose the religious power and responsibility they have and will face the king's final judgment.

19:27. The class of those who do not have includes another group. These not only think they have the way to God all locked up, but they actively oppose Jesus. Here Jesus spoke directly to the Pharisees and scribes who would soon lead Him to Pilate and Calvary. They were opposing Him. They did not want His type of relationship to God. They refused to acknowledge Him as king. Eternal slaughter and death awaited them. Active opposition to God brings even greater punishment than refusal to do things God's way.

MAIN POINT

When we take action on what we've been given, we enter into the joy of the Lord.

INTRODUCTION

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What is the worst New Year's resolution you've ever made? How did it turn out?

Why do you think so many people struggle with following through on their resolutions?

Why do you think we struggle with following through on the commitments we make in our walk with Christ?

Even if we have the best of intentions, those intentions don't mean anything until they are put into action. In the Parable of the Ten Minas, each of the slaves started out with good intentions, but only the slaves who used the talents to bear fruit followed through on those good intentions. This parable shows us that we only really enter into the kind of joy God has in store for us when we put intentions into action.

UNDERSTANDING

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

- Ask a volunteer to Read Luke 19:11-27.

Jesus began His parable by explaining that a certain nobleman went to a far country to receive kingly authority. We understand Jesus was using the parable to refer to Himself as King of the kingdom. The far country related both to Jesus' death, resurrection, and ascension and to His being King in God's kingdom. Through this parable, Jesus

communicated to His followers that there would be a delay in the fulfillment of the kingdom of God, and that there is a right way to live as disciples until He returns.

What is Jesus saying about His kingdom? What is He saying about His expectations for kingdom people?

What do the nobleman's actions in verses 13 teach us about God and how He interacts with us?

What do the minas represent in this parable?

A minas was the equivalent of about three month's wages. The parable is intended to highlight how God graciously blesses us with talents, resources and gifts that He intends for us to use to glorify Him. The parable also warned the listeners not to expect an immediate consummation of the kingdom and taught that until that time believers would be held accountable for their stewardship of their lives. Understanding that the slaves represent believers in Christ makes clear the application for disciples then and now. Jesus was about to leave His followers and return to His Father in heaven. One day He would return, but in the meantime His followers must serve Him faithfully with all He has entrusted to them.

What is the meaning of verses 14 and 27? Who are the enemies?

How did each of the slaves handle the minas the master gave to them?

How does this parable speak to the misconception in verse 11 that Christ's kingdom was to appear immediately?

Jesus reigns as King now at the Father's right hand, but one day He will return and make His kingdom evident to all the world. At that time Jesus will require an accounting from His disciples. Verse 27 pictures the judgment awaiting those described in verse 14, people who reject Jesus. Jesus concluded His parable by revealing the consequences of faithfulness and unfaithfulness.

The third slave claimed to know the nobleman (vv. 20-22) Based on his actions, do you think he knew the nobleman as well as he said? Why or why not?

Do you think it's common for people to view God as the third slave viewed the nobleman?

How might the way we see God influence whether or not we invest our lives in His kingdom?

The biggest opportunity the slave squandered was to know the master. People are what is most important to God, and He wants you to invest in your relationship with Him.

What earthly rewards might believers experience when they faithfully serve God?

What heavenly rewards might believers experience in the future as a result of having faithfully served God?

What talents and resources do you think Jesus has given you? How do you feel about the way you have invested them? Are you using them to bring Him glory, or do you need Him to repurpose them?

APPLICATION

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

In what area of your life do you most struggle to live intentionally for Christ?

What is one thing you know God has entrusted you with? How does love require you to use what God has given you?

The third slave claimed he stowed away his minas because he feared his master. What fears have kept you from faithfulness? How might you move past those fears and begin living intentionally for Christ's kingdom?

Regardless of the talents or resources we have, we all have been entrusted with the gospel. What does Jesus expect us to do with the gospel? How can you use your gifts to meet this expectation?

PRAYER

Thank God for the blessings and resources we have to glorify Him and to advance His kingdom. Pray for God's forgiveness for when we squander our opportunities and selfishly use our God-given resources. Pray that we would be good and faithful stewards and that we would experience the joy that comes with living intentionally for Him.