

The Sunday School

BIBLE LESSON

Abridged from Peloubet's Notes.

First Quarter.

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS.

Lesson VI. February 10. Matt. 25:14-30.

Print Verses 19-30.

(May be used as a Temperance Lesson).

GOLDEN TEXT.

So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.—Rom. 14:12.

EXPLANATORY.

I. THE HOUSEHOLDER AND HIS SERVANTS.—Vs. 14, 15. 14. FOR THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN. This is not the original, but is naturally supplied from v. 1 since the same subject is continued under another illustration. IS AS A MAN TRAVELLING INTO A FAR COUNTRY. He was going abroad, and therefore had to leave his affairs in competent hands.

The householder represents Jesus Christ, who was about to leave his disciples and go to heaven, which was a "far country" in the sense that his servants could not have visible communication with him. WHO CALLED HIS OWN SERVANTS. These upper servants, or slaves, were to a large landholder what the under officers are to the king.

AND DELIVERED UNTO THEM HIS GOODS. "His property, so far as it might be available for trading purposes; his 'floating capital' as it were."

15. AND UNTO ONE HE GAVE FIVE TALENTS. A talent was 3,000 shekels, and as the weight of the Jewish shekel is variously estimated, there is considerable variation in the value given to the talent, which was doubtless a weight of silver, from \$1,000 to \$2,000, with no clear statement as to the reason for the difference, and seeming contradictions in the same article.

TO EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS SEVERAL ABILITY. "Or capacity, in proportion as he deemed them qualified for larger or smaller administration."

11. THE MAN WITH FIVE TALENTS.—Vs. 16-21. 16. THEN. The "straightway" of the last verse belongs at the beginning of this.—"straightway he went." It thus teaches the great lesson of urgency and promptitude. AND TRADED WITH THEM SAME. Literally, "worked"; then in a technical sense "engaged in business," and so "traded."

19. AFTER A LONG TIME. Long in the history of the whole church, and long enough in the case of individuals, to allow them to make good use of the trust.

THE RETURN OF THE LORD. THE LORD OF THOSE SERVANTS COMETH. AND RECKONETH WITH THEM: has a settlement. They are to report what they have done with the talents entrusted to them. It is the day of judgment, such as is described in the latter part of the chapter.

20. BEHOLD, I HAVE GAINED BESIDE THEM FIVE TALENTS. He had doubled his spiritual capital. He was twice the man he was before. He had twice as much of the same things as were first entrusted to him.

21. HIS LORD SAID UNTO HIM, WELL DONE, THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT. He had his lord's approval. Faithfulness, not success, nor the amount gained, was rewarded. God will say

ARCHITECT'S FOOD.

Grape-Nuts Turned into Big Buildings.

The duties of an architect are so multitudinous, looking after the thousand and one details required in the construction of large buildings, that many of them suffer from the constant mental application and require the best of food to keep up their work. The chief draughtsman in the office of R. T. Newberry, Architect, at 1227 New York Life Bldg., Chicago, by name, Henry C. Hengels, says:

"After nine months' constant application in the preparation of the necessary plans and details for the large hotel known as the Post Tavern and the Post Building, at Battle Creek, as well as several other large institutions, I found myself in a very debilitated and dyspeptic condition and unfit for work."

"Instead of medical treatment, I used Grape-Nuts food in place of the usual breakfast cereals. The first few days gave great encouragement, encouragement, and after a week's use, quite an appreciable improvement manifested itself. Since then, daily use has entirely restored the digestive functions to their natural healthy condition, and I have gained about one pound per week. I am now entirely well and strong again and am able to apply myself to work with more than usual vigor. I consider Grape-Nuts a most valuable food for all brain workers. The help this food has given me is incalculable."

"Well done" only to those who have done well.

THOU HAST BEEN FAITHFUL OVER A FEW THINGS, I WILL MAKE THEE RULER OVER MANY THINGS. We constantly see this illustrated in this life. Faithfulness in the smaller sphere ever leads to a larger sphere, to new activities, to grander opportunities, to more splendid achievements.

ENTER THOU INTO THE JOY OF THY LORD: participate in my joy and share with me in my pleasure. It is thought by many that the figure here is that of a master making a great feast, and inviting his servants who had proved faithful to enter into its enjoyment.

III. THE MAN WITH TWO TALENTS.—Vs. 22, 23. 22. HE ALSO THAT HAD RECEIVED TWO TALENTS. . . GAINED TWO OTHER TALENTS. He was as faithful and as successful as the one who had received five talents. He would soon be equal to any one who had received five talents, but had not made so good a use of them. All depends on the "ratio of faithfulness." The progress is by geometrical progression. Even he who had received but one talent could have surpassed in a short time one who used five with less faithfulness. What an inspiration to use to the best of our ability all that God has entrusted to us!

23. WELL DONE, GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT. He had the same rewards as the man with five talents, for he was equally faithful. The rewards were according to his ability. He had all he could use or enjoy. His cup, small or large, was full and running over.

IV. THE MAN WITH ONE TALENT.—Vs. 18, 24-30. 18. BUT HE THAT HAD RECEIVED ONE WENT AND DUGGED IN THE EARTH. Hiding treasure in the ground was a very common plan for safe-keeping, in a land where there were few banks or places of deposit.

24. LORD, I KNEW THEE THAT THOU ART AN HARD MAN. That is, hard-hearted; insensible to the feelings of others in all matters relating to money, and hence close-fisted as regarded his own, and grasping as regarded what might by hook or crook be got from others. REAPING WHAT THOU HAST NOT SOWN. Unjustly gathering for himself the fruits of other men's labors. GATHERING WHERE THOU HAST NOT STRAWED, or "scattered." "The reference of the expression is, apparently, to the husbandman's work on the threshing-floor. He first scattered over the area of the floor the loosened sheaves of grain. Then he threshed them and gathered the pure grain."

25. AND I WAS AFRAID. To risk the money, lest he should lose it, and incur his master's displeasure.

26. THOU WICKED AND SLOTHFUL SERVANT. Whatever his excuses, his real reasons are found in this sentence. (1) His excuses were vain because they were excuses and not reasons. (2) THOU KNEWEST, i. e., accepting your statement. I will judge you by your own words (Luke 19:22). What you plead as an excuse is the very reason why you should have acted differently.

27. THOU OUGHTEST THEREFORE. If you believed I am such a man as you say. TO HAVE PUT MY MONEY. It was mine, not yours. TO THE EXCHANGERS. To the bankers. These were men who carried on a business midway between modern banking and modern pawnbroking. They took money on deposit and loaned it out on interest, paying interest themselves to the depositors. RECEIVED MINE OWN WITH USURY, i. e., pay for the use of the money. It should be "interest," as in R. V., not "usury." Originally the terms meant the same, but now "usury" means exorbitant or illegal interest.

28. TAKE THEREFORE THE TALENT FROM HIM. The punishment for refusing to use the talent is the loss of the talent itself. AND GAVE IT UNTO HIM WHICH HATH TEN TALENTS, because he is fitted to use it well. The talent must not lie idle. The faithful servant has not only those rewards which grow out of his faithfulness, but other and greater things are committed to his care, new capital to produce new results.

29. FOR UNTO EVERY ONE THAT HATH: in the sense that the men of two and five talents "had" or possessed, by the hold which faithful use gives. That man "has" capital, not who merely holds it in his name or safe, but who knows its powers and capabilities, and how to make it accomplish its purposes. The man with the one talent buried it; he did not have it. SHALL BE GIVEN, AND HE SHALL HAVE ABUNDANCE. This is illustrated in worldly and intellectual affairs every day. FROM HIM THAT HATH NOT: has not made true use of, and therefore does not really possess. SHALL BE TAKEN AWAY EVEN THAT WHICH HE HATH: which was entrusted to him. The opportunities pass away, the abilities diminish, the powers wane. So it will be in the spiritual world.

30. CAST . . . INTO OUTER DARKNESS. There was no other place for him. His nature was contrary to the light. He had no part in the household of the saints, for

he was not a saint. His punishment is the natural result of his crime. WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH: expressing the terrible pain and loss, which was all the greater because he brought it on himself. His lord had given him every opportunity, and done all that was possible, but he refused the opportunity.

Stuttering.

To cure a child of stuttering, the child that stutters must be gently, patiently, and persistently corrected, stopped when he begins to hesitate, made to fill the lungs with air by a deep inhalation, and then to pronounce the difficult syllables until he can do so easily and smoothly. If this course is pursued undeviatingly, cure is certain.—Ex.

Baked Pork and Potato Stew.

Put in a deep baking dish a layer of sliced raw potatoes, then a sprinkling of sliced onions and pepper, then a layer of thin slices of fat salt pork, then potatoes, etc., until the dish is full. Pour on water enough to show among the potatoes, cover closely, and bake about an hour.—Ex.

Floors.

Painted or varnished floors may be kept in good condition by wiping with a damp cloth and then rubbing with a dry woolen cloth. This, of course, is for floors that do not get badly soiled. Kitchen or pantry floors may be washed with skim milk; if very dirty, with soap and water. A scrubbing brush should never be used on a painted or varnished floor.—Ex.

A Woman's Right.

That of knowing as much as her husband. —The People's Cyclopaedia.

The question of the rights of women is one which is constantly agitated. And yet, one of the most important of these rights is frequently overlooked. That is the right of every woman to know as much about people and places and facts as her husband knows. A man gains his knowledge in a practical way. He comes in contact with men and things. He knows what is going on in the world because he is a part of the active world. A woman stays at home. What she learns must be learned at second-hand. She learns things by reading about them. In her reading she finds mention of many things which she knows nothing about—things which have been discovered, or made, or have happened, even within her own lifetime. If she has no convenient reference book, she will not look the matter up, and she will go on knowing nothing about it. Just the same, it is her duty to look up just such things, and it is her right to have the necessary reference book at hand. There is one such book—and it is six books. The set is called The People's Cyclopaedia of Universal Knowledge. It is brought right down to date. Everything in it is boiled down—concise, condensed, and yet perfectly complete. Its arrangement is absolutely perfect. All of the information in it is readily accessible. It can be found without the loss of a moment's time, and when it is found, it will be perfectly clear, and will give all of the essential points on each subject without verbosity, and without dragging in irrelevant matter. What it contains is the very essence of the information. It gives you what you want to know, and only that, quickly and completely. It has the finest collection of the finest maps that ever were put into a Cyclopaedia in this or any other language.

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