

Parable Of The Minas

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Having invited Himself to the home of a chief tax collector, Zacchaeus, Jesus spoke the Parable of the Minas (Luke 19:11-27) because the people "thought that the kingdom of God would appear immediately." In it, He declared the true purpose of His ministry: As the Son of Man, He had come to seek and save the lost. Jesus used this parable to provide the truth about when He would take His place on the throne of David as King of kings. The disciples hoped that Christ would redeem Israel by making a public stand to convict their wicked society, deliver the chosen people from servitude to the Romans, and usher in the Kingdom of David in all its ancient glory. Jesus' disciples had not yet understood that, because of His approaching death and resurrection, He would establish the church, and it would do its work for many years. His Kingdom would not be ushered in until His return to earth as its rightful King.

The parable teaches that Jesus grants privileges to His servants, expecting faithfulness in return, and that He will reward His servants at His coming. Church members receive equal privileges, but the more diligently faithful will produce better results. This parable demonstrates the distinction between the faithful and the faithless.

1. Who is the nobleman and where did he go? Luke 19:11-12.

Comment: In this parable Jesus describes Himself as a man from a noble family with rights to a kingdom. Because he had to go away to receive his kingdom, his servants would be responsible to care for his interests in his absence. On his return, he would reward all who had been faithful—and deal severely with those who had disregarded His instruction. Jesus ascended to God's throne (Hebrews 1:3) to receive His Kingdom, and from there He exercises power (Philippians 2:9-11).

2. What is the servants' responsibility to the nobleman? Luke 19:13, 15-21.

Comment: Traditionally, rich noblemen had a retinue of servants or bond-slaves, among whom were those who, because of their integrity and resourcefulness, could be trusted to care for their master's interests while he was away. Upon his return, the parable's nobleman commanded his servants to account for their business done on his behalf in his absence. The ten servants (verse 13) represent not only the disciples of Jesus' time, who served during His earthly ministry and in the early church, but all the saints, whom He expects to serve Him faithfully until He returns.

The first servant's mina gained him ten minas for which he humbly took no credit. He had faithfully fulfilled his responsibility in trading with the mina. Taking advantage of every opportunity, he increased his master's investment tenfold, and he was rewarded with rule over ten cities.

The second servant had not been as diligent and ambitious, his mina increasing fivefold. Nevertheless, he still received increased responsibility in proportion to his trustworthiness and capability. The God we serve notices both the quality and quantity of what we do for Him (Luke 19:15; I Corinthians 3:13).

The third servant was not diligent enough to increase his mina at all. His excuse revealed his twisted opinion of his master and his expectations of his servants.

3. Why did the citizens hate the nobleman? Luke 19:14.

Comment: The nobleman's uncompromising character and their fear of his judgment set his citizens against him. Since his servants knew the nobleman was demanding, they should have wisely made the best use of the money he had entrusted to them. But since they knew his character ahead of time and the strict compliance he required, they had no right to complain when they were condemned (verse 22-27).

In the end, Jesus' rebellious "citizens" cast off all restraint (John 19:14-16), resulting in Him paying the penalty for sin. Christ is patient in spite of the resistance He receives, and when He returns to earth to establish His Kingdom, He will deal with all rebels decisively. We know that God is just and fair and will call us into account for our actions. We should be prepared to meet Him with proof of our increase.

4. Was the nobleman's judgment too harsh? Luke 19:22-27.

Comment: The nobleman owned the money, but the servants had to trade with it. However, the goal contemplated by the nobleman was not moneymaking as much it was His servants' development of character. Those who are diligent and faithful in serving Christ are commonly blessed in being made blessings to those around them. Jesus commands His disciples to improve and increase their talents, understanding and making the most of them, as well as to increase their capability of doing good and to do it until He returns (I Corinthians 12:7-11; Ephesians 4:7-16).

Jesus emphasizes His return and receipt of the Kingdom, at which time His Father would grant Him all legal rights (I Corinthians 15:23-28). In such a Kingdom, the King must have trusted and competent servants to assist Him in governing. We have the promise that, if we suffer with Him and work with Him now, if we are diligently faithful to Him, we will reign with Him (Revelation 3:21; 5:10; 20:4, 6). God has given us abilities and truth to use and develop, and we are held accountable for our efforts and effectiveness in using them for the benefit of our King and Savior.