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The Minas

Luke 19:11-27

During the later days of His ministry on earth, Jesus told two parables involving the testing and development of men by giving them responsibilities to be carried out in their manager's absence. Both stories were addressed mostly to the Lord's followers, with reference to their receiving and conveying the gospel until His return. The story in this lesson includes also a warning against supposing that Jesus would become an earthly king immediately. It also sounds a loud alarm to those who would resist His ultimate rule.

***Special note:** Some students think that Jesus was referring to the circumstances that surrounded Archelaus' coming to power in Judea some thirty years earlier, following the death of his father, Herod the Great. If this is true, Jericho provided a perfect setting for Jesus' story, for it was a favorite residence of Archelaus. Herod had provided in his will that this son should be king in Judea after him. Archelaus could be a king, however, in the Roman Empire only by appointment from Augustus Caesar and the senate. He went to Rome to get his appointment, but he was so fervently hated by the Jews that they arranged to send fifty of their fellow countrymen to Rome to oppose his appeal. Archelaus' opponents were partly successful. He was made ethnarch, not king, over Judea, Samaria, and Idumea, only one-half as much territory as his father had ruled.*

1. Where was Jesus when He told this parable? (See v. 1) What event had just transpired as Jesus began to tell this parable? (See v. 2-10). In spite of Jesus' clear statement of the purpose of His coming (v. 10), what were people expecting? (See v. 11). Can you tell any more about this expectation?

2. If Jesus was not referring to the situation explained above (the author of this lesson thinks not), who was the “certain nobleman” (v. 12) in this parable? In what way was this parable to be fulfilled? (See Acts 2:32-33; Matthew 28:18; Daniel 7:13-14)

3. Each servant was given a mina (a weight of silver equal to about 3 months’ wages). What was he to do with it?

4. The statement in verse 14 sounds very much like the situation involving Archelaus. In what way, however, would it apply to Jesus? (See John 1:11; 15:18; 19:21)

5. Read v. 15. At this point, Jesus’ story differs sharply from the account of Archelaus. Jesus’ nobleman was wholly successful in securing his appointment. He returned as king. Archelaus was not made king. What was the purpose of calling the servants in before the king? What meaning is there in this for us?

6. Read v. 16-19. What can be said about the accomplishments of the first and second slaves’ return on the king’s money? What did they each receive for their efforts? How might this apply to us? (See 2 Corinthians 4:17).

7. Parts of this parable are similar in meaning to the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:15ff). The lesson for us is probably the same: We have a responsibility to use the gifts/talents God has given to us and get an increase with them. List three talents you believe God has given you.

a.

b.

c.

What are you currently doing with these minas/talents that will produce a return on the King's investment in you?

8. The third servant returned his mina to the king, having preserved it by keeping it wrapped up in a hanky (v. 20-21). What excuse did he offer for his use/misuse of it? Did the Master accept his excuse? Where is the line between fear and laziness? Does it matter? (See Proverbs 26:13-14) Is there something keeping you from using the minas God has given you?

9. Quite literally, the king took from the poor and gave to the rich, so much so that his attendants protested. (See v. 24-26) This is a bit different than we are prone to think. What is the sobering lesson here for us?

10. What happened to the enemies who refused his reign over them? (See v. 27). What does this mean to those who reject Christ's rule today?

The Greatest Stories Ever Told

Some questions to ponder:

How can we conquer the fearfulness that tends to hinder our service to Christ?

To what extent is mere laziness responsible for the church's lack of spiritual power?

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