

LESSON FOUR

PARABLES (Continued)

A. MANY PARABLES TAUGHT TRUTHS CONCERNING OUR LORD'S RETURN:

Jesus taught many parables which illustrated and placed emphasis upon many truths concerning His return. As we read these parables we note the importance of the following truths:

1. There is a definite certainty regarding His return;
2. No man knows the exact time - He may return at any hour;
3. Jesus exhorted His disciples over and over to be ready;
4. Certain things are necessary in order to be ready:
 - a. Oil in the vessel;
 - b. Lamps trimmed and burning;
 - c. Wedding garment;
5. A definite order of events was taught:
 - a. Rapture of the church;
 - b. Judgment of works and faithfulness when rewards will be handed out;
 - c. Judgment of the nations when he sets up his kingdom.

B. PARABLES CONCERNING OUR LORD'S RETURN:

1. THE GREAT SUPPER:

- a. Scriptural Reference: Luke 14:15-24.
- b. The Story: A man prepared a banquet and invited many guests. When these guests made excuses, he had his servants bring in people from off the street. When there was still room, he told his servants to compel people to come from the street until his house was filled with guests.
- c. Truth Taught by the Parable: The entire world is invited to be present at the marriage supper of the Lamb. Similar excuses are being made today but none of them who make excuses will be at the marriage supper of the Lamb.

2. THE WEDDING GARMENT:

- a. Scriptural Reference: Matthew 22:1-14.
- b. The Story: A king made a marriage supper for his son. When those who were bidden to the wedding refused to come, he sent other servants telling them that everything was ready. The servants were ridiculed and abused. The king then sent his army and destroyed these people and their city. The servants then went out into the streets and furnished the wedding with guests. However, when the king came he found a man without a wedding garment. When this guest was asked how he entered without a wedding garment, he was speechless. He then was bound and thrown out into the darkness.

- c. Truth Taught by the Parable: Those who preach the gospel today are often ignored, persecuted and even killed. However, certain destruction and judgment will overtake all that refuse to accept the invitation to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. In this parable emphasis is placed upon the necessity of having on the wedding garment. All guests must be clothed with righteousness with garments without spot or wrinkle (Revelation 19:7-9).

3. MAN TAKING A LONG JOURNEY:

- a. Scriptural Reference: Mark 13:34-37.
- b. The Story: A man took a far journey but before leaving he gave each servant his work to do and he commanded the porter to watch for his return. This man warned the porter against sleeping. He might return in any one of the four watches during the night and it would indeed be serious if he found the porter sleeping.
- c. Truth Taught by this Parable: Jesus likened Himself to this man who went on a far journey but might return at any moment. The night was divided into four watches:

even	- sunset to 9:00 P.M.	- Pentecost to Dark Ages
midnight	- 9:00 P.M. to midnight	- Dark Ages
cockcrowing	- midnight to 3:00 A.M.	- Reformation Period
morning	- 3:00 A.M. to sunrise	- Latter Rain Outpouring.

Looking at the history of the church Jesus did not come during the first three watches. Therefore He will come in the morning. When Jesus comes it will be morning (the breaking of the day) for the church, but it will be midnight for the world.

4. THE FIG TREE:

- a. Scriptural References: Matthew 24:32-33 & Mark 13:28-29.
- b. The Story: The fig tree bears its fruit before its foliage. The leaves come out in late spring, which is a certain sign that summer, is near.
- c. Truth Taught by this Parable: Jesus refers to the fig tree as a type of the Jewish nation. Summer is referred to as the time of the consummation of the age and the time for the return of Jesus. Therefore, the truth taught here is that when the nation of Israel is restored to its power in Palestine and Jerusalem, it is a certain sign of nearness of our Lord's return.

5. WATCHFUL SERVANTS:

- a. Scriptural Reference: Luke 12:35-40.
- b. The Story: The servants were on constant watch for their master who was to return from a wedding. They were watching that they might open the door immediately at the knock of their master. When the master returned and found the servants faithfully watching, he has them sit down to a meal, and he serves them. Thus they are rewarded.

- c. Truth Taught by the Parable: The church must be on a constant watch for the return of Jesus. No one knows exactly when he will return. If we are found ready and watching, we shall be able to sit down with Him at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

6. THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS:

- a. Scriptural Reference: Matthew 25:1-13.
- b. The Story: There were ten virgins who were going forth to meet the bridegroom. They all had lamps but only five had extra oil. These were the wise virgins. While they waited, they slept, but at midnight they heard the cry, "*The bridegroom cometh.*" They all arose and trimmed their lamps, but the lamps of the foolish virgins had gone out. They tried to borrow oil from the wise virgins but were refused. They had to go to buy oil for themselves but when they returned, the bridegroom had already returned and the door was shut. When they knocked and cried out, the reply came from within, "*I know you not.*"
- c. Truth Taught by the Parable: Virgins are pure and chaste. They represent Christians who have repented and been washed in the blood. The lamps represent their professions. The wise virgins have been filled with the Holy Ghost while the foolish virgins are those professing believers without the Holy Ghost. The truth taught here is that it is absolutely necessary to have the Holy Ghost to be ready for the Rapture and to enter into the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. The reply of the Bridegroom, "*I know you not*" is of great significance and should be given careful study.

7. THE TALENTS:

- a. Scriptural Reference: Matthew 25:14-30.
- b. The Story: According to eastern custom a certain man before leaving for a far country divided his money among his servants according to their ability. This man gave one servant five talents (about \$5,000.00), another servant two talents (about \$2,000.00) and a third servant one talent. When he returned the first two servants had each doubled their money and each received the same words of commendation. The third servant could have done the same but instead he had buried the talent. This unprofitable servant was spoken of as being wicked and slothful and was cast out into outer darkness.
- c. Truth Taught by this Parable: The lesson taught here is that rewards will be given for faithfulness, not according to the number of talents but rather according to faithfulness. The servant with the one talent could have received the same reward. The unprofitable servant will be judged and be cast into hell fire.

8. THE POUNDS:

- a. Scriptural Reference: Luke 19:11-27.
- b. The Story: This parable was given in the home of Zacchaeus in Jericho. The story is similar to that of the talents except in this case every man received the same amount, which was one pound each (about \$10.00). When the master returned the servants had shown a profit of different degrees and were rewarded accordingly. The unprofitable servant had wrapped his pound in a napkin and lost it because of his unprofitableness.

- c. Truth Taught by this Parable: The lesson taught here is very similar to that taught by the Parable of the Talents. Rewards are given in direct proportion to faithfulness. The exhortation directed to us is: "Occupy until I come." We should faithfully be living every moment as we would like to be found when Jesus returns.

9. **LABORERS HIRED FOR THE VINEYARD:**

- a. Scriptural Reference: Matthew 20:1-16.
- b. The Story: A man who owned a vineyard hired laborers early in the morning, at nine o'clock, noon, at three o'clock and also at five o'clock. He had agreed to pay the laborers who had worked all day a penny. However, he paid each of the workmen a penny. The workmen who had labored all day grumbled but the master claimed it was his right to pay a penny to all.
- c. Truth Taught by the Parable: The truth taught here is similar to that taught by the parables of the Talents and Pounds. Pay was not given on length of service or amount of work accomplished but rather on faithfulness.

C. OTHER PARABLES CONCERNING OUR LORD'S RETURN:

- 1. SHEEP AND THE GOATS: Matthew 25:31-46.
- 2. VINEYARD LEFT TO HUSBANDMEN: Matthew 21:33-46.

LESSON FOUR

SELF HELP TEST

A. State FOUR truths that are taught by the parables which concern our Lord's return:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

B. Name TEN parables which concern our Lord's return. For each one give the Scriptural Reference where it is found.

<u>NAME:</u>	<u>SCRIPTURE:</u>
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
6. _____	_____
7. _____	_____
8. _____	_____
9. _____	_____
10. _____	_____

C By referring to these parables show that the Holy Ghost is essential to being ready for the Rapture of the Church.

D. By reference to these parables show that rewards will be handed out according to faithfulness.