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God, through His Son Jesus, provides eternal grace for our failures and human limitations.

Matthew 25.

(2013)

The Bible not only reveals God's eternal plans purposes and promises

But also shows how you can know God for yourself.

Teach it, don't demand it.

Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man. As to such I neither claim special knowledge or perfect understanding.

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Matthew 25.

Topics.

- The parable of the Kingdom of Heaven and the ten virgins.
- The parable of the Kingdom of God and the talents.
- The parable of the sheep and the goats.

The Previous Chapter: in the previous chapter Jesus told the disciples; the temple will be destroyed and that the beginning of birth pains will be wars, famines and earthquakes. He said many will say, I am the Christ; many will fall away and that the Gospel will be proclaimed to the world. He spoke of the abomination of desolation; a corpse being gathered wherever vaulters are; the coming of the Son of man being as be lighting; the powers of the heavens being shaken; the lesson of the fig tree; the days of Noah; one being taken and another left; of faithful and wise servants and of weeping and gnashing of teeth.

NOTE: for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

The Parable of the Kingdom of Heaven and the Ten Virgins.

Matthew 25:1-13 ----- ¹"Then the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. ²Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. ³For when the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them, ⁴but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. ⁵As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept. ⁶But at midnight there was a cry, 'Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.' ⁷Then all those virgins rose and trimmed their lamps. ⁸And the foolish said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.' ⁹But the wise answered, saying, 'Since there will not be enough for us and for you, go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves.' ¹⁰And while they were going to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast, and the door was shut. ¹¹Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, lord, open to us.' ¹²But he answered, 'Truly, I say to you, I do not know you.' ¹³Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

The kingdom of heaven: is the same as the Kingdom of God, it refers to God's spiritual and invisible Kingdom existing now by faith in the hearts and minds of those who believe and is manifested through faithful brothers and sisters sharing their faith and displaying the fruits of the Spirit as they go about their daily lives and collectively manifested through the global body of Christ (the church).

For further detail see the title: -

- The Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God (at the end of this study).

Lamps: are symbols of deeds that evidence a person's faith in the Lord, the wise had an abundance of outward deeds that evidenced their inward faith in the Lord, whereas the foolish had nothing.

Oil: is a symbol of the Holy Spirit, the wise not only had the indwelling Holy Spirit, but it was outwardly manifested by the fruits of the Spirit (i.e. kindness, grace, mercy, etc.), toward others.

They were full of gratitude, passion and excitement regarding their spiritual life and relationship with the Lord, whereas the foolish were inwardly lacking in the fruits of the Spirit and any passion for the things of the Lord, thus they had nothing that outwardly evidenced their relationship to Christ or their inward faith.

Flasks: are a symbol of abundance, the wise had extra containers of oil for their lamps, symbolising that they were full of the Holy Spirit, the Lord's word and the fruits of the Spirit.

The Wise and the Foolish Servants.

Oil was the fuel that kept the flame burning so the lamp would give out light, therefore the oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit and God's word and by extension prayer, fellowship, reading the Bible, sharing ones faith etc., thus the wise were full of these things.

They were committed to the things that God considers important and passionate about living their lives before God and with the Lord Jesus Christ. Whereas the foolish confessed to believed, but were indifferent to the things that God considers important. They in contrast to the wise showed no care, interest or concern for God's Kingdom and had no interest in building their lives on the Lord Jesus Christ and the things of God.

In the following parable of the, "Sheep and the Goats" (v34-40) the Lord tells his disciples when they give food, drink and clothing to the poor and treat those they don't know with kindness and care for the sick and visit those who are in prison because of their faith in the Lord it is the same as if they were doing it for the Lord himself (v40) and he will say to them "Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world" (34).

From this parable we can conclude that the wise servants were treating other humans with respect and decency especially the poor and those who were less fortunate than themselves. Thus, they were living according to the Royal law, love your neighbour as yourself, meaning do not deliberately do harm to other humans. No sane person deliberately does things to inflict pain on themselves, loving others as you love yourself is not about feeling some warm and fuzzy emotion towards others, it is about not hurting others as you would not hurt yourself.

The thing God hates the most is when we do harm to another person, physically, financially, sexually, emotionally, verbally or spiritually and the thing God loves the most is when we do-good to others. From this we can be confident the wise servants were others centred while the foolish were self-centred and self-serving.

Go rather to the Dealers and Buy for Yourselves.

The expression, "Go rather to the dealers and buy for yourselves" does not mean people can earn their salvation by self effort and good deeds. Jesus is pointing out that no-one is able to redeem another person to eternal life. The words, buy for yourselves carries the idea of finding the Lord yourself and entering into an intimate relationship with him it means that a person must seek ask and knock for themselves and not simply rely on others to carry them or do all the labouring for them.

Many people confess to believe in the Lord, but live their lives are indifferent to his word and the things that are important to him. Though the foolish confessed to believe in the Lord, they lived their lives solely focused on and for themselves; their own pleasure and their own gain and did nothing to affect or extend the Kingdom of God in any way.

The principal: of the parable is to always be passionate for the Lord Jesus Christ with a constant desire and goal to live a life that honours his heavenly Father and brings a good testimony to his name so that we will be ready for his return, because no-one knows when that day will be.

The Parable of the Kingdom of God and the Talents.

Matthew 25:14-30 -- ¹⁴"For it (the kingdom of God) (v1) will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. ¹⁵To one he gave five talents to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. ¹⁶He who had received

the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. ¹⁷So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. ¹⁸But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. ¹⁹Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. ²⁰And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.' ²¹His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' ²²And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.' ²³His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' ²⁴He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, ²⁵so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.' ²⁶But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sowed and gather where I scattered no seed? ²⁷Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. ²⁸So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. ²⁹For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. ³⁰And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

The Lord commends and accepts into his Kingdom the servants with the five and the servant with the two talents, but the servant with the one talent the Lord called a wicked servant.

Gifts freely given: all who have received the goodness and kindness of God's salvation that is available to all through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace have been granted forgiveness of sins, fellowship with God and eternal life these spiritual gifts should be freely given away. If a person who confesses to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ does nothing with these gifts and continues to live a lifestyle that does not involve the Lord in any way it is most likely they will be rejected when Christ comes to separate out of his eternal Kingdom the wise and the foolish servants, the sheep and the goats.

This is because the confession of their inward faith has no outward reality to it, like the religious leaders of Jesus era the chief priests, Pharisees and scribes their faith was lip service totally devoid of any reality or relationship with the God they confessed to follow.

Each according to their ability: the master only gave each according to their ability, he did not expect the servants to do what they were not capable of doing, he gave each a talent according to what they were capable of doing, the Lord does not expect those who can not publicly speak to be great orators, or those who lacked the gift of hospitality to have their homes full of people, etc. The master only expected his servants to be faithful and do what they were capable of doing in their daily lives, for many this would simply mean being a faithful disciple of Christ and a good testimony to his name as they go about the mundane things of everyday life.

Investing the Lord's money with the bankers: the master told the servant who hid his talent that he should have at least invested his talent with the bank and it would have increased. When money is invested in a bank nothing more needs to be done for the investment to increase in value. The parable is teaching that God does not require much from those who belong to Christ, but their must be something however small that evidences a persons passion, gratefulness and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

They hid their talent in the ground: this means they did absolutely nothing with their salvation or anything to add to the Kingdom of God, but lived their lives totally for themselves, their own pleasure and their own gain. Like Esau who sold his birthright they placed no value on what the Lord Jesus Christ had done for them, they showed no gratitude for what it cost God to redeem them and the extreme pain and suffering Jesus endured to save them.

You wicked and slothful servant: the Lord's statement, "You wicked and slothful servant" clearly shows us that there are wicked servants in the Kingdom of God that is existing now by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

I reap and gather where I scattered no seed: means the Lord's Kingdom is extended by others throughout history evangelising and testifying to the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Give the talent to him who has ten talents: those who live for the Lord will be given abundant life (meaning joy, contentment, peace etc.), not only now in this life, but when the Lord Jesus Christ returns and rewards all those who have been faithful to him with eternal life, but to those who solely live their life for their own pleasure, their own gain and for the things of this world will at death lose everything they have gained and their own life for all eternity.

Cast into outer darkness: (weeping and Gnashing of teeth) the entire context of this chapter is about wise and good servants and foolish and wicked servants, what they have done with their lives and how they will be rewarded at the judgment seat of Christ therefore the weeping and gnashing of teeth refers to the judgment seat of Christ where the foolish and wicked servants of the King will be told they are not accepted into the Kingdom.

There are a number of verses that use the expression, "Outer darkness" it carries the idea of being the extreme opposite to light, it implies that people instead of being in the light will be in darkness, meaning someplace outside the Kingdom of God and separated from God.

Maybe outer darkness refers to those who thought they would be in the kingdom, but instead find themselves dwelling amongst the nations describe in the following verses that are pictured living on earth during the millennial age of Christ, but apart from him and outside of the majestic New city of Jerusalem.

Outer darkness is certainly an apt description of living outside of the New and Holy city of Jerusalem when its light is contrasted to the darkness of the nations. There will be enormous grief and sorrow because these particular servants of the Kingdom thought they would be accepted into the glorious city of the New Jerusalem to be established on earth with the Lord Jesus Christ as its King, but instead of being accepted are rejected.

- They (those who overcame) sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, "Great and amazing are your deeds, O Lord God the Almighty! Just and true are your ways, *O King of the nations!*" ⁴Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify your name? For you alone are holy. *All nations will come* and worship you, for your righteous acts have been revealed" (Rev. 15:3-4).
- I saw no temple in the city (of Jerusalem's), for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴By its (Jerusalem's) light will *the nations walk*, and the *kings of the earth* will bring their glory into it, ²⁵and its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. ²⁶They (*kings of the earth*) will bring into it the glory and the honor *of the nations* (Rev. 21:24-26).
- Through the middle of the street of the city (Jerusalem); also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the *healing of the nations* (Rev. 22:2).
- Night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever (Rev. 22:5).

Summary: in this parable of the talents Jesus is teaching, that if a person is truly saved to eternal life there should be something in their lives that outwardly evidences their inward faith in the Lord.

The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats.

Matthew 25:31-46 ---- ³¹"When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' ⁴⁰And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.' ⁴¹"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴²For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' ⁴⁶And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

When Christ comes as King of kings and Lord of lords there are two groups of people the sheep and the goats that will be judged by the Lord.

It is difficult to determine whether this group of verses applies to those in God's Kingdom from every nation or to the nations of the world in general since the Scriptures teach that that Jesus will say: -

- Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness (Matt 7:21-23).

These verses clearly show that there will be a separation of the righteous (the sheep) and the wicked (the goats) at the judgment seat of Christ, but when Christ is ruling over the nations as King of kings and Lord of lords with the faithful who have been gathered to him to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice joy and peace on earth during his glorious millennial reign there is no-doubt he will separate the wicked (the goats) from the just (the sheep).

Because of this I personally feel that rather than try to discern which of the two scenario's the Lord had in mind is to apply the verses to both scenario's since the principle underlying what Jesus is saying fits both the judgment of Christ and the judgment of the nations.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

This parable highlights the following two things: -

1. Those who the Lord commends (the sheep) are not even aware that what they are doing is pleasing the Lord. These servants of the Lord are not doing-good deeds to earn salvation or to maintain it. They are treating others with respect, decency, compassion, mercy and grace and because they have the fruits of the Spirit dwelling in their hearts and therefore have a natural desire to help the poor and the less fortunate when it is in their power to do so which manifest the life and love of God and of Christ in their heart.
2. The wicked servants (the goats) in this context are not those who have incorrect doctrine, but those who have no compassion and show no mercy toward those in the body of Christ, they obviously have a knowledge of the Gospel and of God's Kingdom because they are servants of God, but they are most likely in the Kingdom for their own selfish ambition and financial gain, power and for the sense of being important or famous.

The principal: thought underlying this parable is; when those who belong to the Lord do something good for a brother or sister in Christ or for those outside of God's Kingdom it is the same as if they are doing it for the Lord himself.

Depart into Eternal Fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels (v41).

Those who showed no concern for the poor, the less fortunate and especially their brothers and sisters in Christ will be cast into eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels (eternal fire speaks of total destruction, i.e. eternal extinction).

For further information see the titles: -

- Hell or the Grave (Final destination of Humans).
- Lake of Fire.

Both titles are found in, Death (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God.

The phrase the Kingdom of heaven does not mean that the Kingdom is in heaven, Matthew is the only writer that uses this term, both Mark and Luke say the Kingdom of God, the two titles refer to the same Kingdom which is God's Kingdom on earth. The Gospel of the Kingdom of God was the message the apostles were to proclaim, the Kingdom at hand refers to the present spiritual Kingdom of faith, grace and conscience that began with the death and resurrection of Christ.

The message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ is the Gospel of the Kingdom. Jesus resurrection was the beginning of the New Covenant and totally destroyed the Old Testament Covenant by doing away with the need for the temple, the Levitical priesthood, a human high priest, the holy days and sacrifices because everything now needed for salvation is in Christ.

Prior to the resurrection no-one, not even the apostles fully understood that Jesus was going to be put to death and rise again they basically preached only the Kingdom of God on earth, because they never really understood that Jesus was going to be its eternal King through the cross, but after the resurrection the apostles focus is on the King of the Kingdom rather than the actual Kingdom. This is because whoever belongs to the King will inherit the Kingdom. Jesus the King is the golden and royal path into the Kingdom, while the Kingdom is the inheritance of those who belong to the King.

The kingdom of God has existed, in different forms and shapes throughout history. It existed in the Old Testament under the Judges, David and Solomon and many other kings of Israel. It was not a perfect Kingdom and never has been. Jesus was not the King and many of the kings that did reign were far from godly nevertheless it was God's Kingdom because God was the King.

Today there is an invisible and spiritual Kingdom of God existing through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in the hearts and minds of those who believe which has outwardly taken on a different shape and form to that of the Old Testament Kingdom. When Christ returns in glory as King of kings and Lord of lords to establish God's literal and visible Kingdom on earth God's Kingdom will take on a different shape again, but even this is not the final and ultimate shape of the Kingdom as it will once again change its appearance at the Great White Throne judgment when God descends to earth and is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its royal and majestic fullness.

This shines a brilliant spotlight on the truth that it is the King who determines whose Kingdom it is and not the shape or form of it. Even though all four Kingdoms mentioned have been different in shape, form and appearance they are all called God's Kingdom simply because God and the Lord Jesus Christ is their King whether the Kingdom is seen or unseen.

For further information see the title: -

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).

When the Son of Man comes in His Glory (Matt 25:31).

When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him he will sit on his glorious throne and all the nations will be gathered before him and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. This event will take place when Christ returns as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his millennial reign.

In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth.

Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God.

The book of Revelation states: -

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that: -

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done.

Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev 20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory.

For further information see titles: -

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

End