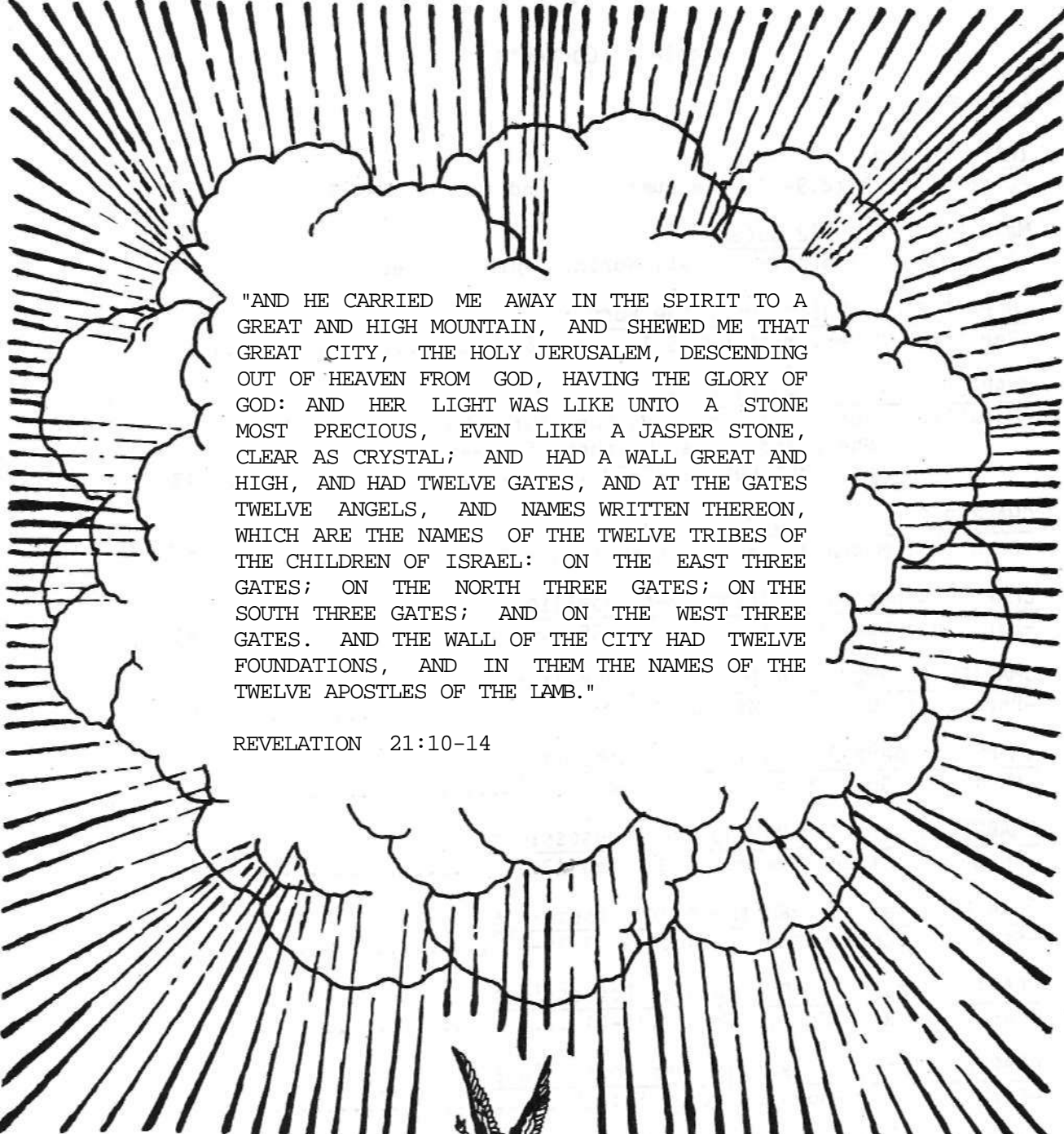


THE GATES  
OF THE  
NEW JERUSALEM.

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B. R. HICKS

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"AND HE CARRIED ME AWAY IN THE SPIRIT TO A GREAT AND HIGH MOUNTAIN, AND SHEWED ME THAT GREAT CITY, THE HOLY JERUSALEM, DESCENDING OUT OF HEAVEN FROM GOD, HAVING THE GLORY OF GOD: AND HER LIGHT WAS LIKE UNTO A STONE MOST PRECIOUS, EVEN LIKE A JASPER STONE, CLEAR AS CRYSTAL; AND HAD A WALL GREAT AND HIGH, AND HAD TWELVE GATES, AND AT THE GATES TWELVE ANGELS, AND NAMES WRITTEN THEREON, WHICH ARE THE NAMES OF THE TWELVE TRIBES OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL: ON THE EAST THREE GATES; ON THE NORTH THREE GATES; ON THE SOUTH THREE GATES; AND ON THE WEST THREE GATES. AND THE WALL OF THE CITY HAD TWELVE FOUNDATIONS, AND IN THEM THE NAMES OF THE TWELVE APOSTLES OF THE LAMB."

REVELATION 21:10-14

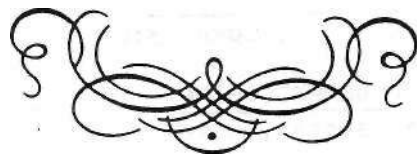


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## INTRODUCTION

We must recognize that ALL Scripture is given by the inspiration of God and is profitable to each of us personally, bearing a message of doctrine, reproof, correction, for instruction in righteousness. According to 2 Timothy 3:16,17 the man of God needs ALL Scripture that he may "be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." In other words, All Scripture is recorded for our profit to teach us how to grow into full, mature stature in Christ.

With this in mind, let us turn to the Book of Revelation where we will study together the twelve gates of the Bride, the New Jerusalem. Although the 21st chapter of Revelation will, in due season, be fulfilled literally, it carries a message to those who are hungry to grow into full stature of the Lord Jesus Christ, for it contains the fullness of truth concerning the Bride of Jesus Christ.

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem coming down from GOD out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband..... And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, come hither, I will shew thee THE BRIDE, THE LAMB'S WIFE. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal."

Revelation 21:2,9-11

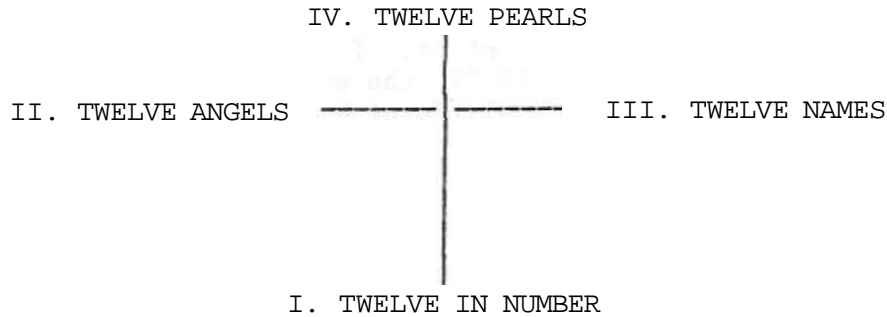
The new city, the New Jerusalem, is the Bride of the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. As we stay humble before God, the many precious mysteries found in this portion of God's Word will be opened up to our understanding. Here are principles of spiritual truth applicable to all Christians, and particularly to those who are "pressing towards the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" - to be in the Bride of Christ.

To begin, let us observe the stature of truth concerning THE GATES of the New City. A gate is something that can either be closed or opened. Apparently these gates had been closed at one time, but then in the dispensation of the Perfect Age or Eternity, these gates will be opened, for we read,

"And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there."

Revelation 21:25

**STATURE : TWELVE**



**I. TWELVE IN NUMBER**

"And had a wall great and high, and had TWELVE GATES, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel."

Revelation 21:12

Note the repeated usage of the number twelve. Twelve is the number of perfect government, and principle wise shows us that the Bride of Christ has come under the complete government of her Bridegroom. It is He who controls these gates. It is He who determines whether these gates are open or shut. As we progress in our study, we will clearly see what each of these gates represent. This prophecy not only foreshadowed a literal edifice, but also reveals divine principles which must be worked in the hearts of those who will become the Bride of Christ.

**II. TWELVE ANGELS**

"....and at the gate twelve angels....."

Twelve angels are posted at the gates as gate keepers, no doubt to escort the Kings from the new earth into the city (Rev. 21:24). Although the Word does not say so specifically, I have the impression that these are Cherubims posted at these gates.

Did we not see Cherubims posted on the east side of the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden, placed there to guard the Tree of Life? And this same Tree of life is present in the New Jerusalem pictured for us in Revelation 22. Here we see a river proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb.

"...and on either side of the river was there the tree of life."

Actually, in the new dispensation there is no need for the protecting ministry of the Cherubims, for fallen Lucifer with all his followers and their sin and defilement are already eternally committed to the lake of Fire. No doubt the Cherubims, the twelve angels then, are seen as a living witness of their past works and performances in relation to the Bride City and the Tree of Life.

### III TWELVE NAMES

"...and NAMES written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:"

Revelation 21:12

The word "NAME" implies nature, character and authority, and these gates bore the names of the children of Israel. Briefly stated, they were:

1. JUDAH : to praise the Lord
2. ISSACHAR : to bring a reward
3. ZEBULUN : a continuing city to inclose,  
to dwell with
4. REUBEN : behold a son
5. SIMEON : that hears and obeys
6. GAD : a troop or army
7. EPHRAIM : fruitful
8. MANASSEH : forgetfulness
9. BENJAMIN : the son of the right hand
10. DAN : to judge
11. ASHER : blessedness
12. NAPHTALI : one who contends, the fighting  
of the enthroned one against  
his enemies.

#### IV. TWELVE PEARLS

"...and the twelve gates were twelve pearls;  
every several gate of one pearl..."

Revelation 21:21

That each gate was different is emphasized in the phrase, "every several gate," (several meaning different). Each gate had its own angel, its own name, and was made of a single pearl, each different from the other.

To understand this spiritual principle let us take the natural pearl for an example because the natural types the spiritual. Through the secretion of certain glands, the pearl oyster creates his protective shell. If a grain of sand or some little parasite enters his shell, the oyster immediately secretes this mother-of-pearl to overlay the foreign substance. With layer after layer, the foreign particle in time becomes a pearl.

The same principle works spiritually for us. If we become as that little parasite hiding away in the secret place to feed upon Jesus Christ, the Lord will begin to form around us these gates of pearl. He will loosen, as it were, that mother-of-pearl nature of His, a layer at a time, until we become transformed by His nature. Each is a "several" pearl. God has twelve different pearls to form within the heart of the Bride. As we hide away in fasting and prayer and in the Word of God, we will experience this "over-laying process" until we can say as the Apostle Paul said,

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"

Galatians 2:20

He was saying, in so many words, "I am living, yet you do not really see me because I have been overlaid with the pearl of the Christ-life." It was no longer Paul-life that was being exhibited before men; it was Christ-life, for Jesus was living in and through him.

Another point of interest is that this pearl formation takes place in secret; it is a hidden process and no one sees it. The pearl in the natural is formed in the depths of the sea. As we trace the Hebrew word "pearl" back to its origin we find it means "to freeze": or in other words "ICE". In fact, the word "jasper" comes from the same root word, and in verse eleven we saw that the New Jerusalem was like a jasper stone, clear as crystal - clear as ice. In our study of the Old Testament Tabernacle, which is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ, we find the same principle in the Laver. At the Laver we lay hold of the jasper garments of the Bride, for they come from the icy depths, the watery grave of our precious Lord. The Laver pictures the outward and

inward baptism in water, portraying the waters of His Name (nature, character, authority), death and life. As we hide away, dying daily, surrendering our self-life to the watery grave, God begins to overlay us with the mother-of-pearl of His nature. We are like a little grain of sand and as we cling to Him He transforms us into a lovely pearl. If we are to be included in the Bride of Christ, we must learn to reign over many things which would destroy our union with Christ. We will never have the formation of these twelve precious pearls within our hearts apart from the waters of His Name, death and life. We must surrender to take on the cold breath of the humility of Christ. Although there is the glory, we must first experience the humiliation found at the Laver, the watery grave, the jasper, the pearl, the ice - if we are to become His Bride. Because our old hearts are desperately wicked, our carnal natures depraved, our human wills perverted by the spirit of pride, there is much that must be overcome before we can grow "unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ": (Eph. 4:13)

The knowledge of reigning over these hindrances, weights, and sins, moreover, God has hidden, in mystery form. Remember, the overlaying of the pearl is done in mystery fashion, hidden from man's eyes. Only they who diligently search after the pearls ever find them. And to those who seek to know Him, the mysterious process will begin and the mysteries will unfold. Did He not say,

"...thou hast hid these things from the wise  
and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes."

God has hidden the mysteries that pertain to the formation of the twelve gates of the Bride City in all of the parables Jesus taught. Although the parables are more than twelve, they nevertheless, fall clearly into twelve categories that deal with twelve areas of our lives that must be reigned over, that must be overlaid with His nature to form the twelve gates in our hearts. With this understanding of the twelve gates as seen in the twenty-first chapter of Revelation and of the parables Jesus taught, these portions of God's Word become vitally related to our daily relationship with Jesus Christ, and PROFITABLE to the spiritual man, the man of God. Let us then proceed to study the different kinds of pearls that Jesus wants to overlay within our being as we yield ourselves to Him.

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MAIN STATURE ON THE 12 GATES

**10. RULING OVER ANXIETY**

- a) Mustard seed. Mk 4:30-32.
- b) Seed; (unconscious growth) Mk 4:26-29
- c) Fig tree. Lu 21:29-32.

**11. RULING OVER UNJUST-JUDGEMENT**

- a) Creditor & debtors. Lu 7:41-43
- b) Friend at midnight. Lu 11:5-8
- c) Importance of human soul:
  - 1. Lost sheep. Lu 15:4-7.
  - 2. Lost coin. Lu 15:8-10.
  - 3. Lost coin. Lu 15:11-32.

**12. RULING OVER PRAYERLESSNESS**

- a) Unjust judge. Lu 18:1-8
- b) Pharisee and Publican.  
Lu 18:9-14.

**4. RULING OVER REBELLION**

- a) Leaven. Mt 13:33-35.
- b) Two sons. Mt 21:28-32.
- c) Good shepherd. Jn 10.

**5. RULING OVER POSSESSIONS**

- a) Hidden treasure. Mt 13:44.
- b) Costly pearl. Mt 13:45-46.
- c) Rich fool. Lu 12:16-21.
- d) The pounds. Lu 19:11-27.

**6. RULING OVER UNMERCIFULNESS**

- a) Two debtors: (unforgiveness) Mt 18:23-35.
- b) Good Samaritan: (unconcern) Lu 10:25-37.
- c) Fig tree: (unfruitfulness) Lu 13:6-9.
- d) Servant: (unprofitableness) Lu 17:7-10.

**7. RULING OVER MURMURING**

- a) Laborers. Mt 20:1-16.

**8. RULING OVER REJECTION**

- a) Wicked husbandman.  
Mt 21:33-44.

**9. RULING OVER UNFAITHFULNESS**

- a) Ten virgins. Mt 25:1-3.
- b) Talents. Mt 25:14-30.
- c) Stewards. Lu 16:1-12.

**1. RULING OVER THE WORD**

- a) Sower. Mt 13:1-4, 10-18.

**2. RULING OVER EVIL**

- a) Wheat and tares. Mt 13:24-30, 36-43.
- b) Sheep and goats. Mt 25:31-46.
- c) Net. Mt 13:47-50.

**3. RULING OVER SHAME**

- a) Mustard seed. Mt 13:31-32.

**RULING OVER THE WORD OF GOD**

"The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:"

MATTHEW 13:1-4

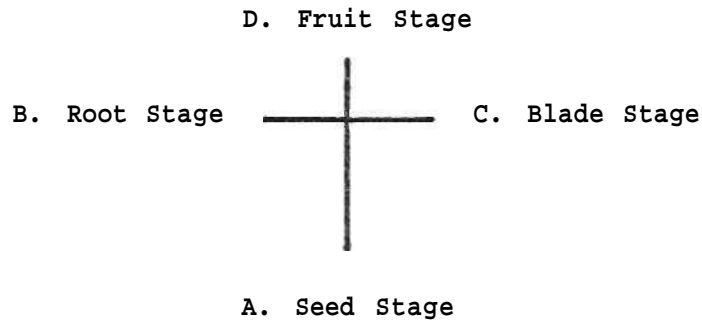
There are many aspects in which these parables can be viewed but we are in this study principally interested with the aspect of ruling over the Word of God. From verse nineteen we see that the seed is "the word of the kingdom." The kingdom pertains to the Bride and Bridegroom relationship and their reign during the millennial time (the kingdom of Heaven) and during the perfect age (the Kingdom of God).

The message of the kingdom as spoken in the parables was hidden from the thronging crowds and expounded to His disciples. Although Jesus often employed allegory to clarify and illustrate the spiritual truth, such as the common scene of the shepherd with his sheep, he never revealed the mysteries of the parables to the general crowd. This privilege was reserved for those who sat at his feet. And so it still is today.

"And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, BECAUSE IT IS GIVEN UNTO YOU TO KNOW THE MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive. For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them. Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower."

MATTHEW 13:10-18

Now let us look at this matter of reigning and ruling over the Word of God- This does not mean that we boss the Word of God, but rather that we protect and reverence it, lest it be stolen from us or become unfruitful. Jesus gave a stature of truth concerning the manner of growth of the Word.



**A. SEED STAGE**

**A. SEED STAGE**

".....Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them."

MATTHEW 13:3,4

What do you do with the Word of God when it comes to you in seed form? Sometimes, beloved, God gives us seeds in advance to store upon our spiritual shelves. At the time, perhaps, we understand little of the seed-word. But even so, we must carefully guard that seed of truth and hide it in our hearts, for when our spiritual man has grown sufficiently God will, by His Spirit, bring that seed forth and open it to our understanding. This is what we should do, but too often we let the devil and his birds snatch that seed of truth from us and it is lost. I explaining this parable to the disciples Jesus said,

"When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side."

MATTHEW 13: 19

This is why I write down everything God gives me, although I do not always understand everything God shows me, it is still a thrill to be lifted up in the Spirit and catch a glimpse of something higher, for know that in due season the Lord will open my understanding and I will fully enter into what He has for me. When we hide the Word, guard and keep it, rule and reign over it, and wait upon the Lord for the

revelation of it, then the devil and his birds cannot snatch this precious seed-Word from us. Now hiding the Word does not mean that we just cast it on our spiritual shelf and forget it, thinking that when God pleases, He will take it down and unfold it before us. Not at all, for even here the devil can come along and steal away that precious seed. True, we keep the seed upon the shelf, but we guard it by taking it down during our prayer times and seeking the Lord's revelation of the matter. Begin to pray, "Dear Lord, I know you have something for me here in this truth that I don't understand." And as we cry and pray before the Lord over the matter, God will begin to let our spiritual heart grow until one day we will find the Word opened up to us and it will be exactly what we need at the time to grow and go on for God. My how we will rejoice then that we prevented the devil from stealing our precious seed-Word.

Perhaps there have been times at the House of God when the message preached seemed to have little meaning to us and we passed it to someone else. Casting that seed-Word aside is not reigning and ruling over it. Though we may not realize our need of the Word, the devil does and is especially eager to snatch the precious seed from us.

Let us remember, also, that all truth comes first in the seed form. If we miss it here, we have completely missed it. This principle, of course, is true in every area of learning. We had to learn our ABC's before we could begin to read. How much more important, then, is it to guard the seeds of God's Word! Do not despise them, but gather them gratefully and care for them. Water them with our tears and supplications before the Lord, and before we know it, they will grow into a blade and finally full fruitfulness.

## **B. ROOT STAGE**

"Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they spring up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away."

MATTHEW 13:5,6

If the Word is ever to bear fruit in our lives, it must also be kept through the root stage. Whereas the seed stage was besieged by the devil and his birds, the root stage must combat unprepared soil filled with stones - stones of hardness and bitterness that make us unreceptive to the Word of God. We should ask the Lord to break the fallow ground of our hearts. A broken and a contrite heart is our best protection against the stones which hinder the growth of the Word in us. How precious, in the sight of God, are our tears. In fact, He even bottles them up in a bottle!

Instead of letting the devil's birds snatch the precious seed-Word and the stones of indifference and bitterness war against the root stage, we

must reign over the Word. This is why Jesus expounded this parable, His disciples, for it is basic and essential to the formation of gates of pearl within the heart of the Bride of Jesus Christ. He explained it by saying,

"But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the Word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended."

MATTHEW 13:20-21

Though many receive the Word with joy, they do not allow it to take root and then when the heat of testings, trials and tribulations come to the growth of the seed, they are offended at the Word and it withers dies. Surely this is not the way to reign over the Word! Instead growth, there is only loss and a frustration. If we do not learn to reign over the Word of God we will never grow up into full mature stature or be in the Bride of Christ.

#### C. **BLADE STAGE**

"And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them."

MATTHEW 13:7

In the blade stage, the attack is above the ground. When the little seed is planted, beloved, learn to rule over the Word; take care of it. When it comes upward, then there are the thorns of this life to attack. There will be thorns all around to try to steal the substance on the ground and to choke the little seedling. God's Word gives us a state of what these "thorns" are that will try to destroy the fruitfulness God's Word in our lives.

#### 4. Pleasures of this Life

3. Lust of other things



2. Deceitfulness of Riches

1. Cares of this World

"He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful:

MATTHEW 13:22

"And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful."

MARK 4:19

"And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasures of this life, and bring no fruit to perfection."

LUKE 8:14

The work of the thorns is to choke the precious seedling of the Word of God in our hearts, to waken it by stealing the substance of the ground from the seedling, and to hinder the seedling from maturation. Some of these thorns are the CARES OF THIS LIFE. We get so busy just making a living and taking care of our daily tasks that we forget what we are really here for. Our purpose is more than simply living along until we die. True, we have to take care of our daily needs, but our great task is to find our way to God and to prepare ourselves for an eternal existence with Him. But we are so busy wearing ourselves out on the non-essentials of living that we neglect to take time to guard the Word of God in our hearts. Beloved, if we do not have the time to guard the Word of God, then there is something seriously wrong with our schedule.

And some of the thorns He called "the DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES." Though earthly riches promise much, they are unable to give anything eternal. How sad is a person who reaches the end of life's journey rich with earthly goods, yet poor toward God. How tragic when an eternal soul goes out of this life empty and naked as he came. Beloved, if we will be as the little parasite we spoke of earlier, clinging to our heavenly Father, seeking to live by His sustenance, desiring to know Him, hungering for His living Word, then we can be laying up precious treasures for ourselves in Heaven.

And then He spoke of the LUST OF OTHER THINGS as being part of these thorns. The human heart is depraved and desperately wicked. If we leave it to its own inclinations, it will always take us away from God. This is why we daily need a fresh consecration unto God in prayer and in the Word of God. Only as we spend time in His presence and fill our vision with the things of God from His Word, can we possibly persevere. God's Word will keep our vision clear and focused on eternal values and prevent the springing up of the thorns of the lust of other things to rob us in

the seedling stage of God's Word in our hearts.

Specific mention is made of the PLEASURES OF THIS LIFE as the thorns which also choke the Word of God in our lives. If we do not learn to reign over the Word by protecting it against the cares of this world, deceitfulness of riches, the lust of other things, and the pleasures of this life, these thorns will begin to rule over us and choke the blade stage of the Word of God in our hearts.

#### D. FRUIT STAGE

"But others fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

MATTHEW 13:8,9

If we are going to press on from the seed stage, the root stage, and the blade stage then we are going to have to guard the Word of God. Even in the stage of fruitfulness we must rule over the Word to see it come to full maturity; to the hundredfold as opposed to thirtyfold or sixtyfold. If we are not careful to guard our vines of fruitfulness, the devil will nibble away ever so subtly until suddenly we find our vine withered away.

"But he that received seed into good ground is he that heareth the word and understandeth it; which also heareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

MATTHEW 13:23

Jesus spoke this parable and taught its meaning to His disciples because He desired to show them how to reign over the Word of God. Even as in the garden of Eden, Adam, male and female, were commissioned to guard it; dress it and keep it; to protect the Tree of Life, so we, too, must guard the Word, the Christ. And if we do not learn to guard the seed, the root, and the blade, we will never bear fruit as God intended.

This, then, is the first gate of pearl that must be formed in the heart of the Bride of Jesus Christ. Without this reigning over the Word of God, we will never see the full attainment of the mature stature of Christ in our lives so necessary to the Bride.

## INTRODUCTION

In the Perfect Age, when time shall be no more, there will be some believers in Heaven wearing White Robes; some believers on the New Earth called kings and priests who will be wearing White Raiment; and some believers will constitute the Bride of Christ, wearing White Linen. We see her clothed in jasper which is her final dress, when we view her as the New City which is her final and eternal place.

Revelation 21 gives us a beautiful description of this Holy City "coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." If we are going to be in that New City we must have this City, spiritually speaking, built within us now. The revelation of this New Jerusalem unveils many spiritual principles and truths that the Bride of Jesus Christ will have laid within her spiritual building now, in preparation for that great and eternal position in the Perfect Age.

Predominant is the number twelve which is the number of government. The Bride of Christ will learn, in this life, to come under the complete government of her spiritual Husband, Jesus Christ. In our last study we concerned ourselves with the twelve gates.

"And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the City was pure gold, as it were transparent glass."

REVELATION 21:21

Each gate was a different kind of pearl. Tracing back the origin of the word "pearl" takes us back to the same meaning as "jasper", for both words come from root words meaning "ice". Ice speaks of the cold breath of God which has to do with His humility. God's hot breath relates to His exaltation and glory. "The LORD also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice; HAIL STONES and COALS OF FIRE" (Ps. 18:13). God's voice, His breath, gives forth both the hot and cold breath, the exaltation and the humiliation. We cannot know the exaltation without having first experienced the suffering or humiliation side. We are not going to reign and rule with Christ as His Bride without partaking of the cold breath of God, without fellowshiping His suffering and being made conformable to His death. We see, again, the importance of the icy, cold breath of God in our own personal experience, for without it we will not have formed within us those twelve gates of pearl or the walls of jasper that shall adorn the New City throughout eternity.

In explanation of the Gates of Pearl Jesus taught us the Parables. In order to hide the truth from the wise and prudent (wise in their own eyes) Jesus taught these great spiritual truths in mystery form, parable form. But to those who were willing to become as little babes and sucklings (little in their own eyes and willing to feed upon the bosom of God's Word . . . drinking of the sincere milk of the Word) the veil was drawn back and the revelation given.

There are more than twelve parables, but they fall readily into twelve categories that deal with twelve areas of our lives. The Bride of Christ will spiritually possess these twelve gates, for she will have yielded these areas of her nature to God to where her nature has been overlaid with the nature of Christ. Through the process of dying out to her self-life, the cold, icy breath of God's humility will have formed within her these twelve gates of pearl.

First we must learn to reign and rule over the Word of God. We studied the Parable of the Sower for it relates to this first gate of pearl. We reign over the Word of God, which is the precious seed, when we protect and reverence it until it springs up into fruitfulness in our lives. Only as we carefully guard the Word of God in our hearts will it press on from the seed stage, the root stage, the blade stage, and finally into full fruition. Without this reigning over the Word of God we will never attain the full mature spiritual stature that characterizes the Bride of Christ.

Keep in mind that the message of the parable is primarily concerned with the kingdom of God which has to do with the Bride and Bridegroom relationship. The rule and reign of Christ and His Bride relate to two dispensations; namely, the Kingdom of Heaven time which pertains to their earthly reign during the Millenium and the Kingdom of God time which refers to the Perfect Age - the universal reign throughout eternity.

oOo

## RULING OVER EVIL

"Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the house-holder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn."

MATTHEW 13:24-30

There are two aspects to the Word of God, generally speaking; the prophetic aspect and the personal aspect. This parable concerns the time when Jesus Christ will come back again to this earth. At that time there will be a separation, separating the wheat from the tares. After the battle of Armageddon has been fought, and prior to the setting up of His thousand year reign on the earth, there will be this separation of the wheat from the tares. The division will be made between the good and the evil.

It was not until later that Jesus took His disciples and unfolded the mystery of the parable of the wheat and tares.

"Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man. The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then

shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear:.

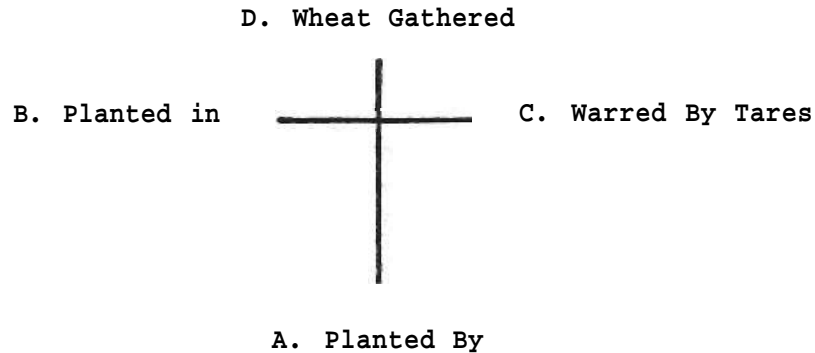
MATTHEW 13:36-43

The principle here is that of separating the good from the evil. If we are going to know this union with Christ, which the marriage relationship illustrates, then we have to have this gate of humility formed within our hearts now so that when the evil comes we will not be enticed by it, nor deceived by it, but will be able to shut our gate against it and separate ourselves from the evil thing.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: For I was hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal."

MATTHEW 25: 31-46

Again, the same principle of separation. In this case, he uses sheep and goats. The evil ones were the goats and the righteous ones were called sheep. Before Jesus goes into His millennial reign, this separation of the good from the evil will take place. Jesus Christ will not have any evil, any goats that are going to buck and rebel, in His kingdom. He is going to have a righteous, holy reign during the Kingdom of Heaven time on earth. It will be a reign of righteousness and peace. Whether it be separation of the sheep and the goats, or the wheat from the tares, the principle is the same. There is this dividing between the good and the evil. Let us consider further the parable of the wheat: and tares as we see it in Mt. 13.



**A. PLANTED BY**

These good seeds were the children of God, the children of the kingdom, and they were planted by the Son of Man, by Jesus Himself.

**B. PLANTED IN**

The good seed was planted in the world, which was the field.

"But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat."

MATTHEW 13:25

What an enemy sleep is! Some people cannot even get into the Spirit for fear they may lose thirty minutes of sleep. Our real strength comes from God, both spiritual and physical, for we are lifted up into the Spirit of God. This matter of sleep is one of the things we have to learn to rule over or it will rule use and rob us of many precious opportunities to seek God.

### C. WARRED BY TARES

The tares warred against the wheat by stealing away the substance of the ground. Why does the devil plant a tare right next to the wheat? For this reason, to steal, to steal the substance from the wheat and to rob the wheat of its nourishment from the soil. Spiritually speaking, the substance of the child of God is the Word of God. The devil sees to it that there are plenty of tares planted around God's people to hinder and rob them of their substance, their nourishment from the Word of God. And it was "while men slept" that the enemy came. Because of this "sleeping condition" in most of the churches, we have many unconverted sinners in our midst.

Sleep, out of the will of God, is like a tare. While we sleep there is going to be a tare to come and stand right beside us to steal the Word of God from us. Many times we sleep when we could be studying and praying instead. Does not the Word say, "He that loseth his life for my sake shall find it?" We have to learn to reign over evil. If we sleep we cannot watch. If we reign over sleep we will not have so many tares to fight. God is mindful of our physical need for sleep, and He will see to it that our needs are met, but to sleep when it is not God's will that we do so, is actually the first step to degeneracy. Tares creep in while we sleep to steal the substance of the Word of God.

The householder bid his servants not to do the separating lest the wheat be uprooted with the tares. Only He is capable of this work of separation, and so it is with us in our daily personal experience. We are not capable of separating the wheat from the tares in our own lives. It is not for us to do the perfecting, but as we lay our hearts bare before the Lord, He will come and show us what is a tare and what is wheat. Let the Son of Man come and separate the good from the evil. If we will just stay in the Word and continue to feed and nourish the little wheat plant that is in our heart, it will continue to grow and gather strength, and in time, the wheat will even take the substance from the tare.

### D. WHEAT GATHERED

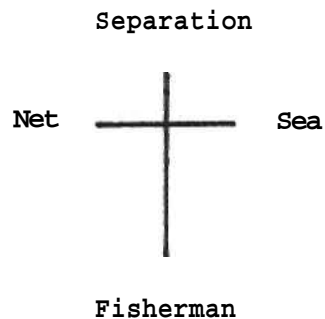
Prophetically, the time is coming when the Son of Man will appear to separate the wheat from the tares, the sheep nations from the goat nations, and then He will establish His millennial reign upon the earth. Personally speaking, the mystery concerning the wheat is that if we will not sleep but will war for the substance, Jesus Christ will come and gather out the tares and cast them into the fire of the Holy Ghost. He will pluck out the tares that are in our hearts and they will be burned and consumed by the power of God and the Spirit of God. Even so, when the literal Kingdom of Heaven is set up here on earth, the goat nations, the tares, will be cast into "a furnace of fire", and into "everlasting punishment".

We have a second parable that teaches us how to reign over evil. We do so by WATCHFULNESS! If we sleep carelessly and out of the will of God,

the devil will sow tares in our hearts, and the tares will grow in strength, stealing away our substance from the Word of God. Our second parable shows us the same principle of separation.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was east into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

MATTHEW 13:47-50



The Kingdom of Heaven is the millennial reign of Jesus Christ and His Bride ~ their heavenly reign upon the earth. Christ shall reign for one thousand years seated on the throne of David in Jerusalem. In this parable of the dragnet, we see it is a matter of reigning over evil, reigning over that which is not good - that which is not produced by God.

#### **A. FISHERMEN**

First we see the obvious fact of the fishermen who used the dragnet method in their fishing.

#### **B. NET**

The Kingdom of Heaven is pictured as a net. As the Kingdom of Heaven message is proclaimed (the message of the Bride and Bridegroom relationship), many kinds of "fish" are caught in the net. Even as a net gathers all kinds of fish, so does this message as it is preached among the people. Jesus told Peter to follow Him and He would make him a fisher of men.

The Kingdom message is a wonderful net to fish with, but many fishermen

fish without it for they do not possess this net themselves. The net speaks of the full message of the Word of God. We can catch many "fish" with the net of the blood message, and the Holy Ghost message, and the message of the water baptism with its full implications, but what a greater ingathering of precious "fish" there would be if we would preach the full message of the Word of God. Jesus went about "preaching the gospel of the kingdom (Matthew 4:23), the disciples were commissioned to "preach the Kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 8:12), won many souls in Samaria, and Paul abode in his own house in Rome for two years.

"Preaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man "forbidding him"

ACTS 28:31

Ought not we, then, to preach the same message: the foundation of the blood, fire and water, plus the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; namely, growing up into full spiritual stature and becoming a part of the Bride of Jesus Christ. God's Word, in its fullness, is a mighty net to draw in the "fish" of this world.

### C. SEA

The sea is symbolic of the people of the earth. As there were two kinds of fish in the sea, good and bad, so there are both good and bad people.... clean and unclean.

Even among the so-called Christian ranks there are those that God looks upon as unclean and unfit for the Kingdom. The fishermen that held the Kingdom of Heaven net did not keep all of the fish. When they reached the shore, the time of separation came; the good fish were placed into the vessels and the bad fish were cast aside.

The second gate will be formed within us when we learn the principle of ruling and reigning over evil. We must maintain a watchful attitude at all times and learn to separate between the good and the evil. Jesus, in His human aspect, knew how to make this choice. The Lord Jesus Christ was God incarnate; the Word (the Christ) indwelt the human body of Jesus the man, and it was the man part of Him that had to grow in order to choose between good and evil. The Christ within Him certainly was never tempted nor did the Christ ever have to make the choice for good - Christ was the Word and the Word was God (Jn 1:1)

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For before the child shall know to refuse the

evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings"

ISAIAH 7:14-16

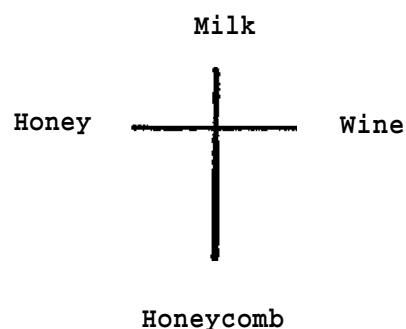
This prophecy concerned Immanuel, God with us...Jesus Christ. The man Jesus was to eat butter and honey that "he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good". The butter comes from the milk of the cow and is a natural type of the fat that comes from the milk of the Word. The man Jesus fed on the richest part of the Word (Christ) that dwelt within Him. Sutter or fat, in the Scripture, is a type of zeal; therefore, all the fat was offered up to God in the Old Testament sacrifices. All zeal belongs to God. The butter of the Word of God produces true spiritual zeal for God. If we eat enough of this butter, even as Jesus did. we will be zealous to choose the good and reject the evil.

Jesus not only ate of the honey which speaks of the sweetness of the word. It is not enough for us to have only the zeal, we must also have the sweetness with it. All our spiritual trouble dates back to the lack of the Word of God, eating of its butter and honey. The Bride of Christ is going to have this butter and honey. As the Husbandman-Bridegroom, He describes the heart of His Bride, now His Spouse.

"I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved:

SOLOMON'S SONG 5:1

He broke the seal to the garden of her heart and found in her spiritual garden the following things:



The wax of the honeycomb was used for lighting purposes, so it speaks to us of the light of the Word. All of our experience with the Word of God

begins here - with the light. We receive the light of the Word before we receive the sweetness of it. When we accept the light of the Word, then the honey of the Word comes next. When we are not finding the delight and ecstasy in the Word of God, it indicates that we are not walking in the light of the Word somewhere in our experience, for the sweetness always follows the light. And then comes the wine which pictures the delight and life and joy found in the Word. And lastly, comes the milk because the milk contains the butter fat. God wants all of our zeal to be founded on the light of the Word, on the sweetness of the Word, and on the joy of the Word. All our service unto the Lord is as dead works unless what we do is founded on this kind of a foundation.

It was true in the life of Jesus, and will also be equally true in our lives: with the butter and the honey of God's Word to feed upon, we will know to choose the good and reject the evil.

Our first gate, and first principle of humility, was learning to reign over the Word of God. The Word will reign over us when it grows up within us, but until it grows into fruition within our hearts, we must reign over the Word by holding on to it, guarding and protecting it until it takes root downward and bears fruit upward. Our second gate and second principle was learning how to reign over evil. We were clearly taught the fact of separation as we saw it portrayed in the wheat and tares, the sheep and goat nations, and the good and bad fish. We rule over evil by watchfulness. As the gate is formed within our spiritual temples, we will be able to open the gate to the good and close it against all evil. Let us therefore be watchful, and be faithful to feed upon the butter and the honey of God's precious Word....this Word that brings light, sweetness, joy and zeal.

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## INTRODUCTION

The New City, the New Jerusalem, is the Bride of Jesus Christ which descends down from God out of Heaven, her description is recorded in Revelation 21 and the predominant number is twelve which is the number of perfect government, for the Bride has learned in her earthly life to come under the complete government of her spiritual husband, Jesus Christ. In our present study we are especially interested in the twelve gates that are seen in the New Jerusalem. These several gates are of one pearl, or in other words, twelve different kinds or classes of pearls which are formed by the cold breath, the humility breath of God. The word "pearl" is traced back to an unused root word in Hebrew meaning to freeze, crystal from its resemblance to ice; therefore, the name "pearl" links their formation with the cold humility breath of God as it were. These gates then, must be spiritually formed within the heart of the Bride during her earthly journey. The Bride must be a partaker of the cold breath of Jesus Christ in order to be prepared for her eternal dwelling in the New City.

Jesus did not leave us in ignorance concerning the formation of these gates, for He taught these truths in parable form which are a mystery except to those who humble themselves and become as babes and Sucklings. The wise and prudent cannot receive the revelation, for it is withheld from them. There are twelve categories of truth found in the parables of Jesus Christ, which fit together with the gates of the new City, therefore they shine forth like twelve beautiful pearls and as they are formed within our hearts, they will govern and rule our lives. The Bride of Christ spiritually possesses these twelve gates by yielding herself to God and following Him to overlay her with the nature of Christ. Through the process of dying out to self-life and being overlaid with the cold, icy breath of God's humility these twelve gates of pearl are formed within her, as it were, preparing her for the eternal reign in the New City.

Our first gate, the first principle of humility we must learn, is to reign over the Word of God. We must reign over the Word by holding on to it, guarding and protecting it, until it takes root downward and bears fruit upward. Our second gate, and second principle, was learning to reign over evil. We rule over evil by watchfulness, learning how to open the gate to the good and closing it against all evil in our own temple. We now come to the third gate, RULING OVER SHAME.

**RULING OVER SHAME**

"Another parable put he forth unto them saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof."

MATTHEW 13:31-32

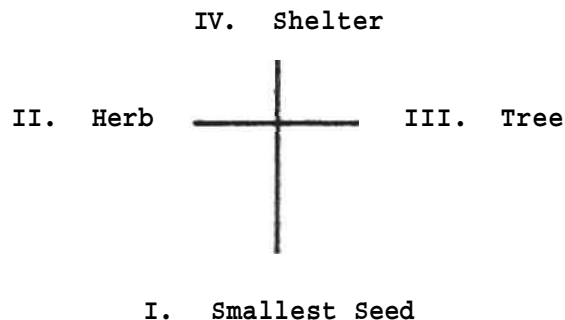
As Christians, we have all experienced the sense of shame that tries to settle down upon us when we witness for Christ, when we feel people's rejection and ridicule, when we are made a gazing stock for Christ. We know these feelings well, but Jesus warned us saying:

"For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's and of the holy angels."

LUKE 9:26

Beloved, this ought not to be, and certainly the Bride of Christ must learn to reign and rule over this sense of shame that rises up in the flesh. This thing must be put down and crucified within us, for Jesus Christ will not take such a one to be in union with Himself, to bear His name as Bride and wife.

Webster defines "shame" as a painful feeling from a wrong or foolish act, and in the Greek it is defined as a disgrace, a dishonor, and to despise. The parable is a small one, but potent in meaning - touching a very necessary evil in our hearts. How strange that we should feel this sense of shame welling up inside of us, as if we have done something wrong or foolish. How we ought to thrill at the privilege to represent Him, joy and delight to present Him to others, rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer for Him! What a privilege to be able, in our generation, to stand up and be counted for Him!



**I. SMALLEST SEED**

**I. SMALLEST SEED**

This is the stature on this parable dealing with the matter of shame. We begin with the smallest of seed- Even though it was the smallest of seeds yet it was identified as to its kind, it was a mustard seed. Also, when it has grown to full stature, it must own its identity and its small beginning. It teaches us that we are not to be ashamed of our small beginnings. Having attained bigger places and achieved greater things in life, many people are ashamed of their humble beginning and do all they can to cover it, hide it, and forget that they had a "mustard seed" beginning. Regardless of how far we may come in God in stature or ministry, we must never forget our beginning in God was a "mustard-seed" beginning. We must keep an awareness of our complete bankruptcy when we came to Jesus Christ as a sinner seeking His forgiveness and grace. We must crucify our pride and shame in order not to despise the small things, in order to fellowship others that are in their "mustard seed" stage. We must learn to reign over shame that despises small things. Many people are ashamed of their beginnings in the natural - their culture, their families, their environment, etc. But the truth is, most great people have come from humble beginnings. Even though our God is so great that the heavens and the earth cannot contain Him, yet He becomes so small, as it were, as to dwell in the heart of a man. Instead of feeling shame, we ought to be thankful for our small and humble beginnings for they are the gates which open to us the way of glory and exaltation.

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

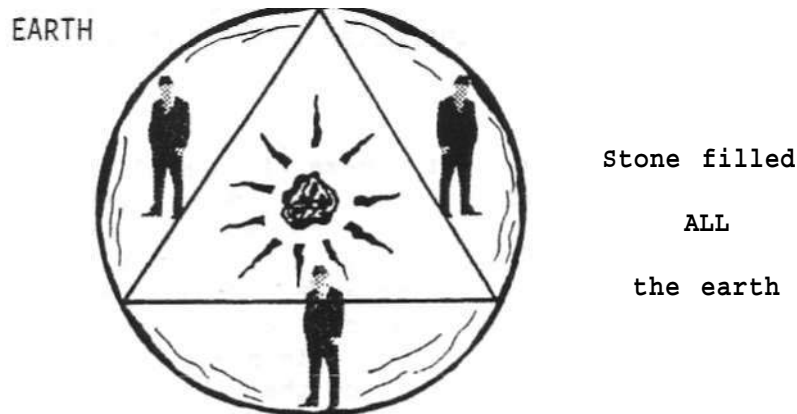
DANIEL 2:44-45

King Nebuchadnezzar had a revelation by dream of the Gentile kingdoms of the world up until the end time. He saw it in the form of a great image and the interpretation of this image with its message was given to the king through Daniel.

Babylon .....	The head of gold.
Medes & Persians .....	Breast and arms of silver
Greece .....	Belly and thighs of brass
Rome .....	Legs of iron, feet of iron and clay

The great Roman empire was divided into ten kingdoms, part of iron and part of clay - part strong and partly broken. But "in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed.... it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever". In other words, during the time of the Gentile rule, God has been and is building His invisible Kingdom which, in the end time, the height of this kingdom shall be manifested when Jesus Christ shall come with His Bride as "the stone" cut out of the mountain and He will break and destroy the entire image of Gentile power...." till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.... and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth (Dan 2:34,35). The stone grew from a small beginning until it became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

We see the same principle and the same truth here in Daniel as in the parable we are studying and that is an humble beginning of the Stone, but in the end, growing into a gigantic mountain of ruling and reigning power. There is tremendous power in humility, and it is the only sure and safe beginning for anything.



Let us rehearse what we know thus far. Jesus is teaching in parables, the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven which pertains to the reign and rule of Jesus Christ and His Bride on earth during the Millenium. In the particular parable we are dealing with here, His Kingdom, or rule and reign, is likened unto the smallest of all seeds - the mustard seed, in order to teach us that the origin of His reigning power is found in humility. But, in due season, we see the little seed has grown past the herb into a great and mighty tree, so great that the birds come and lodge in its branches. Therefore, let us crucify our pride, our shame over small things, humble beginnings, etc., for they are the doorways that lead unto the ruling and reigning power of Jesus Christ.

## II. HERB

The tiny little mustard seed, when it is grown, becomes an herb and then

a tree. We have many lessons to learn in the seed stage, lessons of humility and dealing with the sense of shame that accompanies it. Too often we judge a matter by its beginning, failing to remember that this is not the end of the thing- There is fantastic power released when something is growing, even a little seed has power to break the hardest concrete when it is growing. So despise not the small things for they contain great POWER. For instance, we get disgusted and feel like quitting just because we cannot lay hold of great trees of TRUTH in God's Word as someone else does. When we do not know the power of the seeds of God's Word we become disheartened and discouraged and ashamed of our portion. Then we begin to accuse God of respect of persons. Let us crucify our pride and shame then we can delight over the seeds of God's revealed Word to us and have patience for it to grow into a mighty tree within us. But God takes us all through the seed stage that we might learn to separate ourselves from many things in us that we are totally unaware of. In the seed stage we must learn to reign and rule over our shame...our shame of being small and seemingly unimportant and insignificant. God has to also take us through the herb stage. The difference between the herb stage and the tree stage is that in the winter season, the stature of the herb is cut down as it were to ground, back to the root, but the tree does not lose its stature in the winter season only its leaves, its dress, its glory. How humiliating for the herb to be cut down to the ground in the winter and have to start over again as it were in the spring season.

How faithful God is to take us through the necessary stages of humility to bring us under complete surrender and obedience unto Him that the gates of pearl, the gates of ruling and reigning might he formed in us. How much shame we find in the carnal heart when God puts us in the herb stage of growth and we seem to be growing so tall and blossoming so fragrantly only to find ourselves in a sudden winter season and being cut down as it were to the ground. The sorrow, the disgust, the discouragement that arises in our hearts, tell us of the shame that is hiding underneath. How precious to let Jesus crucify our flesh until we can delight to be abased or to abound as He wills. Then are we ready to be launched into the tree stage of growth.

### III. TREE

Our little mustard seed has gone through its seed stage, its herb stage and is now become a tree in stature. A herb loses its stature above ground during the winter season though the roots are still alive. In the spring season it will spring up with new stature again. Now a tree has greater stability of stature, for though it loses its green foliage of beauty and glory during the winter season, it does not lose its stature.

What an excellent example of how spiritual growth takes place. We must all begin in the seed stage and then go through the herb stage unto the tree stage. When the cold blast of winter trials and testings come, the "herb-grown" Christians give way and their stature wilts to the ground, as it were. This is not true of the "tree-grown" Christians, for when they are thrust into a winter season of stripping and dying, and the cold breath of God is working new humility in them, they stand steadfast and

sure in their stature even though they have lost the foliage of blessing and exaltation in the high place for a season. We must learn to be grateful to the Lord for everything that He does for us. He sends the winter's blast, the springing up of new life in the springtime, the scorching heat of the summer, and the harvest of the fall season—all work together for our good and for His glory. The first Psalm gives us a lovely pattern of the same principle.

4. LORD knows



"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful."

PSALM 1:1

Mentioned here are some specific things that we must separate ourselves from if we are going to grow up into full mature stature in Jesus Christ or unto the tree stage of growth. We must first separate ourselves from many things in our own flesh and then also from the flesh of others. The word "blessed" means happiness, and it is a truly happy man that separates himself from the council (advice) of the ungodly. The ungodly-man is one who has known God and has turned away and apostatized from God. If we are going to grow up in Jesus, then we have to walk under the headship of Christ and not the fleshly opinions and ideas of the ungodly. The inward happy state comes when we are in love with the headship of Christ and separating ourselves from our own will.

The blessed man also separates himself from the way of sinners. There is a way that leads to destruction, and the blessed man does not stand, linger, or frequent that way, for it is a way of death. Nor does he sit in the seat of the scornful...resting or abiding in fellowship with those who are scornful of the things of God. For instance, there are Christians who scorn the Word of God just because they do not understand it. When we scorn a thing, we actually reject it. Christians have been cheated of many blessings and privileges that God intended for them just because of this scornful attitude. But the blessed man separates himself from the council of the ungodly, the way of sinners, and the seat of the scornful.

"But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night"

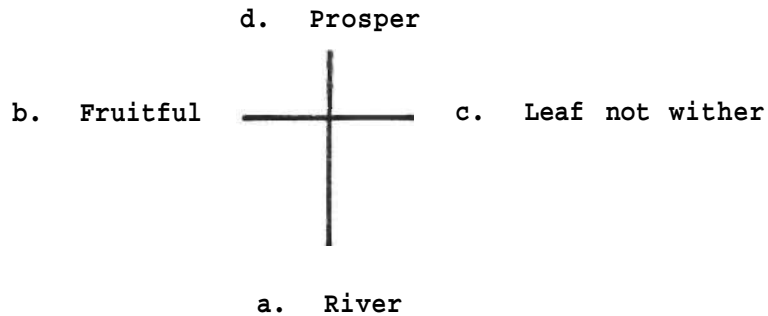
PSALMS 1:2

Delight is a strong word for it means, "pleasure, delightful, desire, a valuable thing, purpose, willingly." The blessed man finds the law of the LORD desirable, pleasurable and a valuable thing. So much so, that with both will and purpose he meditates upon it day and night . . . unceasingly! The proof of delight is meditation. What we have given our hearts to is evidenced by our words and deeds. If we love His law and delight in it and give ourselves to it, we feed upon it, we delight in it day and night.

"And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper"

PSALMS 1:3

Such a man shall take on the likeness of Jesus, for the Lord will make him into a tree. Here is a stature describing a tree-stature Christian\_\_\_one who had separated himself and found his delight in the law of the Lord.



This Christian shall be like a tree; he has taken root downward and grown upward in stature with real stability, unmoved by the winter's blast. He has learned well his lessons of ruling over shame in the seed stage, and in the herb stage, and is now a tree. And he is planted "by the rivers of water". Planted speaks of being established and settled, but notice, he dwells by "rivers" of water. He has learned to live by the waters of the Name, Death, and Life of Jesus Christ, and he is a fruitful Christian. As we abide in the vine (Jesus), who is our sustainer and nourisher, we bear fruit - some thirtyfold, some sixtyfold, and some a hundredfold. This tree stands planted by the rivers so there is fruit.

"His leaf also shall not wither".

The leaves speak of glory, beauty, blessedness. Because this tree abides, it will not fade nor lose its glory. There is a growing up in God to where we have no need to be stripped back time and again by our winter seasons but shall stand as the evergreen tree, splendid in its beauty regardless of the season. In the Book of Revelations we see the leaves of the tree of life are provided for the healing of the nations during the Perfect Age. Even so, when we arrive at this place of spiritual stature in the Lord, our leaves are not for our own glorification, but are to minister to the needs of others, that they may be healed spiritually, challenged and blessed to go on in the Lord.

"And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

This is true prosperity. All other prosperity comes and goes, but when God prospers us, it is real and lasting. In the Book of Joshua it is said, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for THEN THOU SHALT MAKE THY WAY PROSPEROUS, and THOU SHALT HAVE GOOD SUCCESS" (Josh. 1:8); meditate on the law of God, observe to do all. THEN will thy way be prosperous and paved with good success. What precious promise!.

"The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgement, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish"

PSALMS 1:4-6

The Lord KNOWS the righteous man, which speaks of a oneness of relationship, for this knowing refers to a very intimate knowledge and relationship. The LORD knows the righteous man does right; he does the will of God and that will is righteous.

The doing of God's will is what made him righteous. When God binds up the ungodly and the sinner in the lake of fire, they will never again be able to do their own will. The ungodly are like chaff and they shall not stand in the day of judgement, that is stand in the day of judgement, to help God judge, nor shall the sinner be found in the congregation of the righteous. For the righteous it is all gain, but for the ungodly and the sinner it is all loss.

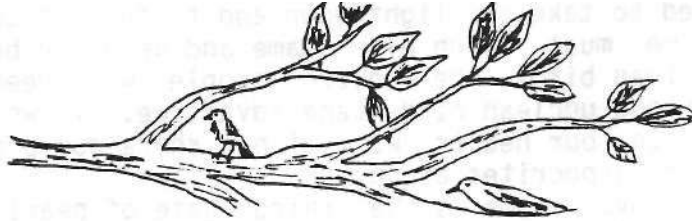
#### IV. SHELTER

". . . .but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air

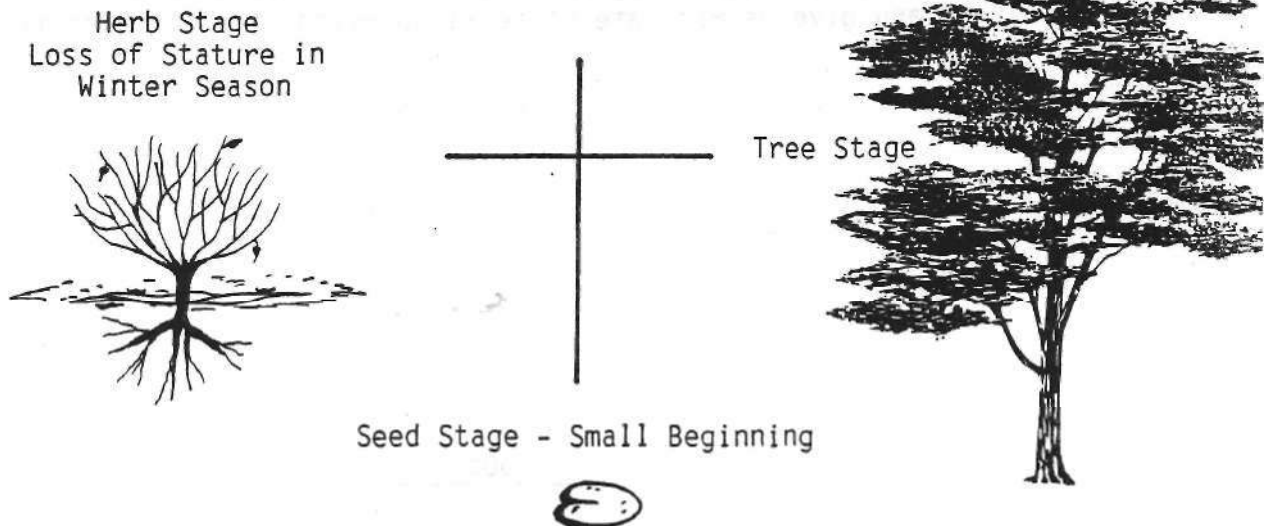
come and lodge in the branches thereof"

MATTHEW 13:32

This is the ministry of the tree. It becomes a resting place for the birds. Scripture designates two kinds of birds, clean and unclean. Both will come and partake of the glory and rest in the presence of the blessedness that rests upon the tree. The mustard belongs to the herb family, but grew to such height in comparison to the other herbs in the garden, that it was called a tree. The fowl of the air came to rest and settle upon its branches and also relished its seed as food.



Shelter - Unclean Birds or Visitors



We suffer shame in three respects in particular:

1. The shame of our small beginning;
2. The shame over loss;
3. The shame over visitors - the unclean birds.

We must learn to reign over all shames.

Having attained the spiritual stature of a tree, we then suffer the shame of the unclean associates that come to settle upon us.... eating of our spiritual food and resting under the shelter of our spiritual blessedness

and the glory of God's presence. We have nothing to say about what birds are attracted to us. Even as a city that is set upon a high hill has nothing to do with controlling where its rays will shine, so a tree does not choose which birds will come to rest upon it.

It takes great humility and grace to put up with the hypocrites - those who profess to be with you and yet in their hearts are against you. Our precious Lord Jesus washed the feet of His betrayer, even though He knew the intents of Judas' heart. We have to learn to reign over shame when there are people around us who say they are in the Crucified Way and then live like the devil. Unless we reign over this shame, we will soon be forced to take our light down and to fold up our branches of ministry. But we must reign over shame and keep our branches stretched forth for the clean birds, the sincere people who need shelter, even though the dirty and unclean birds take advantage. If we have any pride and shame left in our hearts, we will not share our presence and glory with those who are hypocrites around us.

Ruling over shame is the third gate of pearl that must be formed in the spiritual heart of the Bride of Jesus Christ. All shame can be traced to three things - our shame of the low place or our small beginning; our shame over loss and our shame of associations. As we humble ourselves at the feet of Jesus, diligently seek His face, He will crucify this shame within us and give us His gate of pearl to reign and rule over it.

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## INTRODUCTION

The New Jerusalem is called the wife of the Lord Jesus Christ in the book of Revelation and in this particular study we are especially interested in her gates, which can be opened for entrance or can be shut for exclusion. There are twelve categories of living truth found in the parables of Jesus which fit together with the living gates of the New Jerusalem. These twelve gates show twelve different classes of ruling and reigning power of the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bride of Jesus Christ must have this living truth of these twelve gates spiritually formed within her, in order that she may be prepared to dwell in the eternal city of God called the New Jerusalem. The Bride of Christ will spiritually possess these gates by yielding herself to God and allowing Him to form within her the very nature of Jesus Christ. Once formed, these gates are under His control, to open and shut as He wills.

Twelve is the number of perfect government. The Bride must learn to come under the perfect reign and rule of the Lord Jesus Christ in her life, and this ruling knowledge comes only as she humbles herself and allows God to overlay her carnal nature with His divine nature. These gates were made of pearl, and as we trace the origin of the word "pearl" we find it means to freeze, crystal from its resemblance to ice. This gives us a beautiful picture of the cold breath of God's humility. Therefore the spiritual gates of pearl are formed through the ministry of the cold breath of God's humility, through the Lord Jesus Christ. Only as we die out to ourselves, our self-will, our depraved nature, will we receive the layers of the precious pearl of His humility to overlay us and to form within us these beautiful gates of pearl; these gates of ruling and reigning power.

The first gate on the east side has to do with reigning over the Word of God. The first principle we must learn is to rule over the Word of God. God sows His precious Word in our hearts as seed, but if we fail to guard, protect, and reverence it, the enemy will quickly snatch it away, therefore preventing it from taking root downward and bearing fruit upward. The second gate on the east side, or the second principle we must learn is to rule and reign over evil. Only as this gate is formed within us can we know how to open to the good and close to the evil that would find entrance into our own temple. The third gate on the east side that must be formed, as it were, in our own hearts is that of reigning over shame, that thing within us that fears small beginnings, simple and humble things of life. As we humble ourselves at the feet of Jesus, diligently seeking His face, He will crucify this shame in us and form within us His precious gates of pearl. Then we can rule over all shame.

This completes the three gates as it were, found on the east side of the New Jerusalem. There are also three gates found on the south side. The first principle to learn is to rule over rebellion.

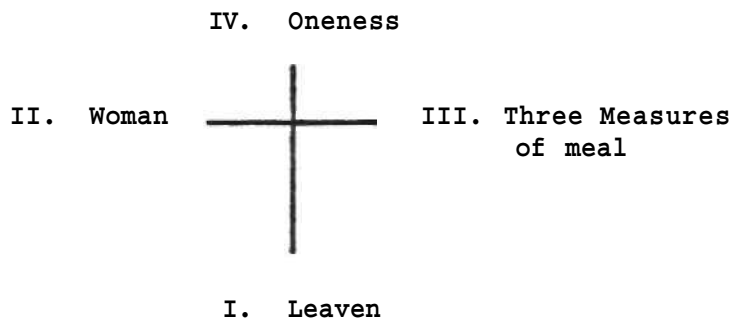
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We find three parables which have to do with the mystery of ruling and reigning over rebellion. We can never go on for God until we learn to reign over our own rebellion. Beloved, it is not somebody else's rebellion that keeps us out of God's Kingdom (the rule and reign of the Bride and Bridegroom), it is our own. Regardless of who rebels around us, it will not hinder us in our own spiritual journey as long as we are crucifying and dealing with our own rebellion. We can go on for God regardless of others who do not. Many have put their hand to the plow but have turned back, but this does not have to deter us in any way.

Our first parable under the gate of reigning over REBELLION is the parable of the leaven as found in Matthew thirteen.

"Another parable spake he unto them; The Kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened. All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world"

MATTHEW 13:33-35



The woman took the leaven, hid it in the three measures of meal until the leaven had accomplished its purpose, that of permeating the whole with a new kind of life. Wisdom is personified in the book of Proverbs as a woman, and surely this woman had wisdom in that she knew to hide the leaven in the meal, not disturbing it nor removing it until it had done its secret work completely. The leaven is a picture of the resurrection power of Jesus Christ and the meal is a picture of His precious body which was permeated completely with new resurrected Life when it was dead and lay in the grave. When leaven permeates the meal, there is change that takes place in the meal, it can never be the same, for a permanent change has been wrought.

So it was with the precious body of Jesus Christ, when it became permeated with the resurrection power, it can never be the same again. It will never be subject to death again because it has been filled with eternal divine resurrected glory.

To fully understand the importance of this little parable we must lay hold of the background that will prepare us for it, both in the garden of Eden which gives us the origin of sin in man and in the Old Testament typology where we see our precious Lord Jesus Christ portrayed in minute detail in the tabernacle, in the Priesthood, in the sacrifices, etc.

First let us consider the origin of sin. In the very beginning God made Adam, male and female, and placed them in the Garden telling them that they could eat of all the trees in the garden except the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the midst of the garden. Adam female and male (Gen. 5:2) disobeyed the Word of God and chose fallen Lucifer's perverted proud will and words instead of the will and word of God, thereby causing great injury and insult to the Word of God. They marred, degraded and dishonored the Word of God that had been given to them, although they had been made in the image and likeness of the Word Himself. This image of the Word in them was rent, torn and destroyed.

Two things happened when God's Word was marred in this manner

1. God's anger was stirred up. This was holy and righteous anger. God is always angry with disobedience and sin.
2. God's Word was defiled and dishonored. All of heaven with its angelic host beheld the humiliation, the belittlement, the disobedience of God's Word.

Two things happened to Adam male and female

1. The likeness and image of the Word became marred, torn, and shattered within them.
2. Sin and death entered into them. Not only did they destroy God's Word within, but they received a new image and likeness of sin and death.

Because of God's great love and mercy, it became His responsibility to provide something that would destroy and appease His anger against sin and death, and sanctify His Word of the humiliation and dishonor given unto it. Also, to destroy the image of sin and death in His creatures. God must provide something that would have constructive power as well as destructive. God's image and likeness of His Word must be built again in His creatures; God's pleasure and delight must be built again toward His creatures. God found this peculiar destructive and constructive power in the bread and flesh of His Son Jesus Christ which was pictured in the many bread and flesh sacrifices in the Old Testament. Secondly, let us consider the Old Testament typology of the meal (meat) offerings that accompanied the flesh sacrifices. There were two classes of bread or meal offerings that were to accompany the flesh sacrifices in the Old Testament.

**I. A. The Bread without Leaven**

"Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread; even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your house; for whosoever eateth leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel...Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses: for whosoever eateth that which is leavened, even that soul shall be cut off from the congregation of Israel, whether he be a stranger, or born in the land"

EXODUS 12:15,19

"Unleavened bread shall be eaten seven days; and there shall no leavened bread be seen with thee, neither shall there be leaven seen with thee in all thy quarters"

EXODUS 13:7

"Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning"

EXODUS 34:25

"No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the LORD, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire"

LEVITICUS 2:11

"It shall not be baked with leaven. I have given it unto them for their portion of my offerings made by fire; it is most holy, as is the sin offering, and as the trespass offering"

LEVITICUS 6:17

"And Moses spake unto Aaron, and unto Eleazar and unto Ithamar, his sons that were left. take the meat offering that remaineth of the offerings of the LORD made by fire, and eat it without leaven beside the altar for it is most holy"

LEVITICUS 10:12

The BREAD represents the DESTRUCTIVE power of Jesus Christ. The Hebrew word for bread means "to feed on, consume, battle, overcome, prevail, and to make war."

There are many things in us as Christians that need the destructive ministry of Jesus Christ. Much must be torn down and destroyed before the constructive work can be done within our spiritual hearts. The FLESH of the sacrifice pictures the CONSTRUCTIVE power of Jesus Christ. The word flesh means "to be fresh, to be rosy, to be cheerful, and to announce and to publish good tidings." Basically it is a picture of procreative and begetting power....producing life; fresh, rosy etc.

## **B. The Bread as Meal with Leaven**

"Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD."

LEVITICUS 23:17

"And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free offerings; for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord GOD"

AMOS 4:5

These two classes typify the destructive power of the Body of Jesus Christ. The first class of the bread without leaven is a picture of the humility, suffering and obedience of the body of Jesus Christ before Calvary's Cross, before it was leavened with resurrection power and became the first fruits from the dead. If we eat by faith the bread of the humility, suffering and obedience of Jesus it will destroy our proud wills, our disobedience to the Word of God and make room within us for the constructive power of His procreative Life.

The second class, or the bread with leaven is a picture of the glorified, deified and honored body of the Lord Jesus Christ that has been leavened with the resurrection power of the Father.

It was this class of bread with its leaven that destroyed all the disrespect and dishonor that was done to the Word of God by man in the beginning. It is this class of bread that if we will feed upon it by faith, will destroy all the desires we have to receive glory and honor from others. It is this bread that will destroy all the sufferings we experience inwardly from unjust disrespect and dishonor we receive from others. There is no limit to the destructive power of these two classes of bread, as it were, found in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus confirmed this truth in the gospel of John

"Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hoses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst"

JOHN 6:32-35

The people thronged after Jesus but He discerned their motive saying, "Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." When they began to enquire of Him as to how they were to do the works of God, do that which was acceptable to God, He answered saying, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom He hath sent." The crowd knew he spoke of himself and began to press him For a sign, for had not Moses fed Israel with the supernatural bread from heaven? Jesus then countered with the fact that the bread had come from God and not from Moses, and furthermore, He went on to say "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE!" Here he was, the Living Bread sent by the Father from heaven, the bread of the Old Testament dispensation was but a type and shadow of that which was to come.... and here He stood in their midst...the Bread of Life! Those who would come to Him, eat of Him, would never again hunger spiritually nor would they ever again thirst. And He continued saying

"I am THAT bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my FLESH, which I will give for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever"

JOHN 6:48-58

Jesus confirmed the destructive and constructive forces of this leavened bread. It is able to destroy all sin and death and construct all forces of life. It is true that leaven is used to picture sin and corruption in some places of the Word of God, but that is not true in this parable. Some have interpreted this parable to mean that the leaven of sin was hidden in the three measures of meal which is a picture of the church, concluding that in time the whole church will be leavened by sin. What a sad expository of the Word of God! It is true that He has warned about the tares (sinners) that are in the church, but I can assure you that our precious Lord and Saviour is well able to take care of the precious wheat (believers) that is in the church of Jesus Christ. Most certainly the whole church is NOT going to be leavened by the leaven of sin. The leaven spoken of in this parable is the leaven of the resurrection-power of the Father which is hid in the Body of Jesus Christ.

## **II. THE WOMAN WHO HID THE LEAVEN**

It was a woman in this parable that took the leaven and hid it in the three measures of meal. In the book of Proverbs we find WISDOM is personified as a woman. No doubt the metaphor of a woman is used because a woman is to be courted and wooed, and so is wisdom. It took the divine wisdom of God to hide the leaven of His resurrection, power and glory in the meal, the Body of Jesus Christ until every bit of it was leavened, was quickened, was resurrected from the dead. Likewise it will take the wisdom of God's WORD to hide within us the glorious leaven of His Resurrection Power. Wisdom will not hide this leavening power in the wrong place, wisdom will only hide it in the meal of the lord Jesus Christ.

The gate of reigning and ruling over rebellion has to be formed in us, therefore we must eat of the bread in order for the woman, the wisdom of God, to permeate our beings with the leaven of his power.

## **III. THREE MEASURES OF MEAL**

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you, And will make an offering by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, or a sacrifice in performing a vow, or in a freewill offering, or in your solemn feasts, to make a sweet savour unto the LORD, of the herd, or of the flock: Then shall he that offereth his offering unto the LORD bring a MEAT offering of a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of oil. And the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering shalt thou prepare with the burnt offering or sacrifice, for one lamb. Or for a ram, thou shalt prepare for a MEAT offering two tenth deals of flour mingled with the third part of an hin of oil. And for a drink offering thou shalt offer the third part of an hin of wine, for a

sweet savour unto the LORD, And when thou preparest a vow, or peace offerings unto the LORD: Then shall he bring with a bullock a MEAT offering of three tenth deals of flour mingled with half an hin of oil. And thou shalt bring for a drink offering half an hin of wine, for an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD. Thus shall it be done for one bullock, or for one ram, or for a lamb, or a kid. According to the number that ye shall prepare, so shall ye do to every one according to their number.

NUMBERS 15:1-12

Here were the instructions given to the children of Israel concerning their sacrifices. Notice the three different classes of meal or meat offerings measured according to the offerings of flesh. And too, there was oil and wine that accompanied the offerings. The flesh of the sacrifice with its blood spoke of the constructive life and glory in Jesus Christ but note there must be the proper proportion of destructive power (bread) measured along with it. We cannot increase in marriage relationship with Jesus Christ unless we are willing to decrease in marriage relationship as it were with our own will and way. The bread and the flesh are measured together and are always companions one to the other.

The children of Israel had not yet come into Canaan's land when God gave the orders concerning the measurement of the flesh and the bread but He prepared them in advance. Canaan's land was called Beulah land, meaning marriage land and typifies that oneness of relationship with the Word of God, that union with the heavenly Bridegroom Jesus Christ. Once Israel crossed over Jordan (which means descending) she must be prepared to specifically measure the bread, the flesh, the oil and the wine. The oil is a type of the Spirit of God and the wine was a type of joy. With the destructive work of the Bread and the constructive work of the flesh, there will be the accompanying portion of the healing anointing oil of the Holy Ghost and the wine of ecstasy and delight. What a glorious place God intended Canaan's land to be. Israel would be in a new place of relationship with Him. Israel would be the wife of God, picturing the marriage union and oneness of relationship with Him. So it is with us today; we, too, can grow up unto the fulness of stature or headship of Jesus Christ which is spiritual Canaan's land, a holy marriage union with Him. Entering into this new relationship does not imply perfection, for the children of Israel fought many battles in order to possess the land. So it is with us, Having crossed Jordan into Canaan's land, there is that newness of relationship of being made one with the will of God, but there are yet many battles to be fought before the promised inheritance can be fully ours.

IN CANAAN'S LAND  
(Numbers 15:1-12)  
BREAD AND FLESH

1. ONE LAMB  
1/10 deal of flour  
1/4th Hin of Oil  
1/4th Hin of Wine  
(Thirtyfold)
  
2. ONE RAM  
2/10th deal of flour  
1/3rd Hin of Oil  
1/3rd Hin of Wine  
(Sixtyfold)
  
3. ONE BULLOCK  
3/10th deal of flour  
1/2 Hin of Oil  
1/2 Hin of Wine  
(One hundredfold)

"Then shall he that offereth his offering unto the LORD bring a meat offering of a tenth deal of flour mingled with the fourth part of an hin of oil. And the fourth part of an hin of wine for a drink offering shalt thou prepare with the burnt offering or sacrifice for one lamb"

NUMBERS 15: 14,5

1. One Lamb with its Meal, Flour

This was the beginning, the first offering, the offering of a lamb. Notice that the wine and the oil were always measured in proportion with the bread and flesh. In other words, the wine of joy and oil of the Spirit will always be measured in proportion with the bread of destruction, and the flesh of construction. When we are depressed and downcast and things are rough instead of smooth, we can trace our lack of joy and smoothness of spirit to our failure in eating of the flesh and bread of the precious Lamb of God. He is our living Bread and our living Flesh, and we are to eat of Him and live by Him. (John 6:57)

2. One Ram With its Meal, Flour

"Or for a ram, thou shalt prepare for a meat offering two tenth deals of flour mingled with the third part of an hin of oil. And for a drink offering thou shalt offer the third part of an hin of wine, for a sweet savour unto the LORD"

NUMBERS 15: 6,7

The ram is a much larger animal than the lamb, so it calls for more bread, because the bread comes in proportion with the flesh. We have twice as much flesh with the ram, so there is twice as much flour, bread. The same holds true with the proportion of the oil of the Spirit of the wine of joy.

### 3. One Bullock with its Meal, Flour

"And when thou preparest a bullock for a burnt offering, or for sacrifice in performing a vow, or peace offerings unto the LORD: Then shall he bring with a bullock a meat offering of three tenth deals of flour mingled with half an hin of oil. And thou shalt bring for a drink offering half an hin of wine, for an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD"

NUMBERS 15:8,10

The bullock represents the mature flesh and the mature bread that is measured in Canaan's land, Beulah land, or married land with Jesus Christ. The bullock is a large steer, therefore there must be three times as much bread as the lamb. We have here three different measures and proportions. First we have the thirty fold seen with the lamb, then the sixtyfold with the ram, and finally the hundredfold with the bullock. All this was a sweet savour in the nostrils of God and was an offering made by fire.

Because God's anger is appeased and the dishonor to His Word repaired, the Sacrifice ascends into the presence of God as a SWEET SAVOUR sacrifice.

We started in our study with the parable of the woman who hid the leaven in three measures of meal (Mt.13:33-35). These three measures correlate with the shadow and type as we have studied it in the Old Testament picture of the proportionate bread and flesh. There are three degrees of measurement in Canaan's land picturing the three levels of fruitfulness found in the Bride. There is the thirtyfold fruitfulness, the sixtyfold fruitfulness, and the hundredfold fruitfulness.

#### **IV. ONENESS OF LEAVEN AND MEAL**

As we journey on into spiritual Canaan's land, overcoming the enemies and possessing the land, allowing God to measure out the flesh and the bread, we can all come to the hundredfold fruitfulness in the oneness of relationship with the leaven and meal in the Lord Jesus Christ. We do not have to be content with being the least in the Kingdom of God. We can eat of the LIVING CHRIST - eat of His Body, eat of His bread for destruction and of His flesh for construction. And over and above it all, he pours out the oil of His Spirit and the wine of His joy in proportion with the measure of bread and flesh that we have eaten.

We are studying the fourth gate in the New Jerusalem (the Bride of Jesus Christ) which is Reigning over REBELLION. What is it that actually keeps us from eating the LIVING BREAD, this living flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ which destroys the fleshly man, the carnal man, the old depraved nature within us? REBELLION in the human will keeps us from eating of the living Bread. Beloved, it is a dangerous thing to rebel against the living Bread from the Heavenly Bridegroom which He has passed out to us. He passed out the bread, the manna sent from heaven, to the children of Israel in the wilderness but they rebelled against it, rejected it, loathed it, calling it "light bread". God slew many of them in His judgement and wrath for their rebellion and rejection of the figure, the shadow, and type of the true Bread (Jesus Christ). How much more will God turn judgement and wrath upon us for rebellion and rejection of the true Bread and Leaven. Once He has given us a vision of the prize, lifting us up and giving us a taste of what it means to grow up in Him and know that union with Him, it is impossible to turn back. It is "heaven" to walk on with God, surrendering to do His will, but it is "hell" to turn back from what you have once tasted and begin to rebel against the will of God.

Let us not rebel against God's unleavened Bread of destruction nor His leavened Bread of construction. This precious leavened Bread will help to form in us the beautiful gate of the pearl of His humility which will close and refuse entrance to the proud and arrogant things of this world, but will always be open to the Word of God, to all the lowly, to the meek and to the simple things of this world.

May we come to know the wisdom of Jesus Christ that will bring about the leavening work of His resurrection power, working throughout the entire three measures of meal-bringing us into a hundredfold fruitfulness in our marriage relationship with the Lord.

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**RULING OVER REBELLION (Continued)**

We are now ready to study the second parable, the parable of the two sons. This parable has to do with the rebellion that is in every human will. IF we expect to be in the Kingdom of God we must learn to rule over the area of rebellion.

Jesus Christ cleansed the Temple three times. God's principles never change for He is the same yesterday, today and forever. God demonstrated the threefold cleansing in the Old Testament Tabernacle through the ministry of the two pieces of furniture in the Courtyard (the Brazen Altar and the Laver). God placed three things for the cleansing of Israel in the Courtyard. At the Brazen Altar was found blood and fire; the blood came from the slain sacrifices and the fire came out from God, falling upon and consuming the sacrifice. God also provided water in the Laver. Here, then, was blood, fire and water provided for the cleansing of Israel and all this was a type and picture of God's provision of cleansing in Jesus Christ.

The Word of God deals with details and it is simply amazing to see how beautifully God's Word fits together everywhere, and God's principles coincide regardless of where you find them. For example, the passover lamb was taken on the tenth day and was kept and tested for perfect ion until the fourteenth day when it was slain if it was found without spot or blemish. The lamb was a type of Jesus Christ who was crucified for sinners. In between the time that Jesus Christ made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem (which He made on the tenth day), and His crucifixion on the fourteenth day, He provided in a special way during those four days that He was the lamb without blemish - He proved that He was Jesus Christ the Son of God.

Because our parable on rebellion comes during this period of time we must refresh our memory of these particular days in the life of Jesus Christ. We want, also, to establish the fact of the threefold cleansing of the Temple by Jesus Christ which demonstrates the threefold cleansing He desires to give to our personal temples through His blood, fire and water.

"And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them to me."

MATTHEW 21:1.2

This records the preparation to Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem. Jesus came as the Lamb of God without spot or blemish, but He also came as the King and ministered His kingly authority among them. They had already received Jesus Christ as a prophet and on this day they received

Him as their King, but they never did know Him as the Priest. Beloved, if we do not know Him as the Priest first, we will never truly know Him as the prophet or the King.

"And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the PROPHET of Nazareth of Galilee"

MATTHEW 21:10,11

Actually, He was not Jesus of Nazareth of Galilee, for He was of Bethlehem of Judea. It is vitally essential that we know Him first as our Priest, or we cannot know Him as the prophet or know the prophecy.

For example, take the rod of Aaron, a type of the Priest and the rod of Moses, a type of the King. The first rod that was used in delivering Israel out of Egypt was that of the Priest-Aaron's rod was first used before Pharaoh the king. Then Aaron and Moses used the rod together, jointly, and then Moses used it alone. Most Christians are in too big a hurry . . . . they want to know the King before they know the Priest. How could they have loyalty to Jesus Christ as a prophet or as a king when they had not yet known Him as the priest? We cannot know the king; we cannot come under His headship because we have not known Him as the priest. We begin to learn Him as the priest as it were, at the Brazen Altar and the Laver, the place of blood, fire and water.

#### **1. THE FIRST CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE**

The first cleansing of the Temple is recorded in the book of John after Jesus had turned the water into wine at the marriage in Cana.

"And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money, sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up"

JOHN 2: 13-17

Jesus cleansed the Temple the first time with scourges, with cords. The Bible tells us that Jesus was also scourged, and some historians say that His back was so badly beaten his lungs could be seen. He shed His blood through the pain and suffering of scourging, thereby gaining our healing, for "by his stripes we are healed." This first cleansing of the Temple

by scourging was a demonstration of cleansing by blood therefore revealing to us how God wants to cleanse our personal temples first by the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

## 2. SECOND CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

The second cleansing is recorded after Jesus arrived in the City of Jerusalem at His triumphal entry.

"And Jesus went Into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and over-threw the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves"

MATTHEW 21:12

We do not find that on this occasion Jesus used any scourging (symbolic of the shedding of His blood). On this second cleansing He came with eyes of fire. In the first chapter of Revelation we see the Son of man revealed as the exalted and glorified King. "...and his eyes were as a flame of fire." It was as the King that Jesus came into the Temple that second time to cleanse it with His eyes of fire. Some historians say that when Jesus walked into the Temple on this occasion and looked around that there were streams of fire that went out of His eyes. And Mark's account says

"and when he had LOOKED round about upon all things"

MARK 11:11

In other words, with the eyes of the King, the eyes of fire. He did not have to pick up a cord, pick up a scourge; He just looked at them and they began to flee in order to escape those piercing eyes of the King. Even so, beloved, when Jesus comes as the King with His eyes of fire to search out our personal temples, He exposes all that is unclean and defiling as He did with the eyes of fire in the Church of Thyatira.

"And unto the angel of the church of Thyatira write: These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass"

REVELATION 2:18

Such exposure causes one to repent or to run and hide.

Thus, the second cleansing by Jesus is parallel with the fire on the Brazen Altar in the Tabernacle. These types of the second provision by

God for our cleansing, which is the fire of God's Holy Spirit. Blood comes first, and then the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. Thank God for those eyes of fire! Thank God for the eyes of the King!

### 3. THIRD CLEANSING OF THE TEMPLE

The third cleansing took place after Jesus went to Bethany to spend the night and returned the next day.

"And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there. Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away"

MATTHEW 21:17-19

Jesus left the city and went to Bethany and spent the night there. In the morning he returned into the city, passing a fig tree on the way. Finding no fruit upon it, He cursed it and it withered. All four Gospels record this event, each adding some detail of truth, but each in complete harmony with each other; there is no contradiction in the Word of God.

Turning to Mark eleven we see the same story but he adds an important point:

"And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry: And seeing a fig tree afar off, having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet. And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it"

MARK 11:12-14

Mark adds the time of figs was not yet. In other words, the time of harvest had not arrived therefore the fig tree could not use the excuse that his figs had been harvested for harvest time was not yet. Thus, the fig tree should have had at least green figs even if it was not harvest time or the time of the ripe fig. Jesus had been so busy doing His Father's work that He had had no time to take care of His own needs. He had been in the Temple, had gone to Bethany, and had no doubt left early in the morning before breakfast, for we read that he was hungry...He would have been satisfied with even a green fig for breakfast. I wonder how many of us would be satisfied with a green fig? If things are not served just right and just so and so, God's people murmur and complain,

but beloved, if we are going to walk in the footsteps of Jesus there will come times when we too will have to be satisfied with a green fig, so to speak. But Jesus did not even find a green fig yet it did not detour Him from going on to do His Father's business. Though the fig tree had failed in rendering to its Maker its just duty and responsibility, Jesus still went to the Temple of God for the third cleansing. We can learn a lesson here; green fig, ripe fig, or no fig at all cannot and does not detour us from doing the will of God in our lives. What He has called us to do in this life.... let us do it! We have a pair of footprints in front of us that are signed, sealed and secure and all we have to do is put our feet where He put His feet; they are sanctified footsteps, powerful footsteps, determined footsteps that lead in the will of God. Jesus went back to the Temple for the third cleansing.

"And they came to Jerusalem; and Jesus went into the Temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple."

MARK 11:15,16

This was the third cleansing of the Temple. The first cleansing took place right after the wedding at Cana and Jesus accomplished His work by scourging. The second cleansing took place right after His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, for the guilty scattered when His piercing eyes of fire looked round about the Temple discerning all their greed, and from there He and his disciples proceeded on out to Bethany. The following morning He passed the fig tree, cursing it for its unfruitfulness and returned to the Temple to cleanse it for the third time-all parallel with blood, fire and water in the Tabernacle, but also a shadow and type of the blood, fire and water of the Lord Jesus Christ provided for the cleansing of our personal temples today.

How quickly our personal temples are defiled by rebellion. When Jesus had cleansed the Temple the third time He began to teach His doctrine because the chief priests and the elders of the people questioned as to where he had gotten His authority to do the things He had done. All this preceded His teaching of the parable that belongs to the class, or gate, as it were, of ruling and reigning over rebellion. The parable on Rebellion:

"But what thing ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work today in my vineyard. He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I go, sir: and went not. Whether of them twain did the will of his Father? They said unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the

publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye

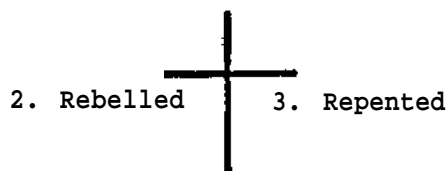
had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him"

MATTHEW 21:28-32

This was the parable of the two sons. They had the same father and yet they were different; the first son could be classified as a RUDE son and the second as a FALSE son. The full truth on any subject of Scripture falls into the fourfold pattern of the cross, as does the parable of the two sons.

**RUDE SON**

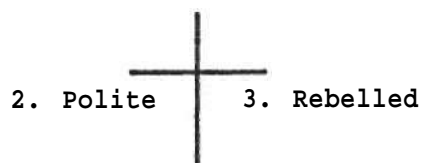
4. Obeyed



1. Word of Command

**FALSE SON**

4. Disobeyed



1. Word of Command

**A. THE RUDE SON**

1. Word of Command

The father came to the rude son first and gave him a command to work in his vineyard, that is, he entrusted to him orders, power, authority, etc. to use in his vineyard.

2. Rebelled

The rude son rebelled saying, "I will not go." The rude son was a picture of the publicans and the harlots, whereas the false son represents the scribes and Pharisees. The rude son, in the beginning, openly resists the authority of this father and forcefully opposes all control by the father. The rude son boldly displays his strong aversion at the prospect of such drudgery in the father's vineyard.

3. Repented

Although in the beginning the rude son has openly rebelled against the father's will, he soon began to feel sorry for his actions. His conscience began to prick him over his rebellion which began to produce a

feeling of contriteness and humility to surrender to the will of his father. With the regret and dissatisfaction over his past actions, the rude son began to change his mind concerning the will of his father for him.

#### 4. Obeyed

It is always easy to obey when repentance has had its full work in the heart. So it was with the rude son. He proceeded to go and carry out the instructions which had been given him for his father's vineyard. He submitted to the guidance and control of his father in the vineyard, he became an obedient son.

### **B. THE FALSE SON**

#### 1. Word of Command

Both sons received the word of command to go and work in the father's vineyard. Although the command was the same, the reactions and the results were entirely different.

#### 2. Polite

The false son who received the same word of command and answered "I go sir" was polite, which would have been commendable had it been sincere, but it was not for it was a false politeness on his part. It is possible to be polite even to God and yet not be real and sincere with God. There are occasions in Scripture where we see politeness evidenced and God rewarded them for it, for it was accompanied by sincerity. Take for instance the man who came to Philip saying, "Sir, we would see Jesus." His politeness to the disciple of Jesus was seen in the manner in which he addressed him, and that day he heard the word of God. The false son politely said, "I go sir," which sounded so mannerly, so polished, so cultured, so correct, so refined, so courteous, BUT it was insincere...it was false!

#### 3. Rebelled

It is far better to be rude and obvious in our rebellion because it will be easier to detect, therefore easier to repent and to go and do the will of God. False politeness is exceedingly deceitful because it covers and hides. Thus, rebellion that is not repented of will lead to disobedience. How many sit and receive the Word of God with such politeness but never obey because rebellion is harbored underneath that mannerly and polite surface.

#### 4. Disobeyed

The false son, as a result of his rebellion, moved, as it were, into the house of disobedience—the abode of disrespect and irreverence. The false son came to the place where he had no respect for the orders, the authority or control of his father. Certainly it is better to be a rude son and repent of it than to be a false son and fail to obey the father's command.

After telling the parable, Jesus asked them which of the two sons did the will of his father. The answer was obvious; the first one, the repentant rude son. So Jesus concludes, "Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the Kingdom of God before you." The Kingdom of God has to do with the marriage relationship between Christ and His Bride.... that universal reign that includes the whole universe, reigning and ruling out of that New City called the New Jerusalem. Jesus continued to press the point by saying, "For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him."

God always works by a threefold witness. God gave the scribes and Pharisees a threefold witness concerning John the Baptist.

#### 1. FIRST WITNESS - URIM AND THUMMIM

They had the witness of the Urim and Thummim for they had the "counsel of God." This is a familiar term in the Word of God related to the practice of the High Priest standing before the inner veil before the Ark of the Covenant enquiring or asking counsel, judgement and direction of God. Within the breastplate of the High Priest were the two mysterious stones, the Urim and Thummim, which flashed forth in witness of the mind and will of God. Notice what the Gospel of Luke tells us in regard to this matter.

"And all the people that heard him (John the Baptist) and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected THE COUNSEL OF GOD against themselves, being not baptized of him."

LUKE 7:29,30

#### 2. SECOND WITNESS - THE WORD OF GOD

The Pharisees had the witness of the Word which John preached plus the witness of the Urim and Thummim, or the counsel of God. Beloved, we need no other witness to the truth than the Word itself. If it is written in the Word of God, then we can receive it and stand upon it.

#### 3. THIRD WITNESS - WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

And in Matthew 21:32 we have the third witness, the way of righteousness; John came unto them in the way of righteousness. Standing in their very midst was the multitude of publicans and harlots that had had their lives changed by the preaching of John the Baptist. These converted publicans and harlots were witnesses of the way of righteousness that John preached.

The scribes and Pharisees had a threefold witness from God concerning God's revealed will in the person of Jesus Christ. But they rejected the

first witness that God put before them, (and to reject means to rebel), and then they rebelled against God's second and third witness, therefore they rejected Jesus Christ and crucified Him. This is why Jesus gave them this parable of the two sons, showing the necessity to rule and reign over rebellion. Otherwise, rebellion will lead us to complete disobedience and rejection of God's revealed will through the Lord Jesus Christ. Because the scribes and Pharisees rejected the counsel they received from the Urim and Thummim concerning John the Baptist, plus the word preached by John who quoted the Old Testament scriptures and took the prophecies and showed them what was coming to pass in their day, plus the living testimonies of publicans and sinners who had had their lives changed to prove that John was in the way of righteousness, they were unable to know Jesus Christ when He came. Therefore they say, "Who are you...where are you from... who gave you this authority?" He answered, "If you tell me where John came from then I will tell you... if you will admit what has already been revealed to you, then I will show you more ... if you confess what has already been revealed to you by the counsel; if you will confess the Word that John has preached; if you will confess the way of righteousness; then I will tell you something more about me. God is not going to tell us something new, marvelous and wonderful until we go back and confess our past rebellions.

Beloved, how important it is that we learn to reign and rule over our rebellions. Unless we do, we cannot expect a greater unfolding of light and revelation. Until we rule and reign over rebellion there is no going on for God. Until this gate of victory is formed within us, we cannot hope to be a part of that great universal reign of Jesus Christ...-the Kingdom of God.

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**RULING OVER REBELLION (Continued)**

In the tenth chapter of the Gospel of John we find the beautiful parable of Jesus as the Good Shepherd. Basically, this parable deals with reigning and ruling over rebellion, although it encompasses many other precious truths. After these marvelous words had been spoken, notice the reaction of the Jewish audience that heard Him;

"There was a division therefore again among the Jews for these sayings. And many of them said, He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him? Others said, These are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes of the blind?"

JOHN 10: 19-21

How blind people were, and still are today. As we preach Jesus Christ even today, we find the same division of opinion, get the same reaction. With their understanding darkened, men cannot see light nor do they recognize truth when it stands before them, so they reject it and rebel against it - all to their own destruction and loss.

"Verily, verily I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture"

JOHN 10: 1-9

We often refer to verse nine in this parable for it shows us that the Good Shepherd has two pastures, the "in" pasture and the "out" pasture, for He said, "and shall go in and out and find pasture." We know the out pasture is the place of crucifixion, the place where we lay hold of the humility of Christ: the in pasture is the place of exaltation for it is here we feed upon the freshly revealed Word of God. In the out pasture

we become acquainted with the man Jesus and we fellowship His sufferings and are made conformable unto His death. Christ is the revealed Word of God, and it is Christ who is the door to the in pasture and here we fellowship Christ the Word of God. In order for us to come through the entrance and enjoy this pasture of eternal life, having to do with the mysteries and the secrets of God, we must come through the Door...the Word of God. There is no one less or no other way through which God can reveal His secrets to us. Many times we look to others to open the mysteries of God to us, but His mysteries are hidden in the Word, and we can only find entrance through God's Door - Christ the Word.

And we saw that the Door (Christ) had a porter, a door keeper. The porter is the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost of God. The door will be opened by the porter; in other words, we find access to the in pasture (where the Word is revealed) through the Door (Christ) only as the porter (the Holy Ghost) opens it to us. When Jesus was about to depart from this world, just prior to His ascension, He said to His disciples.

"I will not leave you comfortless.... I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you...for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you...Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:"

JOHN 14:16-26; 16:7,13

God has truth, full stature of truth in Jesus Christ, but the door must be opened unto us before we can enter into these truths. The Holy Ghost does not speak of Himself but exalts only Jesus Christ, for He is the Spirit of Truth which leads us to the Truth - Christ the Word. The Holy Ghost acts in behalf of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it is He who opens the door.

So then, we have seen that the porter is the Holy Ghost, the Door to the in pasture is Christ, and the Good Shepherd is Jesus the crucified One. The Good Shepherd leads us to the out pasture where we humble ourselves and crucify another layer of our fleshly man, and then the Good Shepherd leads us back to the in pasture that we might feed upon fresh revelations of the Living Word of God. There are two sides to our Lord Jesus Christ, and we must know Him in both aspects: the Crucified Christ and the Resurrected Christ. We are to share and fellowship His humiliation and death but also His exaltation and resurrection. We then become partakers of the two kings of life He has provided for us; resurrection life (which we experience after we have crucified our fleshly nature in the out pasture) and eternal life (which we eat and partake of in the in pasture).

With this background in mind, we are ready to view this parable, in

regard to our rebellion against the headship of Christ in our lives. There are four enemies mentioned here, and we must have the gate of reigning and ruling power over rebellion formed within us before we can rule over these four enemies. These enemies will hinder us in going on for God.

#### I. STEALERS

"He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber" (v:1). There are four classes of spirits that we will meet in our spiritual journey and the first mentioned are these "stealer spirits" of the thieves and robbers.

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly"

JOHN 10:10

##### A. Thief

A thief is one that steals secretly. Sooner or later we have those who cross our pathway that act like they are our best friends but actually they are thieves\_\_\_\_they steal our treasures right out of our pockets. This is also true spiritually. In the Song of Solomon these thieves are called " little foxes;"

"take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes"

SOLOMON'S SONG 2:15

The little foxes stole through the hole in the wall and took the fruit off the vine, spoiling the vines. It was a picture of the thieves seeking to destroy the spiritual vine of the Bride and her spiritual growth in Christ Jesus. We too, find there are thieves that beset us seeking to steal our spiritual treasures by taking our time that should be given in the Word and prayer; by belittling our spiritual treasures and by filling our minds with worthless thoughts and ideas thereby hindering our going on with God. These thieves will cause us to rebel against the headship of the Lord unless we learn to rule over their rebellion and ours too. Unless we learn to rule over the rebellion of the thieves we will begin to agree with them that our treasures are not worth fighting for and that God does not really deserve so much space and time in our lives.

B. Robber

To rob means to steal unlawfully by force and by violence, even by murder - just another class of stealers. If we allow the thieves to pilfer our smaller treasures of fruitfulness in God then the robber will come against us with greater force and violence to make us give up the remainder of our treasures in the Lord. First come the thieves, and then the robbers with their force to frighten and intimidate us so that we will begin to lose out with God all around. Sometimes the robbers come through human beings who try through mental violence and sometimes even physical violence to terrorize us in giving up our desire to go all the way with Jesus Christ. Sometimes those robbers come through demon powers of Satan who whisper all sorts of lying terror to make us lay down our vision for the prize. But how precious to know that Jesus Christ will form His gates against all these thieves and robbers and that we can reign over them instead of them reigning over us causing us to rebel against God's headship in our lives. These are the tactics of Satan, God's arch enemy, who is determined to steal away and rob the saints of their many precious treasures in the Lord. But thanks be unto God who has given us the victory over our "own rebellion and the rebellion of the thieves and robbers.

**II. SUBSTITUTE**

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."

JOHN 10:4,5

The second enemy we must fight is the enemy called "substitute or stranger." A stranger comes along and imitates the voice of the true Shepherd and he will say, "Relax now...take it easy...you do not have to work so hard at this thing." This stranger, this substitute, is not the voice of God speaking; it is not the voice of the true Shepherd, Jesus Christ, for when He speaks, He urges us to press on after the prize...surrender our whole hearts...seek earnestly...strive. A substitute means alien voice, a stranger, a foreigner. Notice, it has a great deal to do with WORDS and so it is in this case, the stranger comes with another voice, another word than the Word of the Lord. This stranger can come to us in the form of our own fleshly man speaking, or in the form of evil spirits, or through the form of another human being speaking to us. Although we may be walking on for God, we must take heed to these "substitutes" that will speak words to us, words that will misguide and side track us.

### III. HIRELING

"But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep"

JOHN 10:12-15

A hireling is one who works for money. The next enemy we will meet is this hireling, for he comes along trying to steal us away from the "true Shepherd. There are hireling pastors and hireling ministers and hireling teachers that are not in the ministry because of their great care and concern for the souls of men but because of the personal gain, the prestige, and the mere professional aspect of the ministry. Such an one, because he has little interest in the sheep as such, readily forsakes the sheep, thinking only of his own comfort and preservation. How tragic it is when men, seeking a shepherd, fall into the hands of hireling shepherds. Every carnal heart has the hireling enemy in it; that is if we are paid, we will do things for the work of God that we would not do otherwise. Jesus wants to crucify the hireling and reverse the order, then we will do freely for the work of God what no one could possibly pay us to do. If we do not keep our eyes on Jesus, the hireling enemies can make us rebel against Jesus and loose the prize. But God lets the hireling enemy cross our pathway to provoke our rebellion that comes out in the form of disgust, discouragement, etc. that we may crucify it in the out pasture, then the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, will form His gates in us that we may rule and reign over the hireling.

### IV. WOLF

The fourth enemy is the wolf. In the Greek, the word "wolf" comes from the word meaning white light. In other words, the wolf comes like a ray of light and symbolizes the characteristic of deceit. When the wolf attacks, the hireling runs for his life and utterly forsakes the sheep, and the wolf begins to rend and tear and scatter the flock. Not so with the true Shepherd, for He goes out to seek the one lost sheep; He protects the sheep to the point where He lays down his very life for the sheep. The wolf is that deceitful thing in us and others that comes: in the form of light pretending to be leading us to the prize, the Bride of Jesus Christ, but is rending and tearing the image of Jesus Christ. Let us seek Jesus in the out pasture for crucifixion of these four enemies and their rebellion against the headship of Christ because they will try to hinder our journey to the out pasture and to the in pasture. These enemies will assail us and try to devour our spiritual man. But thank God for Jesus the TRUE SHEPHERD; He is faithful to bind up our wounds and heal us of our rebellion if we will follow Him and turn from the thieves.

robbers, strangers, hirelings and wolves.

We are viewing this parable from the aspect of rebellion that arises within us when we are attacked by these four enemies. These enemies are very real and very determined to keep us from finding the pasture of the Crucified Christ and the Resurrected Christ. When under attack by the stealers, the substitute, the hireling or the wolf, our first reaction will be that of rebellion against the headship of the Lord. We will begin to resent the place of suffering and warfare that we find ourselves in...resenting the fact that God has permitted this to come to us. And then rebellion stands up strong inside saying, "It is no use trying anymore...you are fighting a losing battle....you might just as well quit now as later." But those who want to be in the Bride of Jesus Christ will war and wait for the heavenly Bridegroom to form within them the gate of ruling and reigning power over rebellion, then they will delight over the headship of the Heavenly Bridegroom and that they have been counted worthy to suffer with Him. The enemies are there and He permits their attack, that we may know Him, the TRUE SHEPHERD, who lays down his life for the sheep.

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## INTRODUCTION

We learn from the Scriptures that the number twelve is symbolic of government, and because the New Jerusalem is the Bride of Jesus Christ, the number twelve is predominant in the New City. Before the Bride can reign with Him throughout eternity, she must first come under His governmental reign in her own heart. Jesus taught us how to do this through the parables, giving instructions concerning the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God in mystery form. The mystery was unfolded to His disciples, those who sat at His feet and walked by His side. The parables are particularly significant to the Bride, for it is her instruction and key to the areas over which He must rule in her heart. A gate opens and shuts, and once this gate is formed within us, it becomes subject to the will of God which determines the opening or shutting.

"And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious even like jasper stone, clear as crystal: And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates. And on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb"

REVELATION 21:10-11

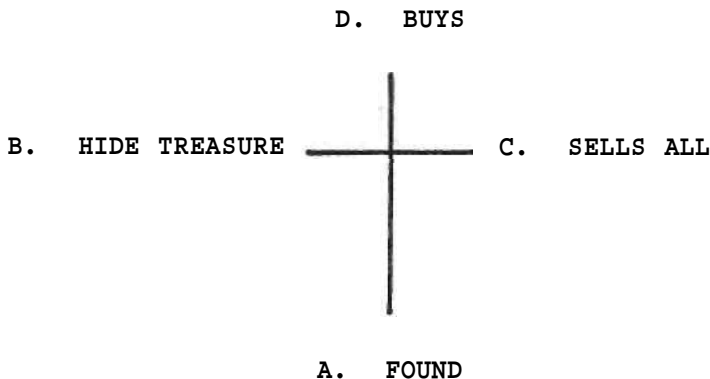
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**RULING OVER OUR POSSESSIONS**

1. RULING OVER THE HID TREASURE

"Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field"

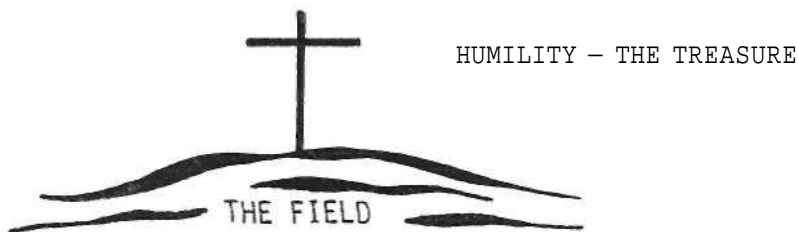
MATTHEW 13:44



**A. FOUND**

Here is a man who had found something. The word "found" in the Greek means to obtain, to have a vision, to perceive, to see something. Thank God for finding a vision of Jesus, and a vision of the prize! If we fail to guard our vision we will never obtain the prize. Although we may see spiritual visions, many spiritual treasures, if we lose sight of our visions, we will never attain and possess them.

Notice that we cannot separate the field from the treasure. There are many who desire the treasure but reject the field that comes with it. This field is Golgotha's hill, the cross, the out pasture of crucifixion. Were it possible to obtain the treasure without the field, the man would have simply picked up the treasure and gone on his way, but he had to buy the entire field in order to possess the treasure that lay therein.



The treasure is the humility, surrender, subjection and obedience found at the foot of the cross - the humility of Jesus Christ Himself. We can partake of it only as we embrace the cross with its death to the Self-life and personally enter into His humility, His surrender, His subjection, and His obedience - not in like degree but in like king. With this humility treasure comes great delight, much power, and peace and joy to the heart which is living in the Crucified Way.

To find something implies that we are looking for something. Let us deviate slightly and see what Jesus was seeking and what He found. Jesus was looking too, for treasure within the hearts of people. First, we see that Jesus looked for spiritual fruitfulness within the hearts of men.

1. FRUITFULNESS

a) Spiritual Fruitfulness

"When Jesus heard these things, he marvelled at him, and turned him about, and said unto the people that followed him, I say unto you. I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel"

LUKE 7:9

On this occasion a centurion's servant was sick and the centurion turned to Jesus for help. Sending his servants to Jesus with his message, he said, "Lord, trouble not thyself: for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof: wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee: but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed" As a Roman centurion with men under his command, he recognized that same authority in Jesus though his was in the natural realm and Jesus' was in the spiritual. "For I also am a man set under authority, having under me soldiers, and I say unto one, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. "Jesus marvelled at the man and said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." In other words, He said, "In this heart I have found spiritual fruit, the fruit of faith." Although the man was not physically present before the Lord, He was able to look into the man's soul and see the spiritual fruitfulness there. When the servants returned to the centurion's house, they found the servant well and healed.

Even so, the Lord Jesus is looking for spiritual fruit within our hearts. Unfortunately, because much spiritual fruit exists only when things are going well, the Lord must put us in tests and trials to see if He can find any true spiritual fruitfulness in us. We must all be put to the test so that we can stand with a personal experience of knowing in Whom we have believed and that He is able to keep that which we have committed unto Him against that day. When spiritual fruitfulness of faith fills our heart, we do not look at the circumstances nor the flood of the devil but shut our eyes and by the eye of faith look up into His wonderful face

and see His eyes gazing down into our heart and hearing Him say, "I am pleased with you: just keep on standing: I will bring you up after a while." Because we do not have this spiritual fruitfulness and the eye of faith, we miss the purpose of our testings and trails. God puts us in these situations to see if He can find spiritual fruitfulness in us - and that is the treasure. And if he finds that treasure in us, He will hide it, cover it over with His blood so that we do not lose our faith until we gain the victory side, the glory side.

b) Natural Fruitfulness

"And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away"

MATTHEW 21:19

Jesus looks for fruitfulness first in the spiritual and then in the natural. We must have the spiritual fruitfulness first before we can expect the natural fruitfulness. Natural growth, increasing in work or ministry, is the outward evidence of the inward spiritual fruitfulness. God does not want us to be overly concerned with counting numbers on one hand, yet on the other hand, if there is never any increase of numbers, there is something wrong. If we are praying, working, believing as we ought, then there will be the resultant growth and increase, the natural bearing evidence of the inward spiritual life.

Jesus looked upon the fig tree for its fruitfulness in the natural, but found none - only the leaves. Jesus is still looking for treasures, and His heart is not satisfied with the leaves of profession but is seeking after the fruitfulness that ought to be there.

2. APPRECIATION

a) Appreciation for Blessings

"There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger"

LUKE 17:18

Jesus was also looking for appreciation, for gratitude. Jesus cleansed the ten lepers and they were miraculously healed in their physical bodies, but only one came back to express his appreciation and gratitude. Only one was FOUND to give glory, to magnify the Lord and to express his appreciation for the blessing of healing. And that one leper, a Gentile, fell down before Him and began to appreciate Him. Jesus said, "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." Now he was cleansed spirit,

soul, and body, for Jesus declared him WHOLE. A whole cleansing is the cleansing of the whole man - the entire threefold nature of man.

I wonder, do we show our appreciation to Jesus for the many blessings we continually receive from Him? Do we fully appreciate the Word that He has placed in our midst, the sweet presence of the Holy Ghost, the power of His precious Blood, or do we just take it for granted and go on our way, forgetting to come back to the feet of Jesus and bring our gifts of gratitude and thankfulness to Him? it is a serious matter to lose our sense of appreciation to the Lord.

And as the leper was grateful for his physical cleansing, the Lord added to his blessing by cleansing his soul and his spirit as well. So if we are grateful for that which is least (and physical healing is the least for it is temporal), then God will give us the greater blessings as well, adding the spiritual blessings which are eternal. The healing of our soul and spirit is by far the greater healing. If we will be grateful for what we have already received, the Lord will give us much more, for Jesus is looking for appreciation from us.

#### b) Appreciation for Opportunities

We need to be grateful for our opportunities. Jesus took His disciples with Him to Gethsemane on the eve of His crucifixion, and said unto them, "Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder." But He took with Him three, Peter, James, and John, not because He was partial, but because these three had a closer and more intimate relationship with Him. Leaving them, He exhorted them to watch and pray while He knelt to pray a short distance from them.

A little bit later, He returned to see how Peter, James and John had laid hold of their opportunity. Had they stayed awake, they were close enough to witness the agony and sorrow of the Lord as He prayed unto the Father.

"O my Father, if It be possible let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt"

MATTHEW 26:39

This was an opportunity that no other human beings were given nor ever will be given again. It was their privilege to watch with Jesus, to observe with their own eyes the man that was joined to the very Word of God; to watch Him kneel down and pray in such great agony for the surrender of the human will of the man Jesus; watch Him pay that price for your will and my will, until His sweat came out like great drops of blood. They had the opportunity to look upon that scene of humility, but when Jesus came back, He found them sound asleep. Awakening them He asked, "Could you not watch with me one hour?"

They fell asleep because they were not grateful for the opportunity given them to gaze upon this tremendous scene. Are we grateful for the

multitude of opportunities that are ours in Jesus Christ? There were many that believed on Him in that day, but these twelve forsook all to sit at His feet and learn of Him. The Apostle John spent time leaning on His bosom. So we, too, must become disciples, sitting at His feet, resting on His bosom, learning of Him, and as such, we are afforded many precious opportunities to look into the very mysteries of God, to look upon the fulness of the stature of Christ.

Jesus awakened His disciples and went back to pray again - giving them another opportunity. Three times He awakened them: three times He extended unto them this rare and great opportunity, but each time they failed in their appreciation of their opportunity and slept. People sleep because they are not grateful for their opportunities. Is -Jesus finding you asleep? or is He finding you grateful and availing yourself of your many opportunities?

### 3. IDLE

In Matthew twenty we find the parable of the labourers in the kingdom. Even so, Jesus is looking for those who are idle, for He has something for us all to do. In the parable He went to the market place and hired labourers for the day. Returning on the third hour, the sixth and ninth hour, and finally on the eleventh, he hired them to labour in His vineyard.

The Lord would not have His people standing idle, unfruitful and unproductive, for there is much work to do in His vineyard. The Lord is looking for those who are idle.

### 4. POOR

#### a) Lost

"And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them. Rejoice with me: for I have found my sheep which was LOST"

LUKE 15:6

The Lord is looking for the lost sheep because the lost one is poor and does not know where he is going nor where he is. Even so, a lost person is a poor person - poor in knowledge. Even after we have been found and brought into a household of faith, we sometimes get lost, even like the prodigal son. We get confused, not knowing which step to take next or which way to turn. How wonderful it is to know that Jesus is looking for the poor, for the lost. If you feel lost right now, look up into the lovely face of Jesus and know that His eyes are upon you because He is looking for the lost. He finds what He is looking for and sets them in the right path. When He finds you, you no longer feel confused and bewildered, the moment knowledge comes. His presence and power comes,

you are no longer confused. The minute He touches you, you know you are not lost, but with sure feet you begin to follow Him, for He is your Shepherd. When we lose the sense of His touch, we feel lost and when lost, confused, and when confused, very poor indeed.

b) Cast Out

In John nine is recorded the thrilling account of Jesus healing the man who was blind from birth. The Pharisees questioned him about his healing and when the man began to defend Jesus and the work that He had done for him, he was cast out from them.

"Jesus heard that they had cast him 'out; and when he had found him, he said unto him. Dost thou believe on the Son of God? He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him? And Jesus said unto him, Thou has both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him"

JOHN 9:35-38

Knowing that the blind man had been cast out by the Pharisees, ostracized by his church, Jesus went looking for him and found him. Not only does Jesus seek after but He finds. And having found him, He introduced the man to the Son of God whom he was to worship, whom the church had failed to recognize and receive. Thrown out by the church, yet the man found true worship, found his Lord, Jesus Christ.

So we also are counted as poor, cast out and stripped by the devil and sin. And sometimes we, too, experience being ostracized by people, a group, a church, but that need not hinder us in true worship and personal relationship with the Lord. It ought to comfort us greatly to know that Jesus is expressly looking for those poor ones who have been cast out. And when He finds us, there is that personal seeing, that personal perceiving, that personal finding of Him. These poor ones are part of the treasure that Jesus is looking for. Once we acknowledge the poverty of our hearts. He can begin to make us rich with His spiritual treasures.

c) Dead Ones

Jesus is also looking for those who are dead. Jesus received word that Lazarus was sick, yet He tarried four days. He deliberately waited until Lazarus was dead and buried.

Symbolically speaking, we were all dead in our trespasses and sins, without hope and without God. But He found us, raised us from that spiritual dead position and placed His new life within us. When Jesus stood before Lazarus' tomb, He commanded Lazarus to come forth - and Lazarus came forth! Sometimes we find God's answer to our prayers delayed, and meanwhile, death takes place. Without the death experience we cannot know that resurrection power of the Lord. As He waited with Lazarus that Lazarus might die and be resurrected again, so the Lord

waits with us that we might taste of that resurrection life. Regardless of how spiritually dead we may be when Jesus speaks our name and commands us to come forth, those words of Life will bring us forth. Jesus came looking for Lazarus that He might bring him into an experience of resurrection life, and so He does with us as well.

Our hearts ought to leap with joy with the knowledge that Jesus is looking for, seeking after fruitfulness (both spiritual and natural), appreciation, the idle, the poor. Generally, what we look for we find, and most certainly so with Jesus. Jesus will find the fruitfulness, the appreciation, the idle ones and the poor that He is looking for, but we must take heed what we look for. If we look for criticism, for faults, for failures in the Christian walk, we surely will find just that, but that in no way negates the Christian life with its power and its reality. If we look for the imperfections of those who walk in the Crucified Way, we will find them. The people who walk it are not perfect yet, but the Crucified Way is perfect and will accomplish the fulness of maturity and perfection that it is intended to accomplish in the lives of some. How careful we must be that we keep our eyes upon the New City, the prize, and continue on in our seeking after the treasures of His humility and His surrender. Rest assured, we will find what we seek after.

Turning our attention back again to Matthew 13:44, the parable of the treasure hid in the field, let me remind you that the treasure is the humility of Jesus Christ and the field is the cross-life that goes with it. So we have seen that the man FOUND the treasure. He caught the vision of the humility of Jesus Christ with its surrender, its obedience, its subjection. It is one thing to have the vision of the treasure but another to actually possess it personally. The word FOUND means to have a vision, to perceive, to see. Once we catch a vision of going all the way with Jesus, climbing that holy hill or surrender, we must guard carefully the vision lest the enemy steal it away.

#### **B. HIDES TREASURE**

This cannot possibly speak of salvation for salvation is not to be hidden. It refers to our personal vision. The word hide means to protect, to conceal by covering with something. It carries the thought of holy zeal, holy jealousy. Once we have caught a personal vision of the treasure of humility found in Christ Jesus, (hidden in the cross-life) then we must be zealous and jealous over it, protecting and keeping it. When the Apostle Paul received the heavenly vision he did not confer with flesh and blood, but he went to the backside of the Arabian desert and hid that vision in solitude with God. As we hide the vision, God will increase the revelation of His Word to us.

So this man had a vision of a treasure, and it was hidden in a field, in the cross. The word "field" means a grazing place for cattle. The implication is that it was not an ordinary field which would be plowed, but a feeding and a grazing place. If we are going to make the treasure of His humility and His surrender ours, we will have to take the feeding place that goes along with it. That feeding place is the place of crucifixion, the cross, the fellowship of His suffering. We must take the field along with the treasure.

The kingdom of heaven, the Bride and Bridegroom relationship, is like unto treasure hid in a field, which when a man find it, he gets so jealous and zealous over it that he conceals it; we must conceal our vision with the Blood of Jesus Christ. Plead the Blood over the things that God shows you so that you will not lose the vision. Hide your vision of Jesus; cover it or the world and the devil will snatch it away from you. Even while you are out in the daily stream of life with its many temptations, problems and frustrations, plead the Blood over your vision of Jesus, your vision of the Holy Hill, your vision of the prize, then you can walk in the daily concourse of life yet not losing vision of that which has become the treasure of your heart.

**C. SELLS ALL**

It is one thing to have the vision of it and another thing to purchase it. The man goes and sells all that he has. What do we have to sell? What do we actually own? Only one thing - our soul. We do not own the things of this life, we merely lease them for temporary use. Jesus Christ gave His soul for our soul. If we are going to gain His treasure, then we are going to have to sell our body to buy this treasure. Sell your mind (soul) to God!

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ"

I PETER 1:13

"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first great commandment"

MATTHEW 22: 37.38

We need to gird up, tighten up, strengthen the loins of our mind, the procreating powers of our mind. If we are going to gain the treasure, we are going to have to put all we have into it. And we are commanded to love the Lord with our soul, and our mind. Sell out to God - give Him your whole mind. If we fail to do this, the devil will get to our minds one way or another, and if we continue in this condition, with him possessing our mind, then ultimately our mind will become a reprobate mind. Sell all; give it all the energy and concentration you possess and God will open His Word unto you and you will begin to lay hold of the treasure for yourself.

**D. BUYS FIELD**

He buys the field; buy means the redeem and redeem means to recover by

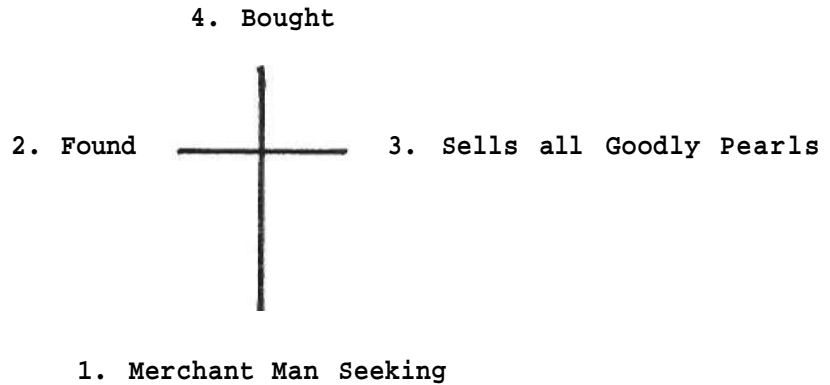
paying a fee. In order to have the treasure that is in the field we have to buy the whole field. If we are going to have Jesus' surrender and humility, then we have to buy the whole field of the cross, buy the Crucified Way, because the treasure is hid in it.

This concludes our study on the first parable that shows us how to reign and rule over our possessions. We must have the vision of the treasure first. Having found the vision and seen what a treasure it is to possess the humility of Jesus Christ, we must hide that vision under the Blood of Jesus lest it be stolen from us, we must sell all to purchase the field which is the cross, and buy it. What a great treasure is this humility. Without it, we can never attain to the Bride relationship with our heavenly Bridegroom; we must have formed within us this gate of ruling and reigning over our spiritual possession in Jesus Christ.

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RULING OVER OUR POSSESSIONS (Continued)

The fifth gate is reigning over Possessions and is taught by four parables: the hid treasure, the Pearl of great price, the rich fool, and spiritual possessions. Let us examine the parable of the Pearl of great price that we may learn to rule and reign greater over the rebellion of our carnal wills:



"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it"

MATTHEW 13:45,46

This parable has to do with reigning over our possessions. The first parable in connection with the fourth gate was that of the HID TREASURE, in which we saw a man finding a hid treasure (Kingdom of Heaven) which represents any Christian who hungers and thirsts for the heavenly rule and reign of Christ in their heart so much that they are willing to sell all to obtain His reign. The man found the treasure hid in the field, therefore in order to obtain the treasure, he had to purchase the entire field. The field represents that cross of Jesus Christ with its crucifixion, suffering, humiliation and death; the hidden treasure represents the humility and surrender of Jesus. Before we can possess this wonderful treasure of the reigning power of the humility and surrender of Jesus which reigns over all rebellion and unrest in eatery situation, we must buy the field of crucifixion, suffering, humiliation and death.

In our second parable we see not just an ordinary man, but a merchant. Merchant in the Greek means one who does wholesale business.

**1. Merchant Man Seeking Goodly Pearls**

This is a merchant man, a business man, one with sufficient knowledge experience and training to handle a wholesale business; therefore he is

not in the same category with the ordinary man. The natural illustration here unveils a spiritual principle and is also seen in the Old Testament Tabernacle which was laid out in the form of the cross, the first piece of furniture being the Brazen Altar found at the foot of the cross as it were, with its sacrifice of blood and fire which represented the Blood of Jesus Christ and the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire. If we will buy the whole truth of the blood and fire at the Brazen Altar, then we will be ready to come higher to the second piece of furniture or Laver which represents the Name, Death and Life of Jesus Christ. If we will live at the Brazen Altar, in the Blood of Jesus Christ and under the Fire of the Holy Ghost, we will have many precious experiences which will enrich us in knowledge, experiencing and training to become a spiritual merchant man that we might come to the Laver, the depths of the Waters of His Name, Death and Life and look for godly pearls which are hidden there.

The merchant man was seeking, which means he was exploring, inquiring, searching, going in quest of, taking pains to find, soliciting, trying to track down, etc. This was his business, trying to obtain goodly pearls. But in order to have something to trade with, to buy with, it is necessary to acquire many little goodly pearls, then eventually one would have enough buying power to buy that one big pearl - the Pearl of great price.

The process of making a pearl in the natural is very interesting. The oyster lives in the depths of the water, and when some foreign substance like a grain of sand finds its way within the oyster shell, it causes the oyster to begin to weep, as it were, or secrete from its glands liquid mother-of-pearl, covering the foreign substance with itself. In the process of time the foreign substance is completely covered with the mother-of-pearl, and thus a little pearl has been formed. Layer upon layer, layer upon layer, until the original intruder is no longer seen, but a lovely pearl instead. The mother-of-pearl is the substance with which the oyster lines the inside of his shell, so then a pearl in one way is really a shell as it were, turned wrong side out.

this over-laying process in the formation of the pearl is such a precious picture of what the Lord Jesus Christ can do in the depths of the waters of His Name, Death, and Life. Jesus Christ can humble Himself to the size of a grain of sand and come into our hard shell-like hearts and then take us to the depths of His Name, Death and Life and give us a living vision of what He has done in order to become one with us which in turn causes our hard shell hearts to become broken and cry out for living union with the Rock, Christ Jesus, until we become one with Him as the oyster and the grain of sand become one. The formation of our union with Jesus Christ and His Nature, His character, His authority (which is the meaning of the word NAME) takes place in the deep waters, the depths of the Laver, as the union of the pearl and the grain of sand takes place in the depths of the sea. Our union with Him does not take place as we minister behind the pulpit or serve Him in any public capacity, but is experienced in the depths of the watery grave - fellowshiping His sufferings and being made conformable unto His death. But to know this great union, we must be willing to sell all our other goodly pearls, our goodly unions of this life and cling to Jesus and surrender to accept Him as the pivot, the center of our beings, even as the grain of sand, the

little rock is the center of the pearl. Then He will cause our hearts to become broken and contrite and filled, as it were, with the mother-of-pearl of his divine Nature. Thus, we become joined, made one with the Heavenly Bridegroom which is the greatest of all unions. It is the Pearl of great price. Once we taste of this great Pearl, we are willing to sell all other unions, all other goodly pearls. We recall how Jacob wrestled with the angel of the Lord crying, "I'll not let you go until you bless me." In other words, "Lord, I am willing to sell all, give up all my little pearls, that I might be made one with your nature." Jacob was never the same after that experience because from that night on Jacob "halted on his thigh" and his name was no longer Jacob, but Israel - a prince with God. Jacob caught a glimpse of the Pearl of great price and it was all that his heart desired.

Every time we go down into the depths of the waters of His Name, Death and Life we come up with some more goodly pearls - knowledge, experience, gifts, ministries, which we willingly trade for the great union (the great Pearl) of the Bride and Bridegroom as Abraham willingly offered his goodly pearl, Isaac, for the Pearl or union with the LORD Himself. Goodly means beautiful, valuable, honest, virtuous. Sometimes we are tempted to think some things are too small and insignificant in our rebellious attitudes to bother the Lord by taking them to the waters of His Name, Death and Life therefore we by-pass precious opportunities to gain goodly pearls.

But we must keep in mind that we are mainly concerned with possessing the one great pearl, the Pearl of great price. As we continue in our Christian walk and service for the Lord, we are bound to pick up some precious little pearls along the way. Many Christians will go to heaven carrying their little string of pearls of knowledge, experience, ministry, etc...and as lovely as they are, it will be tragic because they will have failed to lay hold of that one great Pearl which is the union, the oneness of relationship of the Bride and the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the reason the White Robe group weep when they get to heaven (Rev. 7:14-17). We may seek goodly pearls but if we miss the wonderful union with Jesus Christ as the Bridegroom, then we have missed the Pearl of great price, the most valuable of all pearls. To know Him is better than to be known.

## **2. Found**

The word "found" means that he began to see it, to understand it, to perceive, to gain first sight of or knowledge of. The day came when the merchant man began to see that the thrill was not in possessing all the lovely little pearls, but in the one great Pearl or that Bridegroom union with Jesus Christ. The greatest possession for time and eternity is to be in the New Jerusalem, the New City, the Bride of Jesus Christ. But before we can attain that place, we must learn how to reign and rule over our rebellious wills which prefer to hold on to our little goodly pearls instead of selling all for the one great Pearl.

## **3. Sells All Goodly Pearls**

When the merchant found this one pearl of great price, he sells all of

his goodly pearls to obtain it. Jesus Christ also set the example of this spiritual truth in His life. His pearl of great price was the oneness of union with the Father. In His earthly journey, Jesus had many pearls of spiritual gifts, wisdom, authority, ministry, power, supernatural works, etc... but He willingly surrendered all these pearls to the Father that He might maintain the oneness of relationship with Him. This is what Jesus did when He went to the Garden of Gethsemane and the cup of death was given to Him. People often-times misunderstand the words of Jesus on this occasion. He was not praying to escape the death of the cross when He said:

"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt"

MATTHEW 26: 39

The spirit and soul of Jesus was quickly disintegrating from His physical body in the Garden when His body sweat great drops of blood, yet Jesus Christ did not lift one finger of His great gifts and power to strengthen Himself and push aside the cup of death that He was drinking. If He had drunk that cup fully in the Garden, He would never have gone to the cross. The desire of Jesus was to go to the cross and to fulfill the purpose for which He had come into the world, therefore He prayed, "let this cup (death) pass from me (in the garden)." He gave all His goodly pearls of gifts, power, authority, etc., of His own will to the Father that He might maintain that oneness of relationship with the will of the Father. Jesus was willing for the Father to change His plan of salvation through the cross by being willing to die right there in the Garden, therefore He prayed "not my will, but thine be done" He gave all, sold all His goodly pearls to buy the Pearl of great price - unbroken union with His Father's will and oneness of relationship with Him. As He later hung upon the cross he cried with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lemana shabakthani" (Lamsa translation from ancient Eastern manuscripts, page 986) which means "My God, My God, for this cause was I spared, or this was my destiny." God the Father spared the Son's life in the Garden, sending an angel to strengthen Him, lest He die there, that He might die upon the cross on Golgotha's hill. When Jesus died His spirit, soul and body were separated; His spirit went to the Father (Luke 23:46), His soul to Hell (Hades) (Acts 2:31), and His body went to the grave (John 19: 40-42). This was a greater price that went even beyond the suffering of the cross even the suffering of complete separation of spirit, soul and body. But after His resurrection, this same man, this same Jesus was eternally made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). Jesus the man, sold all His goodly pearls of power and authority of His will that he might purchase this great Pearl, this eternal union with the Lord and Christ and with the Father. In other words, He gave humanity and its will for divinity and its will. This great Pearl Jesus found through the Waters of Death. Likewise, we too by faith, can lay ourselves daily in the pool or Laver of the Death of Jesus and allow our wills to be surrendered to Him and receive His will to be joined to ours and overlay them with the mother-of-pearl of tears and brokenness which come from His precious humility. As we surrender to die to our will, our pride, our ways, then

Jesus in turn will cover us with His precious humility in tears and brokenness that we might know this fulness of union with Him and with His nature. We become like Him! This is worth selling out for. How small and unimpressive are the many goodly pearls of power, authority, ministry, gifts, talents, we possess in comparison to the glory of the PEARL OF GREAT PRICE. Then it is easy to surrender our little goodly pearls of spiritual gifts, ministry and service, accomplishments - the beautiful things, the valuable things, the honest things, the virtuous things: surrender it all to buy the Pearl of great price. When the Pearl of great price is formed within there is no complaining or murmuring because one is unnoticed, criticized, persecuted, etc, but only the thrill and joy of oneness of relationship with the Heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, His love and delight is so great it overshadows all suffering and pain.

#### 4. Bought it

The merchant man sold all and bought this one Pearl of great price. Jesus is our classic example of this principle. Think of the great depths He went to for us in His Laver experience providing us accessibility to His name, His Death, and His resurrection Life. We all begin our spiritual journey at the Brazen Altar where we appropriate His shed Blood for the remission of our sins. And it is here also that we receive and enjoy the experience of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost and the accompanying gifts and ministries of the Spirit of God. So rich is our blessedness at the Brazen Altar that we may want to sit down here, perfectly content and satisfied with the many precious, goodly pearls, completely unaware of the Pearl of great price which is ahead at the Laver.

This same principle is demonstrated in the experience of the Church of Ephesus in the Book of Revelation.

"Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write: These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches:

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God"

REVELATION 2:1-7

Here clearly defined, are some of the goodly pearls of the Church of Ephesus that she rebelled about selling out for the Pearl of great price. let us see what these goodly pearls were:

a) Good Works

Good works are valuable, a virtuous thing, and oftentimes beautiful. But works are just a goodly pearl that we must willingly trade in order to purchase the pearl of great price. There are Christians that will make a fair showing spiritually as long as they have a job to do. When the work is taken from them, then they seem to crumble in their consecration and their union with the Lord. It only proves they were busily stringing their own string of pearls and not willing to surrender them in order to know the union with the will of the Father and His Son. If the Lord asks us to give up our leadership, our position, our ministry for a season and trade that goodly pearl for the big Pearl, we often cry "I do not want to give it up\_\_\_that is not fair...that is my work." As we go for God, all of us Christians gain some goodly pearls along the way, for every Christian has a taste of His death and suffering to one degree or another. And with these pearls some Christians will be on the new earth, others in the new heaven, but the Bride of Christ will have' ruled and reigned, in this life, over her rebellion and will have bought the one great Pearl - the PEARL OF GREAT PRICE. God gives us pearls so that we may learn to crucify our rebellion, not only in giving up the evil things in our lives to God, in order for Him to separate our hearts from evil but that we may also learn to give the good things to God in order that our hearts may be separated from good things thereby leaving only God to fill the human heart and will. Did not the Serpent use both good and evil in the beginning to entice the human heart and will away from marriage union with God's will; therefore man must be separated from good and evil, then he can buy that one big Pearl.

b) Labor

There is a distinction between work and labor. Labor means to reduce your strength. Energy begets energy, so oftentimes when we work our strength is increased rather than reduced. But labor consumes strength and the word also means to be in pain, and to be weary. When we preach with all of our might under the anointing of the Holy Ghost, we labor for it means the giving of our very energy and soul. When we pray, if it is true prayer, we labor. These activities of labor bring us little pearls, and the High Priest, Jesus, recognized that the Church of Ephesus possessed these, but His intention was "I gave them to you that you might hold on to the pearl of your first love."

c) Patience

Patience means cheerful endurance, and without patience we will never make it to the top - to full mature spiritual stature. In order- to fulfill this spiritual journey we will have to lay hold of some pearls of endurance, of patience.

Remember now, we are not speaking of salvation. Salvation is a free gift of God's grace; we did not seek Him when we were sinners, but he sought us. The Pearl of great price is something hidden (a mystery) and God does not hide salvation - He has freely given that we all might freely receive. But God gives us, as believers, various goodly pearls along our spiritual journey that we might have something with which to buy that one big Pearl, the prize or the Bride of Jesus Christ.

d) Holy Hatred

Ephesus had many pearls, among them this holy hatred against evil, against hypocrites and the spirit of lawlessness. Yet, Jesus said, "You have all this, but you are missing that first love - that great Pearl." If God has given us the little pearls of works, of laboring, of patience, of holy hatred against sin, why then are we not using them to get alone with Jesus and to visit the Waters of His Name, Death and Life that we might have a greater union of that first love with Him?

d) Borne

Ephesus had borne, lifted the burden, declared, sustained, received. They had shoulders to bear and were great burden bearers for God. They had that pearl to bear up in the heat of the day.

f) Hast Not Fainted

A goodly pearl to have is to not faint when the Lord rebukes, chastises or corrects us. Surely we need these goodly pearls to buy that one great Pearl - the Prize - the Pearl of great price. We must learn to guard our goodly pearls for with them we have the power to buy the one great Pearl - to be in the Bride of Jesus Christ.

The Bride must have formed within her this gate of pearl, or the ruling and reigning power over natural possessions and spiritual possessions which the Lord has given. If we do not rule over possessions, then they will rule over us, thereby usurping the place of the heavenly Bridegroom. Even as the merchant man faithfully sought after the Pearl of great price and found it, and sold all the goodly pearls in his possession in order to buy it, so we too, must move on from our Brazen Altar experience to the Laver, seeking, finding, selling and buying that precious union with Jesus Christ, overlaid with the pearl of His divine humility, exchanging our possessions for His possession.

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RULING OVER OUR POSSESSIONS (Continued)

"And he spake a parable unto them, saying. The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto Him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasures for himself, and is not rich toward God"

LUKE 12: 16-21

We must learn to reign over our possessions, whether they be great or small. Earthly possessions rule the human heart until the humility of Jesus is formed to dethrone them. For this reason, Jesus admonished His disciples saying;

"Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God."

MATTHEW 19:23,24

The Kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God relate to the Bride and Bridegroom relationship: first, their rule during the Millennial period on earth, and second, their universal reign throughout eternity. To be one with Jesus Christ in the Bride and Bridegroom relationship, we must rule and reign over possessions.

**I. THE PRIDE OF REVELATION OF THE WILL OF THE RICH FOOL**

"And he thought within himself...." See his proud thought issuing from his pride of revelation. The end of the parable shows how deceitful his pride of revelation really was. The shaft of our human will, composed of its pride of revelation, pride of redemption, and pride of satisfaction, is sustained by the river of deceit that flows down the middle of the will. The thoughts of the rich fool were deceitful, making him believe that he actually possessed the material riches he enjoyed for the moment. In reality, the only thing that belongs to any of us is our eternal soul: therefore, the only lasting and eternal possessions are the things we put within our soul whether good or bad. The things we fill our souls with

in this life will be our possessions throughout all eternity. It is imperative to feed our souls on the Word of God and the Spirit of God so that when we leave this world, we may be filled with the riches and beauties of the pearls of humility of Jesus Christ. Our material possessions are not really ours: they are lent to us only for a time. We have the use of them in this life, but when we die we must leave them to others.

And then the rich fool thought within himself, "What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow MY fruits?" Again, the pride of revelation continued its deceitful thinking, causing him to claim all his prosperity as the product of himself- "MY FRUITS." Had not God given the sunshine and the rain? Had not God supplied the wherewithal: the seed, the soil's nourishment and the strength to labour? We have no evidence whatsoever that the rich fool acknowledged God's part nor that he gave God a tithe of his possessions and wealth. There is no awareness of God in the picture nor love and praise rendered to Him.

## II. THE PRIDE OF REDEMPTION OF THE WILL OF THE RICH FOOL

### D. I Will Bestow

B. I Will Pull Down



C. I Will Build

### A. I Will Do

Operating solely by his own will, the rich fool next manifests his pride of redemption by saying, "This will I do..." The price of revelation begets the pride of redemption. God alone, has the true path of redemption which can and will redeem us. Because mankind is hopelessly lost and undone in his sinful state, God extended His will of redemption by sending His Son to the cross, that through His sacrificial death man might be saved. But the devil imitates the will of God and offers his pride of redemption, and by this, the rich fool seeks to save himself.

The rich man has a plan of his own; he will pull down his barns and build greater to hoard all HIS fruits and goods.

Notice his selfishness, as he manifests no concern for the poor and less fortunate about him. Sometimes God blesses us with material possessions in order to test us. Sometimes God places the poor before those who have much in order to see how the rich will treat them. If there were no poor, how could we be tested in regard to our possessions and our willingness to share with those who have not?

The rich fool said, "This will I do....I will pull down...there will I bestow all my fruits..." So the fool speaks, little realizing that soon God will require his soul and catch him out of this life. How much better it would have been to say, "I do...IF THE LORD WILLS!" The rich fool was cut off before his pride of redemption could fulfill its goal to pull down old barns, build new ones and bestow fruits.

### III. THE PRIDE OF SATISFACTION OF THE WILL OF THE RICH FOOL

"And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry." The pride of satisfaction, the final portion of his human will is seen here. The fool looks forward to many satisfying years of revelling in his wealth and prosperity - barns filled with HIS fruits and HIS goods. Notice the stature of the carnal, fleshly Self which he anticipates:

#### 4. MERRIMENT



#### 1. EASE

##### 1. Take Thine Ease

The rich fool expected years of satisfaction with freedom from pain, worry, difficulty or poverty. He looked forward to rest, comfort, relaxation, leisure. He looked forward to the satisfaction of having tension lessened, anxieties relieved, pressures alleviated, and strains reduced. But although he anticipated early retirement, he never had a chance, for that very night God cut him off from the land of the living. As Christians we are never to relax. At times we are tempted to sit down after a battle is won, but it is dangerous to say "Soul, you have fought a battle here, now take it easy, rest up for awhile and enjoy yourself." Our real strength comes as we wait on the Lord in prayer and diligently give ourselves to the study of His Word. In fact, God says in His Word, "Woe unto them that are in ease in Zion." It is the fleshly man that seeks after ease, whereas the Spiritual man is aggressive, ever seeking the things of God.

##### 2. Eat

What an earthly anticipation! Finding pleasure in gorging oneself with rich and dainty foods. An affluent society is usually characterized: by physical unfitness and the diseases that accompany over indulgence. But

the rich fool rejoices because he can eat what he will and how much he chooses.

### 3. Drink

"Soul, rejoice and be glad, because you can drink anything you desire from now on out." His belly being his god, he failed to realize that he was but a man whose life rested in the hands of God. Little did he realize that God's time had struck the midnight hour and that shortly he would stand in the presence of God. Actually he had no opportunity that so filled him with delight. Although his deceitful mind told him he had "many years", that very night God required his soul.

### 4. And Be Merry

The rich fool expected to be merry, happy, joyful, fully satisfied. He looked forward to a time full of fun and laughter, a time of hilarious, festive amusement, but this time never came because God cut him off. However, if his days had been extended, he would have found them filled with bitterness and wormwood for man's will can never produce true and lasting satisfaction. Man's will is deceitful and misleading. Apart from the will of God there is no real satisfaction.

## IV. JUDGEMENT AND DEATH

"But God said unto him. Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?"

A man that takes his own way is a fool. The parable of the rich fool gives us an excellent lesson about the result of the human will. This rich man did not rule his possessions, but his possessions ruled him. The end of his way (his will) was death, destruction, and loss. God's Word states concerning man's way, which is his will:

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

PROVERBS 14:12

This rich man was a fool because he failed to reckon with God; he ignored God as if He were not even in the picture. But God was already in the picture, and He would not be ignored, he had created the man's soul; He had given him land and fruit; God had provided trees for the man to build his barn. The poor rich man never got to take his ease, to eat, drink and be merry, for his earthly journey ended that very night.

How often we worry about things which are not ours. The fruits and goods that so concerned the rich fool were not really his possessions, so they were not his problem. Before morning he no longer had them. When the rich fool met with judgement and death from God he stood with only his

soul, and his soul was poor! His earthly life had been concerned only with laying up material, earthly treasures for himself, but his eternal soul knew only neglect. God's verdict was "NOT RICH TOWARD GOD." The rich fool entered into eternity empty, stripped, naked, barren, and utterly destitute before God. Little wonder, then, that God said, "THOU FOOL!"

The Bride of Jesus Christ must learn how to reign and rule over the earthly possessions with which she is entrusted. When this gate of reigning power is formed within the Bride, the Bridegroom will open or shut the gate to release or stay her possessions according to His divine will, there is a time to share and a time to withhold. But we must come under the headship of the Bridegroom in order to have this-gate operated by His Will, How beautiful is this gate of pearl when the bride has learned to minister her wealth (natural and spiritual) under the direction of her heavenly Bridegroom. The Bride will not be like the rich fool, for she lightly esteems the treasures of this world and understands that they are not hers but God's.

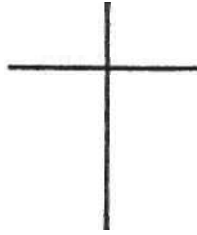
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**RULING OVER OUR POSSESSIONS (Continued)**

This study pertains to the fourth parable which completes this gate of ruling over our possessions.

**IV. The Nobleman's Vengeance**

**II. The Nobleman's  
Subjects**



**III. The Nobleman's  
Judgement**

**I. The Nobleman's Journey**

**I. THE NOBLEMAN'S JOURNEY**

"And as they heard these things, he added and spake a parable, because he was nigh to Jerusalem, and because they thought that the kingdom of God should immediately appear"

LUKE 19:11

Because the end of the earthly journey of Jesus was drawing nigh and his crucifixion was at hand, He taught His disciples this parable to enlighten them concerning the events which were shortly to come to pass. The disciples expected their Master to introduce His kingdom with temporal pomp and power. They expected to go up to Jerusalem to see Jesus clothe Himself with great glory and to take the throne there. Jesus tried to check their expectations and to rectify their mistaken notions through this parable. Although the disciples had been sitting and learning at the feet of Jesus for three and a half years, yet they failed to understand the necessity of the cross. Because they were looking for the immediate appearance of the kingdom of God in their midst, they expected Jesus to be immediately crowned king of the Jews. Jesus began to teach them through this parable the time that must lapse between the cross and the crown. The Word of God declares before honor comes humility and this principle they had failed to discern.

"He said therefore, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return."

LUKE 19:12

A. GOING

Jesus knew that He was soon to depart from this world therefore He used the figure of a certain nobleman travelling to a far country to represent His going back to His heavenly father and His heavenly home.

B. RECEIVING

The nobleman was journeying to a far country to receive a kingdom. Likewise, Jesus Christ the son of God was returning to His Father's heavenly land to receive an everlasting, eternal kingdom.

C. RETURNING

As the nobleman would go, so he would return. And as Jesus Christ would go, even so would He also return, the second coming of Jesus Christ to the earth again is sure and it is then that He will establish His kingdom. His rule and reign will not begin until He has His Bride at His side.

**II. THE NOBLEMAN'S SUBJECTS**

"And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come"

LUKE 19:13

**A. SERVANTS**

Ten servants were called and they came in response to the voice of their master. Because they were "his servants" we understand that these represent Christians for they were His subjects.

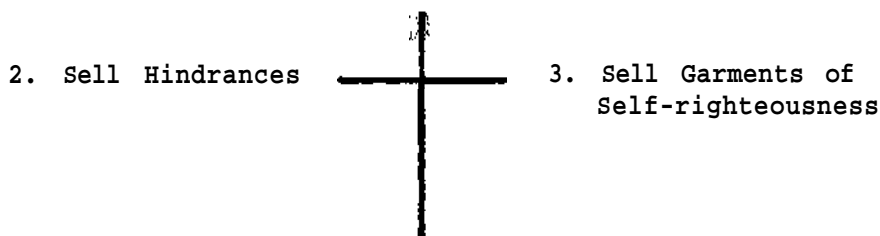
**B. SERVANTS RECEIVED**

The nobleman called his servants unto himself that they might each of them receive one pound each. Before we can receive anything from Jesus we must first hear His voice and come in response to it. Notice, each servant started out with the same gift. Numbers in the Word of God carry spiritual significance and number one denotes UNITY. Every Christian starts out on their spiritual journey the same way, with the same measure of unity-the unity brought about through the Blood of Jesus Christ. None of us can accuse the Lord and say that we started with a disadvantage and that others had a better beginning than we. This is impossible, for all of the servants of our King Jesus begin alike, each with his one pound of unity with the Master.

"Occupy till I come." The word "occupy" in the Greek means to trade, to

buy and sell. Jesus was really telling them to occupy, buy and sell in a spiritual sense. Before we can have any buying power with God we are going to have to do some selling. To sell something means to deliver, to transfer to another; to give up for a consideration; to dispose of for something else, to dispose of one's property completely. Therefore, if we are going to occupy we must part ways, get rid of or sell anything that would hinder our going on for God. With each thing that we get rid of we get a like measure of buying power in return. In other words, our buying power corresponds directly with our selling power. God's Word tells us what we have to sell.

4. Sell All



1. Sell Idols

1. SELL IDOLS OF POSSESSIONS

"Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect (or mature) go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasures in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions."

MATTHEW 19:21,22

This is the rich young ruler that came to Jesus and wanted to be made perfect (to be made mature), but his possessions were an idol of his life. He came boasting of his relationship with his fellow men, but Jesus put His finger on his relationship with God. Jesus knew the idol of his life, his live for his wealth and earthly possession so he bid him "go and sell that thou hast and give to the poor...and come and follow me."

Was the rich young man jubilant over the knowledge of how to reach full maturity spiritually? No, for the words of Jesus touched the idol of his heart and he went away sorrowful.

So it is with us sometimes. We say we want to go on for God and grow up unto perfection, unto full stature of maturity in Jesus Christ, but when God begins to put His finger on the idol of our life, then we go away sorrowful. If we want to increase our buying power with God and want to increase this tenth of unity we have with Him, then we must be willing to

sell the idols of possessions that fill our hearts. Only as we keep on selling and buying can we come into perfect unity with Him and know the oneness of relationship with His glory. We begin with our first point of unity as we are made one with His shed Blood, but it is another thing to be made one with His glory.

## 2. SELL HINDRANCES

"Sell that ye have, and give alms: provide yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not, where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

LUKE 12:33,34

We must sell our hindrances, our carnal and earthly hindrances. That just makes good sense. Any businessman will unload his hindrances even if he must do so at a loss for he knows the hindrances must go before he can make a success of his venture. And so must we when it comes to making spiritual success. Obviously we cannot have our heart in two places at the same time. In other words, we cannot serve two masters at the same time. Where our treasure is, there will our heart be also. If Jesus is our treasure, then our heart will belong to Him but if our possessions are our treasure, then our heart will be set on them. Regardless of how great our carnal treasures might be, we must sell them for they are hindrances to the greatest of all treasures, Jesus Christ.

## 3. SELL GARMENTS OF SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS

"And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye anything? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one."

LUKE 22:35,36

This was spoken just before Jesus went to the garden of Gethsemane after which He was taken to the cross of Calvary for crucifixion. Jesus had instructed his disciples to "go sell your garment and purchase a sword" These garments were a picture of self-righteousness. And He said, "Buy a sword" and with that sword He was going to teach them a lesson about their true spirit and will. The sword was placed in their hand not to be used but to test them. Only with the sword in hand could the disciples have known what spirit was in them. They obeyed the words of Jesus, then they went to the garden with Him and fell fast asleep there. Suddenly

the soldiers stood in their midst ready to take Jesus captive. Quickly, Peter grabbed his sword and cut off the ear of the High Priest's servant, but Jesus reached out His hand, touched it and made it whole again.

Peter had to learn that he could not redeem the situation with a fleshly sword. This spirit is in all of us, but our garments of self-righteousness will not permit us to see this. IT is our carnal spirit that makes us want to cut off other people's ears, but we are not going to make people receive Jesus Christ by our fleshly swords. Neither are we going to do the work of God nor rule over the house of God by going around and cutting off people's ears. We are all like this in our carnal natures until we allow Jesus to crucify our wills. It is so easy for the fleshly man to slash with his carnal sword when others contrary his will.

It was necessary that Jesus show this principle to Peter. And if we are going to grow in our unity with Jesus Christ, becoming one with Him in nature, then we must learn this lesson too. We must sell our garment of self-righteousness and permit God to expose our fleshly sword with which we cut one another. If we want further buying power with God, then we have to sell these garments of self-righteousness as well and give these things over into the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### 4. SELL ALL

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field: the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field."

MATTHEW 13:44

We do not begin by selling all, but after we have been selling out to God one thing after another, then we are ready for this final place of selling all. In selling all, we hold back nothing, have no reservations and give all we own, all our time, all our will, all that we are to Jesus. Of course it is not only selling but also the joy and thrill of buying. This is why people work, so that they can turn around and buy. We sell in order to buy something. Every time we sell a little, we can buy a little. When we sell more, we can buy more. Here are some of the things we can buy from God.

##### a. Buy Wine

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money: come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken

diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

ISAIAH 55:1,2

We know it is not natural food spoken of here for it is the soul that is going to delight itself in fatness, not the physical stomach- Sometimes wine in the Word is used to picture the resurrected Blood of Jesus Christ and the joy that comes from the union with this precious Blood. When Jesus offered His disciples the cup He said, "This is my blood, drink ye ALL of it." We must go back to the Old Testament Tabernacle to understand what is ALL in that cup of blessing. Our first expedience with the blood is when we received the blood of the sin offering at the time of our salvation, but that is not all of it. There is also the blood of consecration in the Whole Burnt Offering and then there is the blood of the Peace Offering which brings us into greater union with Him. We cannot drink ALL of the blood offering unless it is opened up to us through the Word of God and then we can drink of it by faith.

So we are bidden to "buy wine." There is a lot of wine in the Word of God. The Word of God is full of delightful truths which fill the soul with intoxicating thrills and inebriate the heart with the ecstasy of His glorious presence and power. When God allows us to become spiritually drunk, as it were, then He carries our soul to heavenly heights, therefore clothing us with new realms of glory in Him. It is wonderful to drink on the ecstasy, the wine, the delight, the pleasure of God's Word.

#### b. Buy Milk

"...come buy wine and milk without price." Milk is the sincerity and purity of the unadulterated Word of God. Peter exhorted saying. "As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the Word that ye may grow thereby." What a privilege to humble ourselves before God and become like a tiny babe and put our mouth on the great breast of His Word and wait for the Holy Ghost to release a pure, holy flow of living revelation into our soul. Unadulterated milk is that milk which has not been put through man's separator. Man with his carnal separator takes God's Word and tries to separate the rich cream of truth by saying "We don't need this...this belongs to that dispensation...this belongs to somebody else...we don't need this as we are too educated...skip this for it offends our pride and dignity...etc." Thus, when man gets through skimming off the rich cream of the reality of the truth, all that is left is the skim milk, the "watery blue Jon" which could not make a flea fat. But we are exhorted to buy milk, whole milk, milk that will make our souls delight in fatness.

"Buy the truth, and sell it not, also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."

PROVERBS 23: 23

The wine and milk are pictures of the truth we are to buy. The only way we can get it is to buy it. Then it is our responsibility to share it with others, not to commercialize on it. As we spread forth the table of God's Word before others, we are only witnesses of the truth, for they, in turn, will have to do some selling also before they can actually buy it for themselves- God's law is that if we do not work, we cannot eat.

c. Buy Gold

"I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich: and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear: and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

REVELATION 3:18

To the Laodicean church counsel was given that she buy gold tried in the fire. We know this was the church that said "I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing:" but God saw her in her relationship with Him as being wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked. Dispensationwise, this is the last day church prior to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Gold is a picture of the resurrection power and glory of Jesus Christ and of the revelation will of God. As we sell our idols, our hindrances, our self-righteousness, our all to Jesus Christ, then He gives us the wine of the Word, the milk of the Word, and the Revelation of His will that is laid out in His Word. We can buy this golden resurrection power and the glorious revelation of the will of God.

d. White Raiment

"...and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear;"

Clearly, this is not salvation that is being spoken of here for salvation is a free gift of God; we do not buy salvation. White raiment is another layer of spiritual garments and spiritual power and glory to clothe the spiritual man. None of us can boast about the tenth of unity that we started out with. We all started with a tenth, it was a gift from the nobleman. Whatever additional unity we lay hold of comes to us by personal buying from God (trading in ourselves in order to buy the things of God). We cannot boast of this either, for it is still coming to us through Jesus Christ, made available to us because of Him.

C. CITIZENS HATED

"But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us"

LUKE 19 : 14

Notice the distinction made in the parable. The nobleman's servants received his word and served him, but the citizens hated him and rejected him. The nobleman was Jesus Christ and the citizens are the people of Jesus according to the flesh. The servants are the believers on Jesus who receive the one pound from the nobleman, but the citizens received nothing.

D. CITIZENS REJECTED

To the servants were committed the responsibility of the gift of the one pound, but after the nobleman had departed, the citizens sent word of him that "WE WILL NOT have this man to reign over us." This man was a king, but His citizens rejected his rule over them.

**III. THE NOBLEMAN'S JUDGEMENT**

A. JUDGING HIS SERVANTS

"And it came to pass, that when he was returned, having received the kingdom, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him, to whom he had given the money, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading."

LUKE 19 : 15

The nobleman returned as he had promised, and the first that he was to judge was his servants. He judged them first because he gave to them first. To whom much is given much is required. Jesus is going to require out of our hands that which He has committed unto us.

**1. First Servant**

"Then came the first saying, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds"

LUKE 19 : 16

Ten is the legal number. He had been busy OCCUPYING during his Master's absence. He had gained the whole ten pounds worth, the whole legal union. Selling and buying, he had gained full union, full unity, that oneness of relationship known by the Bride and Bridegroom.

the judgement of the nobleman-king was "Well, thou good servant: because thou has been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities" (v 17) To him was committed the ruling power over ten cities.

## 2. Second Servant

"And the second came saying, Lord thy pound hath gained five pounds (v.18). Remember, they had all received one pound. This second servant had also been busy selling and buying, but his one pound had only increased to five. The judgement in his case was, "Be thou also over five cities" (v. 19)

## 3. Another Servant

"And another came, saying, Lord, behold here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin: For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man: thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow" (v.20.21).

Notice, He does not say whether this is the third one or not. He is designated as another one of the ten. This one had nothing to show in the way of an increase. He had taken good care of the one pound, having hid it away in a napkin, thereby preventing it from fellowshipping or working in his own heart. He had failed to sell and buy, trading off his idols and hindrances that he might have purchasing power to increase the pound of unity that was his.

His excuse was "for I feared thee, because thou art an austere man. .." Certainly this is not true of Jesus Christ, but this man had bowed down to his own concepts about his King. We normally think of an idol as being some figure carved out of wood or stone, but the word is not limited to only that meaning, it also means any false notion or idea of the mind. How often we bow down to the idols of our own ideas and worship our own notions. So it was with this servant. And he continued to say that "thou takest up that thou layedst not down." Who ever heard of anybody reaping where they did not sow? It was just another one of his false notions that he had bowed down to.

"And he saith unto him, Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping, that I did not sow. Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury? And he said unto them that stood by. Take from him the pound, and give it to him that hath ten pounds. (and they said unto him, Lord, he hath ten pounds) For I say unto you. That unto every one which hath shall be given: and from him that hath not, even that he hath shall be taken away from him."

(v. 22-26)

The judgement of the nobleman dealt with three of the ten servants but what about the remaining seven? Nothing is said in the parable

concerning them, and where God's Word chooses to be silent, we must be silent also. What God chose to give them as their reward remains a mystery. What was pertinent to the story to accomplish what Jesus desired to teach His disciples has been stated. We have, then, three classes of people: the one in the courtyard category that held on to what he was given in the beginning, and one gained five, and the one that attained full stature and came up with tenfold legal unity.

#### **IV. THE NOBLEMAN'S VENGEANCE**

"BUT THOSE MINE ENEMIES, WHICH WOULD NOT THAT I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me" (v. 27)

God dealt with His enemies as well. "Vengeance is mine" said the Lord and it is for us to leave this matter with Him. We have no record that the servants of the nobleman concerned themselves in any way with the other citizens. The enemies were slain under the nobleman's judgment. So it is God's mercy to deal with His enemies. Were it not so, God's enemies would soon make a hell out of heaven.

The Bride of Jesus Christ must learn many lessons of humility before she can be clothed with the wall of jasper and have the gates of pearl as seen in the New Jerusalem in Rev.- 21. But she must lay hold of this reigning and ruling power if she is to come under the headship of her heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. Let us then press on to have this fifth gate formed within us, this gate of ruling and reigning over our possessions. Let us occupy until He comes, selling and buying to possess the full stature of unity with the Lord Jesus Christ.

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## INTRODUCTION

We have seen in some of the earlier chapters how the spiritual truth of the twelve gates of the New City is found in the parables which Jesus taught.

A parable is like a gate: it swings open wide to the humble and simple but closes to the wise and proud. Jesus taught in parable form the mysteries concerning His Kingdom and the New City so that those with humble hearts could comprehend the mysteries of His truth but that the wise and prudent would stumble against the mystery. The parables fall into twelve categories of truth and fit together with the twelve gates of the New City. These gates must be formed in the spiritual heart of the Bride during her earthly journey. The number twelve speaks of the perfect ruling power of the heavenly Bridegroom which must be formed within the Bride in order for her to enter into spiritual marriage relationship with the Bridegroom.

As revealed in the book of Revelation, the New Jerusalem is the Bride of Jesus Christ, and the physical description of the City symbolizes the nature of those hearts who have been joined in complete union with Him. For this study we are focusing our attention on her gates, gates which have been formed in the Bride during her earthly journey in preparation for her eternal ministry as the Bride of Christ. The Bride must possess the power of a gate to open and close if she is to be under the control and direction of her Bridegroom. Twelve is the number of perfect government, and these twelve gates correspond with twelve categories of living truth found in the parables of Jesus, each teaching us the twelve different classes of ruling and reigning power which Jesus Christ wants to form in His Bride:

We have covered the first five gates, namely: ruling over the Word of God, Evil, Shame, Rebellion, and Possessions.

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**RULING OVER UNMERCIFULNESS**

There are four parables that teach us how to reign over Unmercifulness: (1) Reigning over Unforgiveness, (2) Reigning over Unconcern (3) Reigning over Unfruitfulness, and (4) Reigning over Unprofitableness.

This message was directed to the Apostle Peter. He was not only one of the twelve disciples of Jesus, but also one of the inner circle of three - Peter, James and John, who shared special privileges and experiences with the Lord and His Word. The parables contain truth and instruction pertinent to the Bride in particular, for they deal with the Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God time. The unfolding of these mysteries was given not to the mixed multitude but to the disciples of Jesus. A disciple is one who sits in humble surrender at the Master's feet to study, learn and feed on His Word.. All believers are not disciples in the true sense. This message was spoken to Peter who was not only a disciple but also one of the inner circle.

**REIGNING OVER UNFORGIVENESS**

**IV. NUMBER OF TIMES TO  
FORGIVE THE OFFENCE**

**II. SPECIAL CLASSES  
NOT TO OFFEND**

**III. HOW TO DEAL  
WITH THE OFFENCE**

**I. EXAMPLE OF  
NOT OFFENDING**

**I. AN EXAMPLE OF NOT OFFENDING**

"And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received tribute came to Peter, and said, Doth not your master pay tribute? He saith, Yes, And when he was come into the house, Jesus prevented him, saying, What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom of tribute? of their own children, or of strangers? Peter saith unto him, Of strangers. Jesus saith unto him, Then are the children free. Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the see, and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee."

MATTHEW 17:24-27

Forgiveness presupposes an offence. If there were no offences, there would be no necessity for forgiveness. An offence means an injury, a grief, a hurt, a trespass, a fault, a guilt. When these things exist, unforgiveness rises within us until we allow Jesus Christ to circumcise our hearts and give us reigning power over it. Jesus Christ always presents Himself as a living example of truth before He requires obedience from us. To illustrate this principle Jesus told the parable to Peter, clearly showing the truth of how not to offend.

Having come to Capernaum, Jesus and His disciples were approached by those who received the tribute money. One came to Peter and enquired in verse 24 "Doth not your master pay tribute?" Peter answered "Yes" and went back into the house. Jesus, having heard the conversation outside, asked Peter a question in verse 25 "What thinkest thou, Simon? of whom do the kings of the earth take custom or tribute? of their own children, or of strangers?"

The word "tribute" in verse 24 is a different Greek word than that used in verse 25. The word "tribute" in verse 24 means a double tribute, a twofold tribute - tribute to the political kingdom and tribute to the religious kingdom, the Temple. Peter volunteered that his master would pay the double tribute. The word for tribute in verse 25 means census tax. Prior to this event, as recorded in Matthew 16:16, Peter had a revelation from God and declared "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God" With this in mind, Jesus begins to question Peter concerning this matter of paying a double tribute. Using a natural story, He questions Peter as to whether the children of a king or strangers pay tribute money that is census tax. Naturally, the son of a king does not have to pay tribute money because he is more than an ordinary citizen, he is the son of the royal family and has access to the treasures of the king. Peter acknowledged that tribute money was exacted from the strangers, those citizens who were strangers to the royal family. So then, if earthly kings do not require their sons or children to pay tribute but are free from taxation, this was equally true of Jesus. Was not He the Son of the Living God? Did not this earth belong to His Heavenly Father? Because Jesus was the only begotten Son of the Father, He was free of all taxation, free of any indebtedness of tribute money, either to the Roman empire or the Temple of the Jews. It was God, His Father, who had laid down the laws of tribute for the strangers of this earthly kingdom, and they were required to bring tribute money unto His household. Nevertheless, in spite of the fact that Jesus was the Son of the King who was the owner of the earth, and as such He had no debt to pay, He was willing to pay tribute money in order not to offend the political or religious world..

This is a principle of the divine mercy of God. It takes the mercy of God to pay that which one does not legally owe. It was this principle that Jesus was trying to teach Peter. Jesus is our prime example, and through this principle He taught us how NOT TO OFFEND.

Sometimes the Lord asks us to do what we ought to do, to pay what we actually owe, and often we become angry and resentful. This principle of mercy, however, goes beyond a just debt. Here was Jesus, the Son of God, the son of the royal family, free from any indebtedness, yet willing to

pay a double portion for Himself and for Peter. He owed nothing to Caesar's kingdom. He owed nothing to the upkeep of the Temple; yet He said, "Notwithstanding, lest we should offend them, go thou to the sea...thou shalt find a piece of money...give unto them for me and thee. He paid what He did not owe in order to avoid offence.

Again He demonstrated this same principle of mercy and forgiveness when He went to Calvary's cross for us. There He paid the tremendous debt for our sins. He owed no debt to God, for it was the indebtedness of our sins that He paid on the Cross.

There are times when we are innocent in a matter, yet accused of an offence. It is the devil's business to work offences and often people carry a spirit against us when actually we have not done anything. Therefore we feel we owe them nothing because we are not guilty; however, this is not the example that Jesus has placed before us. Remember the debt of sin was ours, but He went to the cross and paid our debt which He did not owe. If a particular individual carries an offence against us although we have not done them wrong, we still owe a debt of love, mercy and forgiveness. Because Jesus Christ took our place and paid a debt that we could not pay, we are obligated to pay a debt for somebody else that they cannot pay. Perhaps they are too small in spiritual stature, perhaps they are too spiritually poor, and maybe they do not even know Jesus Christ as we know Him. To these, our brethren, we have a debt, a tribute to pay, not because we owe them any legitimate debt, but because we are forever indebted to Jesus. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we must go the extra mile, must operate according to the principle of mercy, must pay our indebtedness to man even when we do not owe it. This is the way of NO OFFENCE. Our love for Jesus Christ and our desire to be like Him will cause us to pay people love, kindness, attentions, of which they are not worthy, nor which we owe.

But when we find ourselves caught in an unreasonable circumstance, having to pay a debt that we do not owe, we may realize that we have nothing to pay with. It is not in our hearts to pay: it is not in our will to rise up and pay. Then it is time to remember Jesus Christ, who He is and what he did for us, and if we call on Him, He will work the miracle of His mercy and forgiveness within us and help us to pay the debt. It was not necessary that He send Peter over to the sea to catch a fish, open his mouth and find the piece of money needful for their tribute fee. But He did it to show that He is the miracle-working Christ. How great was His wisdom to know the fish; how tremendous was His creating power to create a coin in his mouth; how authoritative His dominion to command the fish to the place where Peter was; what wisdom Jesus imparted to the fish to know which fishhook to bite.

Although Jesus worked mightily to accomplish this miracle, He did not do all the work Himself. He left some work to be done by Peter.

#### **1. "Go thou to the sea"**

Before Jesus would provide the substance for the debt which He did not owe and for the debt which Peter owed, Peter had to separate himself from

his position in Capernaum and go look for the substance. What a precious lesson. Before we can expect Jesus to provide us with substance to pay the debts we do not owe and the debts we do owe, we must be willing to be separated from our flesh and go to the sea, the great depths of God's Word, the great depths of the humility and surrender of Jesus. To go means to move forward, to proceed forth, to travel. Yes we must work too if we would see His miracle substance.

## **2. "Cast an hook"**

Peter must catch the fish by anything. Jesus always encourages industry and endeavor when he is the head over it. Jesus Christ gives us the blessed privilege of being one with Him in His great work; but when He works mightily, we must work diligently.

## **3. "Take up the fish and open his mouth"**

Before Peter can find the miracle substance he must take the fish off the hook and open his mouth. Before gaining the reward of obedience, Peter first had to believe his Master and Lord, he had to humble himself and subject himself to the superiority and dominion of his Lord. Likewise, we too must humble and submit if we would receive the miracle substance of mercy and forgiveness to pay spiritual debts that we owe and do not owe.

## **4. "Take and give for me and thee"**

After all the previous work on the part of Peter, he must now take the money from the fish. Many times when God brings us into situations where he has stored His substance of mercy and forgiveness, we prefer not to take it; we prefer to keep our bitterness and unforgiveness; we prefer not to pay debts that we do not owe.

Then Peter had to give the money to those who thought Jesus owed the tribute- Notice Jesus told Peter to pay for Him first and then to pay for Peter himself. Another precious principle is unveiled. Jesus set the example of ruling over all things to prevent offences and unforgiveness; then He helped Peter with his debt. Likewise, we must first rule and reign over offences and unforgiveness; then we can help others to rule and reign over theirs.

Jesus will do whatever miracle is necessary and put the goods in our hands to pay even what we do not owe. When the lack of will and do is in us, remember, He will do a miracle and place the tribute price in our hand so that we can pay. Jesus did not require Peter to pay the tribute money until He had placed the means within his hand. It was necessary for Peter to remember who Jesus was and to recognize that as the Son of God He had no indebtedness to pay the double tribute to the synagogue and the political kingdom of His day. But this was the opportunity to teach an important principle to Peter, the principle of how not to offend.

Let me repeat, real mercy is manifested not when we pay what we owe, but when we pay what we do not owe. This Jesus did when He paid the tribute money, and this He did "lest we should OFFEND them"

## II. SPECIAL CLASSES NOT TO OFFEND

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them. And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. " Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offences cometh! Wherefore if thy hand or the foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire. Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That In heaven their angels do always behold the face of my father which is in heaven. For the Son of man is come to save that which was lost. How thing ye? If a man have a hundred sheep, and one of them be gone astray, doth he not leave the ninety and nine, and goeth into the mountains, and seeketh that which is gone astray? And if so be that he find it, verily I say unto you, he rejoiceth more of that sheep than of the ninety and nine which went not astray. Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish"

MATTHEW 18: 1-14

How great our God is! Although there was strife and contention among the disciples as to who should be the greatest in the Kingdom, Jesus blessed them with special instructions concerning the entrance into the Kingdom. These were not ordinary believers; they were disciples, filled with the power of God, having been out preaching the Kingdom of God to others, healing the sick. Yet, it was necessary for Jesus to tell them that they needed to be CONVERTED in order to find a place in the Kingdom of Heaven, which is the rule and reign of Jesus Christ and His Bride during the

Millenium. Before they could be in the Bride of Christ, it was necessary that they have the KEY to the Kingdom. HUMILITY is the key.

There are two classes that we must not offend. There are the little ones, the children in the natural sense, and then the little ones in the spiritual. To offend either carries with it a great judgment. The disciples were concerned with their position in the Kingdom, and on this occasion Jesus taught them concerning the key that would open the door into His Kingdom.

1. The Key of Humility Giving Entrance (children in general)

a. Humility

Naturally speaking, little children are humble. There is no sense of racial prejudice, class distinction, or battle of the sexes in children; they simply accept one another. Jesus explained that if we are to find entrance into the Kingdom of heaven (the Bride relationship with Christ), we must come with the attitude of humility which is so characteristic of children in general: "become as LITTLE CHILDREN..."

b. Forgetful

"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men"

I CORINTHIANS 14:20

Little children are forgetful. How readily they forget injury. What a beautiful characteristic for us to emulate as disciples of Jesus Christ. When correction or rebuke is necessary, whether it comes through the pastor, God's undershepherd, or through another human instrument or set of circumstances, it is for us to repent and adjust, and then we will forgive and forget the pain of chastening and love the blessings of correction. Sometimes we are tempted to bear a grudge against the instrument of correction that the Lord may choose to use, but a child characteristically forgets readily an injury of an offence- So must we if we are to be in the Bride of Christ.

C. Learning Discipline

"Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father"

GALATIANS 4:1,2

Childhood is the time for learning and discipline. The contest of Galatians 4 pertains to the time of the Law when Israel as a nation was considered a child, under the teaching and discipline of the Law. The intended end of this learning period was to bring Israel into full stature of maturity in her relationship with God.

How careful we must be as parents, for children are great imitators of all they see and hear. As Christian parents we must carefully practice our Christianity before our children daily; then it will be easy for them to follow in our footsteps. As this is true of our natural children, it is equally true of our spiritual children. So Jesus reminded the disciples that if they were to be partakers of His Kingdom, they must become as little children, humble, forgetful and willing to learn and be disciplined.

d. Desire and Hunger

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word,  
that ye may grow thereby"

I PETER 2:2

Another obvious characteristic of little children is their continual hunger for food. If we are to be in the Bride of Jesus Christ, we must evidence this same hunger, this same desire for the sincere milk of the Word that we may grow thereby. Without it, there can be no growing up into the full spiritual stature of maturity that is required of the Bride.

2. Humility of "this" little child

a. Jesus called and the child heard

"And Jesus called a little child unto Him..." In order for that little child to come, he had to HEAR the voice of Jesus calling him. The child heard and came. What was he being called unto? To be made conspicuous, to be made a gazing stock, to be looked upon with all eyes turned upon him. Although we enjoy being seen in our exalted moments, we resent being gazed upon in our humble circumstances when we appear as a little child. The little one came in humility; he came in response to the Master's call, in obedience and surrender to the Master's will.

If we would be the greatest in the Kingdom, we must be like this little child on this occasion. The Master said, "Come here little one" and that little one came to sit down in the low place as a gazing stock before all the people.

b. Jesus set him in the midst

"And set him in the midst of them..." If we would be the greatest in the Kingdom, we must be like this particular little child with his humility under the hand of the Bridegroom so that he can pick us up and set us anywhere He desires for us to be.

We hear no argument, no murmuring, no complaint from this little child. He simply obeyed the command of the Lord and sat down in the midst of them. He did not resent sitting at the Master's feet in a position of humility and obedience, and he did not move until Jesus was through with him. This type of surrender is necessary in the Bride of Jesus Christ. She is surrendered for God to set her anywhere, any place, and at any time, as His will and purpose dictate. It takes a real surrender to come under the "setting hand" of the Bridegroom. Even as a setting hen hatches forth new life as she sits there, so do we find "hatching power" as we stay under the "setting hand" of our Heavenly Bridegroom. It is there that He causes many great seeds of the Word of God to hatch out into new life within our inner man. What a great joy and privilege it is to permit Jesus to SET US IN THE MIDST of the circumstances of His appointments.

3. Humility to Receive Little Ones.

"Whosoever\* therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me."

MATTHEW 18:4,5

This pertains to children in the natural or the spiritual sense, "receive one such little child." When we humble ourselves to receive little children even in the natural sense, we receive Jesus Christ. Jesus has provided special love and care for little children. Little children in the spiritual sense are those who are small in spiritual stature or those who have grown unto spiritual maturity and have become poor or small in carnal pride. As we receive such we are receiving the Christ that indwells them. As we consider our brethren in Christ, we are not to look for their fleshly faults and weaknesses but to look for the Christ that is in them. With this attitude we are able to serve one another, for in so doing, we are serving Christ.

Consider Mary of Bethany, for example. She looked beyond the physical person of Jesus and perceived the Christ, the God that indwelt Him, as she washed his feet. Therefore she took the most precious thing she had, her tear bottle, and poured it out upon His feet. An oriental woman's tear bottle was very precious to her, for it spoke of her acts of benevolence as she had ministered in tears and compassionate weeping for others during her life. It was a significant mark of dignity for a woman to have a large tear bottle buried with her at her funeral. But this

Mary gave willingly, plus the alabaster box of costly spikenard. In American dollars it is estimated to have been worth about \$70. Mary anointed the feet of Jesus with this precious spikenard and wiped His feet with the hair of her head, and the fragrance of her love offering filled the entire house and blessed all those present. The only blessing we can give to others will be what we are pouring out at the feet of Jesus. The fragrance of our love gifts to Him will bless others.

And while Mary is ministering at the feet of Jesus, Judas is saying "Did you ever see such a waste! Just think, we could have sold that box of spikenard and have given the money to the poor." Jesus had already given them a lesson about the poor and the little ones and how to serve Him, and yet Judas pretended to be concerned about serving Christ and about taking the money to the poor. Jesus reminded him, "The poor ye have always with you." And He told them to let the woman alone, for what she did that day would always serve as a memorial to her. It would be told for a witness of her love for Him. He did not mean to ignore the poor nor to neglect their needs. He merely placed first things first: "minister to me while I am here, for I am soon gone, and then take care of the little ones, the poor and the needy."

As we minister to the needy, little ones, and one another, being aware of the Christ that is in them, we minister unto Him. If we want to be the greatest in His Heavenly Kingdom, we must receive the little ones (both in the natural and in the spiritual) and minister that same love and sacrifice that Mary of Bethany did at the feet of Jesus.

This was one of the first lessons that the Bride in the Song of Solomon learned: "While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof" (Song of Sol. 1:12). In other words, she was down under the table at the king's feet anointing His feet with the spikenard. If we would be great in His kingdom, we must learn to minister at the feet of Jesus. At times we are lifted up in the Spirit to where we can actually minister to His personal feet, but for the most part, we minister to Jesus' feet as we minister in humility at one another's feet, at the feet of the little ones, and at the feet of a little child.

#### 4. The Offence

##### a. Judgement

"But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea"

MATTHEW 18:6

"It is a most serious offence to persecute or offend one of God's little ones (natural or spiritual) because God's millstone will cause such to be crushed, broken, and carried to the depths of His judgment. Therefore,

beloved, let us be careful how we treat God's little ones. Whether they agree with us or not, even if they choose not to accompany us on our spiritual journey up the holy hill, we should leave them alone. Let us keep our eyes on Jesus and press on toward the prize. If they are God's little children we must not offend them or become a proud persecutor, for we may fall under God's clearly defined judgment.

b. Judgment to the World

"Woe unto the world because of offences! for it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh."

MATTHEW 18:7

Since offences must come, do not be shocked by them. God's judgment to the world is "Woe....because of the offences" Because the world has been the proud persecutor of God's children, God's judgment is inevitable, and it will be a time of WOE to be sure. After the rapture of the overcoming saints of God, God will loosen His judgment upon the world during the Great Tribulation. Then the world will receive just retribution for all the offences it has given God's children.

c. Self-judgment

"Wherefore if thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire."

MATTHEW 18:8,9

The Apostle Paul reminds us in the letter to the Corinthians, "For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged" (I Cor. 11:31). Self-judgment means that we deal with the offending member ourselves. For example, we are to cut off the offending hand, foot, or pluck out the offending eye. The eye speaks of desire. It is our proud desire that makes us persecute and degrade one another. Did the Lord mean that we are to literally pluck out our physical eye? This is what He said. Surely this fact ought to put some godly fear upon us all. Were we to limp through life maimed and deformed, without our foot, hand, or eye, surely such a thought would impress us with the awfulness of our offences. It would be better to be without an eye, the offending member, than to go on offending and be cast into everlasting hell fire. The hand

speaks of our works, and the foot our walk, will and way- Jesus went so far as to say that it would be better to be maimed in this life than to commit offences against the children, the little ones of God. Such offences will take us to hell. Were we physically maimed and crippled, perhaps then we would crawl away and seek the presence of God with fasting and prayer and come out with the humility that would guarantee our greatness in the Kingdom of Heaven - how much better!

d. Take Heed

"Take heed that he despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

MATTHEW 18:10

It is God's will for every little one, in the natural sense, to be saved and find His salvation, for He continued saying "...the Son of man is come to save that which was lost." Children have guardian angels watching over them. And it is God's will that all those who are spiritually small, like children, should espouse themselves to Jesus Christ and grow up into full mature stature, finding the oneness of relationship with Christ which the will of God has purposed for all believers.

Beginning with verse 12, Jesus continues to enlarge on His evaluation of the little, the small, for He told the story of the one lost sheep. The loving shepherd left the ninety and nine and went forth into the mountains to seek that one stray sheep. In conclusion, He said, "Even so it is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these LITTLE ONES should perish" (MATTHEW 18:14).

**III. HOW TO DEAL WITH OFFENCE**

If we have offended, we need to be corrected, and God's Word gives a clear pattern to follow in dealing with our offences. There is a stature of truth teaching us the full procedure to follow:

**D. He becomes as a Heathen  
and a Publican**

**B. Before two or  
three witnesses**



**C. To the Church**

**A. Tell Alone**

**A. TELL ALONE**

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou has gained thy brother."

MATTHEW 18:15

If your brother trespasses against you, go to him and say, "Brother, when you did that, it brought an offence to me." GO and tell him of the offence ALONE. You are not to go and talk about the offence to others but to keep your problem to yourself until you can go and talk with the offender about the matter. And if you see your brother trespass against somebody else, just stay out of it. We all have enough problems of our own without borrowing anyone else's problems. Most offences come because of lack of understanding.

**B. BEFORE TWO OR THREE WITNESSES**

"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established."

MATTHEW 18: 16

If thy brother refuses to hear you, do not hound the individual and make the matter worse, but secure one or two others to go with you and hear the matter. Of course, these witnesses are to be spiritually wise, therefore impartial; otherwise, they would be incapable of making a righteous judgment in the matter. If possible, witnesses should be used who have the witness of the Holy Ghost so their judgment would be the judgment of the Spirit of God.

**C. GO TO THE CHURCH**

"And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church:"

MATTHEW 18:17

If the offender still refuses to cooperate in the matter, it should be taken publicly before the church body as a whole. Although this is a painful procedure, it is the command of God's Word and if we are sincere with God, He will give us the strength and courage to be obedient to it. Public dealing with offences establishes the fear of God in the hearts of men. Too often church leaders will cover over offences of their members

because their pride will not allow a public exposure. It is the carnal pride of man's heart that seeks to cover sin rather than deal with it. The fear of exposure has been a helpful deterrent in many cases and would be so in this also.

**D. HE BECOMES AS AN HEATHEN AND A PUBLICAN**

"...but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican."

MATTHEW 18:17

If he still refuses to hear and come to repentance, let him become as a heathen and a publican in your relationship with him. A heathen is one who does not understand your language and is unable to communicate, and a heathen is one who does not know Jesus Christ. Sometimes we are tempted when we have a misunderstanding and an offence with some brother to treat him as a heathen or a publican right from the start. This is wrong and certainly not as God intended for the matter to be dealt with. We are to take step one, two and three first. Then if he still refuses to deal with the matter properly in Christian fashion, we are to treat any Christian as a heathen unless we have taken God's order, and unless we have prayed in intercessory and travailing prayer sincerely throughout the whole matter. In all three phases we naturally deal with the offender as a brother in the Lord, and we go to that individual in love and mercy of Jesus Christ. But from that point, fellowship is broken and the offender is treated just like we would treat a sinner.

We recall that the word offence means a grief, a wrong, a sorrow, an affliction. Many times we cause an offence ignorantly, but when this is called to the attention of a spiritual brother who is sincere before God, he will repent. Now when we treat one as a publican and a heathen, this treatment is still intended to bring the offender to repentance. We still pray for him during this time, and if he repents, we accept him back into Christian fellowship and bonds of love, and he is restored to his original position as a brother in the Lord. In I Cor. 5 we have a case where a man was guilty of adultery and fornication. The Apostle Paul instructed them to turn him over to Satan for the destruction of his body that his spirit might be saved. God would then allow the devil to physically afflict his body, and unless he repented then, that disease would take him to the grave. There are those who, when they face death, will begin to repent and seek the face of God when no other pressure has succeeded in bringing them to that place. Later, when the brother had repented, Paul wrote to the Corinthian church that they were not to heap sorrow upon sorrow but to receive him back as a brother. In other words they were to rule and reign over mercilessness and unforgiveness.

Obedience is better than sacrifice because obedience brings blessing. We can sacrifice, but if we are not obedient while we are sacrificing we still will not receive God's blessing. Most problems can be settled down on our knees with our brother. If each will deal with his share of the

wrong, it will not be difficult to have unity restored. As we continue in our portion of Scripture in Matt. 18, we shall note a few of the blessings that come with dealing with the offences.

### **1.. Binding Power**

"Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

MATTHEW 18:18

"Verily I say unto you...." refers to the one who has heard this message and obeyed it. In Mark's Gospel we read,

"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils."

MARK 16:17

How can we, as believers, cast out devils if we first do not bind them? IF we will fulfill the pattern that Jesus gives us in Matt. 18, God will give us binding power over devils. We are living in a Satanic world. The world is filled with satanic spirits of lust, blasphemy, unbelief, rebellion, and as believers we must understand the principles of warfare that surround us in the spirit world. Even believers are often oppressed by the influence of evil spirits; however, we are not subject to them but can have power to resist, bind, and cast out devils and to shake off their influence. What we bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. This is part of the blessing that comes to us as we walk in obedience to the Lord and His Word. If we permit offences to grow in us, failing to deal with them properly, we will lose this binding power which the Lord has promised to His followers.

### **2. Loosening Power**

"...and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Because there are binding spirits that hinder the work of God in people's hearts, there are those who find it difficult to break through into the presence of God. There have been those seeking salvation at an altar unable to break through, then it is time to loosen and liberate them to where they can truly call upon Jesus and be saved. This same thing is often seen among seekers of the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. People need to be loosened from the binding spirits that keep them from getting what God has for them. Loosening power on earth will loosen in heaven as well. What a blessing this is to the obedient.

### 3. Agreeing Power

"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven."

MATTHEW 18:19

It is impossible to have agreeing power unless we first have binding and loosening power. Agreeing power pertains to being one in unity and harmony. Naturally, this is not a fleshly agreement of two individuals for some carnal gain, but this refers to spiritual agreement in matters acceptable before God. Agreeing power is a powerful thing. God sees unity, and we become one when we agree, and then God begins to loosen the angels and the power of the Holy Ghost and the Word to work effectively what was agreed upon. What a privilege the Lord has afforded the faithful and obedient servant.

### 4. Jesus in the Midst

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

MATTHEW 18:20

We are still in the same context, and the Lord is still showing us the blessings that follow those who deal with offences in obedience to His revealed way. "In the midst" suggests the thought of a wheel with the shaft in the center. It is a picture of His perfect will in our midst. In other words, it is Jesus personally in our midst serving as our guiding and controlling shaft. He will unveil His perfect will and set it in the midst of the kind of people who will obey Him. This does not mean that he will be in the center of the church, but rather that he is the center, in the midst of you and me. As we journey through life, we will have mountains and valleys to cross, but if we are obeying in dealing with offences, we will be on the blessing side rather than the judgment side, and Jesus will be like a shaft right in the center of our being. With Him as our shaft, nothing can stop our spiritual journey. All we have to do is deal with offences when they come. Then regardless of whether we may be on a mountain top or down in the valley, we keep going on with God.

## IV. NUMBER OF TIMES TO FORGIVE OFFENCES

Now Peter has a question concerning this matter of offence. He asked Jesus, "Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? (Matt 18:21). The first part of Jesus' answer was applicable to believers in general, but the latter portion pertains to

those who were pressing on for the prize, to be in the Bride of Jesus Christ.

"Jesus said unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but Until seventy times seven."

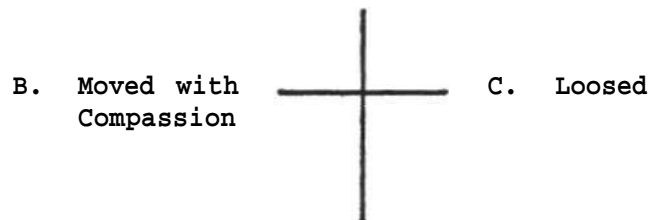
MATTHEW 18:22

Seven times was sufficient for the first class of believers, for Jesus said to Peter "I say not unto thee." To teach Peter, and to teach all who seek to be in the Bride, Jesus continued to give the parable of -the unmerciful servant. This parable shows us what it will take to be in the Bride of Christ. To such HE said, "Until seventy times seven" or 490 times.

This is a parable of contrasts: first, we see how the king handled the overwhelming indebtedness of one of his servants; secondly, we see how this same servant handled the small indebtedness of a fellow servant of his. To better see the contrast, let us place these two statures side by side.

**THE KING**

**D. Forgave Debt**



**A. Took Account  
(\$1,800,750.00)**

**THE SERVANT (MAN)**

**D. Cast into Prison**



**A. Took Account  
(\$514,500.00)**

The king, the lord of the servant, is a type of God our Father. The servant owed Him a debt of ten thousand talents, equivalent to approximately \$1,800,750.00 in our money today. What a tremendous debt this poor servant owed, if fact, an impossible debt for him to pay. Since the debt was a just one, the king could rightly exact payment from him; so "his lord commanded him to be sold, and his wife, and children, and all that he had, and payment to be made." But when the servant fell down and worshipped him, pleading for mercy, the lord (God) was moved with compassion, loosed him, and forgave the debt.

Jesus Christ took our place at Calvary and forgave the impossible debt we owed to God. God could demand and exact fitting punishment, but when we fall down in repentance and plead for mercy, (because of the sacrifice of Jesus) our debt has been paid; we are loosened from the bonds of our sin and indebtedness, forgiven, and set free. Even so must we loosen people and release them from the debt they owe us. No wonder Jesus taught us pray, "Forgive us our debts AS WE FORGIVE our debtors."

But let us see the behavior of the servant as he faced an indebtedness of one of his fellowservant. This poor man owed him an hundred pence, equivalent to 3-1/2 pounds of silver, or approximately \$514,500.00 in our money. Although the servant had been forgiven a debt three times greater, yet he laid hands on his fellow servant, took him by the throat, and cast him into prison until he would pay his debt.

But there are always those who are watching the things we do, and so it was in this case. Some of his fellowservants saw what was done and told it to their lord.

"Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due him. So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses."

MATTHEW 18:32-35

The Bride of Jesus Christ will share the same spirit, the same mercy and compassion that fills the heart of Jesus. So how many times are we to forgive? 1,800,750 dollars worth per offence. What He really said was stop counting. If we want to stay in the outer court or courtyard relationship with Jesus, we can count our seven times, count our 490 times if we will, but it would be difficult to count up to 1,800,750 times - no doubt we would lose count before we got that far. And that is exactly what Jesus was implying. We are to forgive and forget. We are to rule over mercilessness and unforgiveness.

If we refuse to forgive, God will not forgive us, but turn us back to

bearing our just desserts - torment and imprisonment. There are those who backslide because they carry an unforgiving spirit against someone. When we refuse to forgive, we cause a separation between ourselves and God. God has many tormentors to turn loose against us, such as the tormentors of poverty, physical afflictions, hard luck. And devils get turned loose against us as well, tormenting minds and oppressing our spirits. What a price to pay for an unforgiving spirit!

In the closing words of this chapter, we are told that we must forgive from our hearts every one of our brother's trespasses. This is a command of God that we must obey whether our brother repents or not. In God's sight UNFORGIVENESS is SIN! It is mandatory, therefore, that we FORGIVE and FORGET. To learn God's perfect will is to learn perfect mercy and forgiveness.

We get so excited about temporal things - you would think they were eternal.

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**REIGNING OVER UNCONCERN**

**4. Poor Man Succored**

**2. Poor Man Abused**



**3. Poor Man Slighted**

**1. Poor Man - A Jew**

If we are to have a heart like Jesus Christ, then we must allow Him to purify our hearts and make them fair, fitly adorned chambers filled with His divine mercy. A heart that is filled with the mercy of Christ is a treasury of divine riches; a storehouse of divine sweetness; a panoply of eternal wisdom; a cell of divine solitude; the reward of all the life and sufferings of Christ. We cannot have the gate of mercy formed within us unless we first learn to reign over unmercifulness. Mercy means refraining from harming or punishing offenders, enemies, persons in one's power: kindness in excess of what may be expected or demanded by fairness; forbearance and compassion. A disposition to forgive, pity, or be kind, kindness and sympathy to those in distress. Our first step toward reigning over unmercifulness is to rid ourselves of unforgiveness. This we saw in our last lesson, and when we forgive an individual then we are able to show them kindness and favor. And then we must learn to reign and rule over UNCONCERN - that is lack of interest, apathy, indifference or lack of concern. Without concern for others we will never show forth kindness and mercy toward them. As our hearts are filled with love of God, we will find it easy to be a profitable servant unto the Lord and readily find ourselves expressing our concern for our neighbor.

Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35) How is this? Jesus explained this principle further in the parable of the marriage supper when He said, "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsman, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. And thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just (Luke 14: 12-14). He suggested that they invite the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind...the needy. When we give to those who can turn around and return the favor, we end up with a momentary, earthly pleasure, but when we give with no thought of recompense, then our Heavenly Father will bless us with heavenly blessings, eternal riches...that which is true and lasting. Too often we are unconcerned and unmerciful because we have not learned this principle of serving, blessing, giving, showing kindness and favor to those needy around us even though we realize their inability to reward us for our kind deed. We need to learn how to be a true neighbor to our

fellow men, but this we can never do until we learn how to rule over unconcern.

#### I. POOR MAN, A JEW

The certain man was a citizen of that country and was traveling on the most public road in all Judea. This was the grand thoroughfare between the two cities of Jericho and Jerusalem for the courses of the Priest, twelve thousand of whom are said to have resided at Jericho.

"And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor? And Jesus answering said, A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead."

LUKE 10:25-30

#### II. A POOR MAN ABUSED

We have here Christ's discourse with a lawyer concerning how to attain unto eternal life. We must love God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind. The heart must see God is infinitely perfect and excellent in all justice and judgment; the soul must recognize its great obligation of gratitude and interest toward God; the strength must devote itself to pleasing God, to manifest sincere, hearty, fervent love toward Him. The mind must prize Him and value itself by its relationship to Him. We must love our neighbor as ourselves. Christ showed by a parable that whomsoever we have need to receive kindness from and find ready to show us the kindness we need, we cannot but look upon them as our neighbor. How many neighborly needs we receive each day of our lives and yet forget to show love to that neighbor. The word neighbor means friend, brother, companion, husband, lover, kindred.

A certain Jew traveling peaceably on his lawful business from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves. The barbarous ones stripped the poor man of all his possessions and left him beaten and wounded, to die by the wayside. What a fitting picture of the human race that was waylaid, stripped, wounded sorely by sin, left helpless, hopeless and ready to die. See him there, lying in his utter poverty, naked and half dead. One look tells of the abuse he had suffered at the hands of wicked men. Surely some passerby would see him, would be moved by compassion and concern. Surely someone would take the time to help this poor dying man.

### III. POOR MAN SLIGHTED

"And by chance there came down a certain priest that way; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side."

LUKE 10:31,32

Yes, they came but no help was offered. First came a priest. Surely this man of God would lend a helping hand to one of his own sheep, a Jew. But he just happened to come by "by chance" and drawing his clerical robes closer to him, he hurried on in his busy way. He had no time to spend on such menial task for surely far more important things awaited his attention. Yes he saw him all right, but he skirted around the bleeding, dying man and "passed by on the other side." After all, such sights were so disturbing. Here was no concern, no compassion, no sense of obligation to his neighbor, so he hustled on his busy way.

Next came a Levite, a man set apart for the service of the house of the Lord. This man "came and looked on him" for surely he was a sad sight lying there. With his curiosity appeased, the Levite "passed by on the other side." One would naturally expect that a man with such a calling, devoting his life to service in the Temple of God, would have had a sense of concern and mercy, happy to do this poor soul a much needed favor, but not so. He also hurried on his busy way.

### IV. POOR MAN SUCCORED

How the poor man was slighted by those who should have been friends, being from his own nation and religion. The Priest and Levite were of public character and station and professed great sanctity, whose offices obliged them to tenderness and compassion toward mankind, in other words to be a neighbor. It is sad indeed when those: who should be examples of love and charity and prodigies of cruelty or those who should open up their bowels of mercy and compassion but instead shut them up.

"But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was: and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, And went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil, and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an inn, and took care of him. And on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, Take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee."

LUKE 10: 33-36

The true neighbor, the good Samaritan, is a portrayal of our Lord Jesus Christ. We shall note the thirteen details that are mentioned concerning him.

1. HE JOURNEYED

In the case of the Priest and the Levite, they just happened to come by that way; they came there "by chance." Not so with Jesus Christ. He came deliberately with a definite goal and purpose in view. The thought of taking a journey denotes preparation, destination, and a plan or set course. Jesus came in fulfillment of an eternal plan, His destination was the cross and His purpose to redeem lost sinners. His coming was not by chance or an accident; He journeyed here to this lost and sinful world. The word "journey" means to progress in a peaceful, happy state. And so the good Samaritan came, journeying in the Father's good will, happy and peaceful, ready to show mercy and compassion to the needy round about Him.

How can we be a good neighbor unless we are walking in the will of God? If we are out of God's will it is impossible to be filled with peace and happiness, and surely impossible to show mercy to others round about us. If we are trying to serve the Lord and the world too, we will not be able to show mercy. But when walking along smoothly, peacefully, happily doing the will of God, then it is easy to show mercy. But out of the will of God, we will be filled with irritations, aggravations, and frustrations, and when someone comes across our pathway needing a helping hand we will think, "Someone else can help you, I don't have time... if you had not been so dumb you would not have gotten in that shape in the first place...", and we go on - on to the other side like the Priest and Levite.

We can view it in another respect. We are commanded to love our neighbor as ourself. If we are a Christian then we have Jesus Christ living within us by His Spirit. The natural man, the Self, loves himself. What great care and attention we give to the needs of the Self. When he is hungry we feed him, when he thirsts we drink, when tired we rest. Do we show this same concern and mercy to our inner man, the spiritual man? In a sense, we can call him our neighbor also. We are commanded to love him as we love ourselves. When we feel the inner man coming up hungry for prayer, hungry for the Word, do we rush to feed him or do we push him down and think we can take care of that matter later\*

It also has another application. Suppose somebody journeyed along past your way and God helped them to pick you up, and help you, and minister to your needs. Then we are to love that one as we love ourselves. This was a true neighbor, demonstrating this fact by his compassion and concern and merciful ministrations.

2. CAME WHERE HE WAS

Thank God this is true! Jesus left the glories of heaven and came to sinful man where he was. It was not fallen and depraved man seeking

after God, but rather the love and mercy of God seeking man in his hopelessly lost state. Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost. The good Samaritan came to the poor man, to his deplorable condition, he did not keep himself at a distance but drew nigh to the poor man.

3. HE SAW HIM

The good Samaritan was journeying in the will of God and this is why He saw him. We cannot see because we are not journeying in the will of God. In the will of God our steps are by divine appointment and in this place we see. Oftentimes we are not merciful to each other simply because we do not see the other person's need. If we journey in the will of God, He will bring us to the right place and our eyes will be opened when we get there and we will see the need. And when he saw him he did not say "You miserable wretch, how did you get here?" When he saw him lying there broken and bleeding, he had compassion on him.

4. HE HAD COMPASSION ON HIM

When we see in the will of God, mercy and compassion will be there also. To merely see it is not enough, but seeing as God sees, will always move the heart with pity and the desire to administer mercy and compassion to the need. He had compassion on him; not just a vague sense of sympathetic feeling over the injustice of it all, but the compassion of the good Samaritan was directed to the man himself. The mercy and pity of the good Samaritan moved him to help the poor man. His mercy and compassion found expression in a very real and practical way.

5. AND WENT TO HIM

Stooping down and involving himself with this poor stricken man implies real humility on the part of the good Samaritan. We find this a very real problem in society today for when someone is in dire distress and need, people do not want to become involved, because involvement will cost them something. A love for our neighbor, and true compassion and mercy will cause us to get right down where the person is. God's Word tells us to weep with them that weep; rejoice with them that rejoice. True mercy and compassion will draw us to those in need and will bend us to the low place to have the burdens of the poor.

6. BOUND UP HIS WOUNDS

Binding means to tie together to prevent further suffering. The good Samaritan got down where the victim lay, broken, and bleeding by the side of the road and there he began to bind up his wounds. Even though it meant soiling his robe and dirtying his hands with the victim's blood, the Samaritan ministered to the needy man that lay before him.

7. POURING IN OIL

Notice the thoroughness of his efforts to aid the victim in his discomfort and to further his healing. The good Samaritan poured in oil which would mollify the skin, heal injuries, strengthen muscles and fill his heart with joy.

8. POURING IN WINE

The good Samaritan could have hurriedly bound up the wounds and left the more involved matter of cleansing the wounds to someone else. But not so, his personal attention was given then and there. He poured in the wine for cleansing the wounds immediately to avoid infection. The good Samaritan, the good neighbor, supplied all that was needed. He had the cloth to bind with, the wine for cleansing and the oil for soothing and healing. He did all he could to ease the pain, and prevent the peril of his wounds, as one whose heart bled with them.

Likewise, our precious Lord. Not only did He come to this world of poor lost sinners, not only did He see the need, not only did He bow in humility to minister to each one of us personally, but He brought with Him all that He needed to mend our lives, cleanse our wounds, and sooth and heal that which had been injured within us by our enemy of sin. How often He has come as the Good Samaritan in our lives, stooping so low and involving Himself with our every need. How graciously He has supplied the oil of the Spirit of God and the wine of the resurrection Blood of Christ to heal our wounds, whether they be wounds of the body, soul or spirit.

9. SET HIM ON HIS OWN BEAST

This meant that the Samaritan had to walk; what an inconvenience to himself. And so it often is an inconvenience to extend a helping hand to a neighbor, a brother in need or want. This implies sacrifice, but the Lord wants us to be willing to do whatever it takes to help somebody else. With only our own comfort in view, we will never be a good neighbor showing concern for others.

10. BROUGHT HIM TO AN INN

This man was badly beaten and needed shelter and rest, so the Samaritan provided that as well. He could have left the man at the side of the road for had he not already bound, cleansed and medicated his wounds? Was this not enough? Could not someone else take the burden from here? Not so with the good Samaritan. He carried the man to a place of shelter, a place of rest and comfort.

And so Jesus, our Good Samaritan, is still doing today. Not only does He stoop down in humility to minister to our wounds the cleansing and healing we need, not only does He carry us along in our helpless state, but He takes us to the place of rest and comfort. Oh, the delight of the

rest of God to a troubled, wounded soul. And how good to know the security and protection of His divine provisions - the "Inns" that He brings us to, to find rest along life's journeyings.

#### 11. AND TOOK CARE OF HIM

He did not leave the care of this man to someone else, but did it himself. He could very well have been weary from his traveling and left the task to a servant in the Inn, but not so, he took care of him himself.

And so it is with our precious Lord Jesus. Jesus found me when I had fallen among the thieves of sin. There I lay wounded and helpless with no one to care. But Jesus came along and poured in the oil and wine, bound up my wounds, set me on His beast of humility and brought me to His shelter. And then He did not leave me to someone else to be cared for, but He took care of me Himself. He began to instruct, teach and educate me personally in the things of God. Oh, what a neighbor: what an example is He! How I love my Neighbor!

#### 12. PAID TWO PENCE

The concern of the good Samaritan extended further still, for in the morning before his departure: he made provision for the continued care and shelter for the injured man. Taking of his own money he paid the innkeeper that the man might continue to recuperate there. All this was kind and generous, and as much as we could have expected from a friend or brother; and here it is done by a stranger and foreigner. He committed the wounded man into the personal care and attention of the innkeeper. Remember when Jesus Christ asks us to be innkeepers for those who have been beaten and wounded in this life, that He will pay us for all the trouble, both present and future.

#### 13. I WILL REPAY THEE

The good Samaritan stood as guarantor for all the expenses this man would incur during his stay at the inn. The innkeeper had opened his door but it was the good neighbor that paid him for all of his troubles. He risked nothing for the Samaritan said, "Take care of him; and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee."

Even as Jesus paid the initial price when He died upon the cross, even so, as the good neighbor, He continues to pay, for is He not making intercession for us before the throne of the Father even now?

"Which now of these three, thinkest thou, was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves? And he said, He that shewed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto Him, Go, and do thou likewise."

LUKE 10: 36-37

Having spoken the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus now directs His question to the lawyer who had sought to justify himself by retorting to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" The answer was so obvious the lawyer had to concede that it was "he that showed mercy" Driving the point home, Jesus said unto him, "Go, and do thou likewise."

And to us, the words of Jesus still speak saying, "Go, and do THOU likewise." Let us humble ourselves before the Lord, for with a sincere and honest heart before Him, He will begin to form within us this precious gate of reigning power over unmercifulness that we might walk through life as good neighbors, showing forth the love, mercy, compassion and concern that a sin-sick world so sorely needs. Let us not only reign over unmercifulness that would prevent us from being a good neighbor, but let us reign over unmercifulness that will prevent us from seeing other good neighbors who also minister to us.

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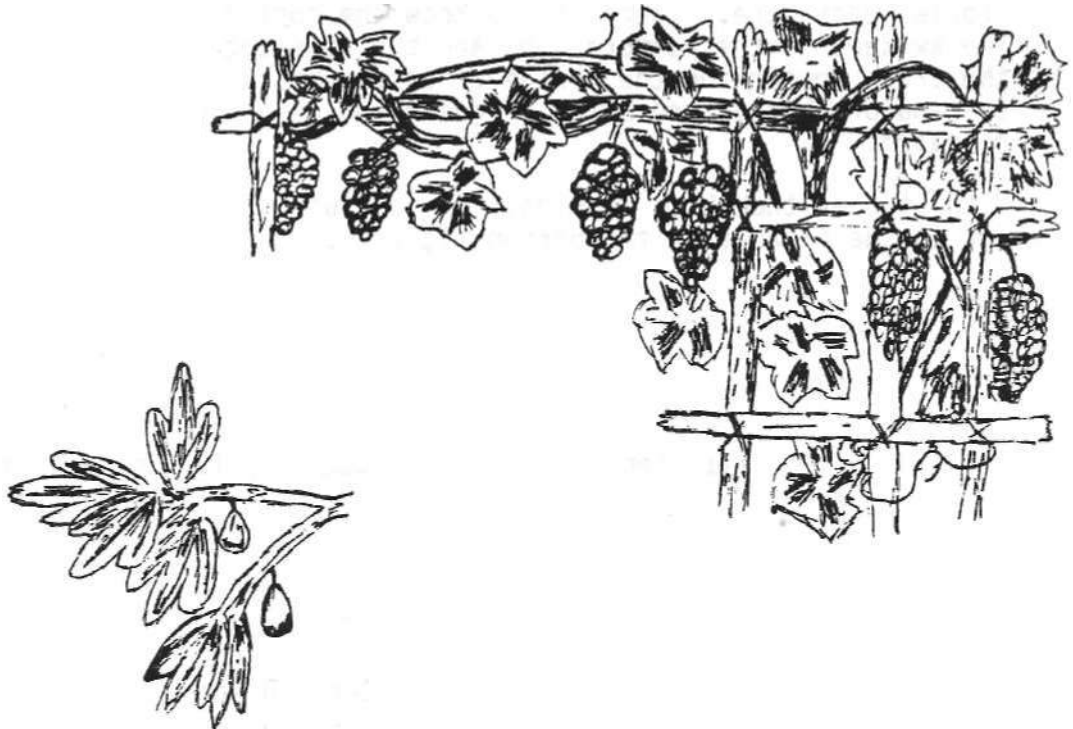
**REIGNING OVER UNFRUITFULNESS**

"He spake also this parable; A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came and sought fruit thereon, found none. Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground? And he answering said unto him Lord, let it also this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down."

LUKE 13:6-9

We are unfruitful as Christians because we are unmerciful. A spirit of mercifulness begets fruitfulness, therefore, it is expedient that we rule and reign over the mercilessness that is in every human heart. For this reason, Jesus taught the parable of the barren fig tree- He has every right to expect to find fruit on His fig tree so we can anticipate His inspection.

- VINEYARD - (God's people in general)
- VINES - (Believers)
- FIG TREE - (Israel, God's Wife in the natural)  
(Bride of Jesus Christ in the Spiritual)



This parable deals with a vineyard which represents God's people in general and the vines in the vineyard are Christian believers. Our attention is focused particularly upon the fig tree growing in the midst of the vineyard. In the natural sense, the fig tree in the Word of God represents the nation of Israel who was the wife of God in the Old testament dispensation. In the spiritual sense, the fig tree is a type of the Bride of Jesus Christ.

Viewing the fig tree in both the natural and spiritual aspect, it is a significant sign of the soon coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. Speaking in another parable Jesus said,

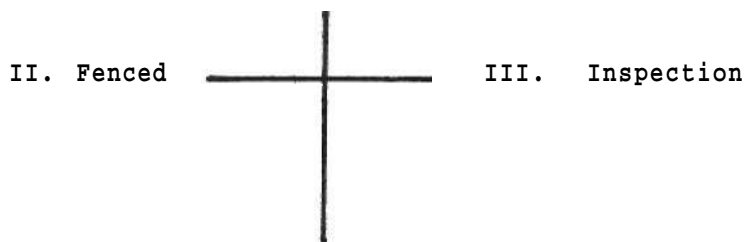
"Behold the fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand."

LUKE 21:9-31

The natural types the spiritual. When we see the buds forming on the trees in the springtime, regardless of the cold temperature and remaining evidence of winter, we know that spring is just around the corner. Likewise, spiritually when we see the fig tree the Bride of Jesus Christ putting forth new buds and new shoots, we know that the Kingdom of Heaven is close at hand. The nation of Israel began to bud as a nation again in 1948. Her sprouting with new life is a sure sign of the soon appearance of Jesus Christ. Also we see the message of the Bride of Jesus Christ, the fig tree, sending forth new shoots and buds of life, awakening God's people everywhere. Therefore we know the coming of the Lord is soon. The awakening, the restoration, and the renewing of the fig tree message, the truth concerning the Bride of Jesus Christ, indicates we are nearing the end of this dispensation of grace and Jesus Christ is soon to be revealed.

With these thoughts in mind, let us study the stature of truth as laid out in the parable of the barren fig tree.

**IV. Mercy**



**I. Owned by a Certain Man**

## I. OWNED BY A CERTAIN MAN

"A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard..." This was not just anybody's fig tree for it was owned by a certain, specific man. This fig tree was a privileged fig tree, not just an ordinary fig tree growing wild by the wayside, lost in the jumble of other trees. No, this was a planted fig tree, planted in a vineyard which was the possession of a certain man.

As we liken the fig tree to the Bride of Christ this point of truth is applicable to her. She is not just anybody's fig tree or Bride, but she belongs to a certain man, and that man is Jesus Christ. It is a real privilege to belong to Him and to have His careful and watchful attention over us. Really, it matters very little what other people may say or think about us, for we have to give account only to our Master, our Bridegroom, and not to them. We are owned by a certain man, a certain husbandman, and to that man we will have to give an account of ourselves.

Notice, the fig tree was planted in a vineyard. This indicates something of interest, for we know that a vineyard required much more care than an orchard of trees. This fig tree was a special tree in that it was planted in a special place, a place where much attention and effort was given, and where many benefits were provided. Let us study further this thought of the vineyard.

## II. FENCED

"Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?"

ISAIAH 5:1-4

In Isaiah 5 we see the particular care that God exercised over His vineyard, natural Israel. First He placed the vineyard in a very fruitful hill which means in the Hebrew "the horn of the son of oil." God has placed all who have been saved in Jesus Christ who is indeed a fruitful hill, a son of oil. Secondly, He placed a fence around it which speaks of protective power. Thirdly the ground was prepared by gathering out the stones. Fourthly, the vine he planted was the most choice of vines. The fifth thing He did was to built a tower in the very center of the vineyard which is symbolic of further protection and revelation

against an approaching enemy. Then in the sixty place, God made a winepress that is a lower and upper vat to obtain the juice of fruitfulness. The lower vat of the Crucified Christ and the upper vat of the Resurrected Christ also waits to press the juice of fruitfulness from our lives to give to others. Then God expected, or looked for fruit our of that vineyard. The choice vine was without excuse. It could not say "I did have grapes but the wild beasts came in and rent and devoured my branches and tore away all of my fruit" Not so, for it was a well protected, fenced in vineyard with every provision made for fruitfulness. Likewise the fig tree that had been planted in such a choice vineyard and shared all the fruitful hill and protection of the vine, could not have any excuse for Lack of fruitfulness because it was also well protected by the fence.

### III. INSPECTION

"Then said he unto the dresser of his vineyard, Behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none: cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?"

LUKE 13:7

When the Lord comes walking by for inspection He is looking for fruit. What fruit? The fruit of the Spirit. In our lesson here we are especially interested in the fruit of MERCY which is the root and offspring of all other fruit. The Lord comes looking for the flowing forth of His love in us that channels itself in the form of mercy. We are, by nature, so unmerciful towards others, but when the nature of Jesus Christ is worked in us, then we become merciful even as He is merciful. But, as our parable goes on to say, "...he came seeking fruit but found none."

For three years he had come to inspect this fig tree, hoping to find fruit but found none. The fig tree could have said, "Oh but look my leaves are beautiful, thick and green, let me just stay here and be a shade tree for the animals, and think of all the little birds that can come and find rest and shelter in my branches." But the Master came looking for fruit. He would settle for nothing less because the fig tree was called to bear fruit. The fig tree had to be fruitful because this was its calling. It was not called for shade or for nests. Therefore, the owner would not allow it to serve in His permissive will, but only in His directive will. Consequently he said, "...cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground." If God has called us to be a fig tree, (to be in the Bride of Jesus Christ), then we are going to be a fig tree and bear fruit or God will cut us down and not allow us to encumber the ground.

#### IV. MERCY

"And he answering said unto him, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it, and dung it: And if it bear fruit, well: and if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down"

LUKE 13:8,9

The dresser of the vineyard mentioned here in the parable represents the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost is the one who is taking care of -God's vineyard in the earth today. He came on the day of Pentecost and has been here working in the hearts of men ever since. He is the dresser, the caretaker, of God's vineyard and of God's fig tree. The Master, finding no fruitfulness on the fig tree issues the order to cut the tree down, but the dresser of the vineyard pleads for mercy. He pleads for one more year, an extension of mercy, totaling four years altogether: Here is a full stature of mercy exhibited.

Mercy was granted, and so we too must learn to be merciful in order to be fruitful. God has not called any of us to cut people down, but has called us to be a fig tree bearing the fruit of mercy and to demonstrate a full stature of mercy toward other fig trees. Then, if they still refuse to bear fruit, it is up to God to do the cutting down.

The Bride must have this gate of MERCIFULNESS formed within her, and the only way we can reign and rule over unmercifulness is by letting God form the tree of sincerity within us with its fruits of mercy. Really, it is not difficult to be merciful if you are sincere of heart. Mercy issues forth out of sincerity.

Beloved, we can expect our Heavenly Bridegroom to come and seek after fruit in our lives. What a great privilege it is to be called a fig tree: owned by a certain man, Jesus: Fenced in and protected, inspected, and yet there is extension of mercy - a full stature of mercy, that He might produce the fruit of mercy within.

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**RULING OVER UNPROFITABLENESS**

This matter of being a profitable servant has two sides, the aspect of faith and the aspect of love. It is possible to be on the faith side and still be an unprofitable servant. The reason we are unprofitable is because we are unmerciful. If we want to be of profit, then we must lay hold of God's mercy.

"There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell, he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence."

LUKE 16:19-26

To be a PROFITABLE SERVANT, we must first look to our own offenses. An UNPROFITABLE SERVANT is more concerned about the offenses he receives than the offenses he gives. The offenses we receive we do not have to account for unto God, but the offenses that we give we are answerable for. Let us consider the parable Jesus used to illustrate this matter of being unprofitable, unmerciful, and giving offence. Actually, to more accurately state the case, this was no make believe story, for it was an actual account of two people who lived, the rich man and Lazarus.

When someone is at your door needing help, and you are too selfish and too busy to minister to that one, then you have offended that one. The rich man offended Lazarus. Day after day the rich man passed the filthy, and diseased wretch that lay at his very gate but he never demonstrated any concern or mercy to that poor human derelict. How pitiful his cry must have been as he lifted up his voice to beg, hoping that the rich man, so regally clothed, would somehow take note of his sore plight and extend some form of mercy. But the rich man hurried by. Poor Lazarus had come as low as any human being could come: he lay in humility among the dogs who licked his sores. Not one time did this rich man show mercy. We find no record of him praying for Lazarus or crying over his

pathetic condition, but we find him later crying in hell - and even praying.

"Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren: that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them, And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

LUKE 16:27-31

The fact that the rich man in hell addressed Abraham as "Father Abraham" shows us that at one time he was a child of faith. He knew how to cry and how to pray. He had not learned how to pray in hell; he already knew how to pray but his praying came too late. In ignoring Lazarus in his need, the rich man offended him. We offend when we see a person in need and have the goods to help them and yet deliberately choose to ignore them.

What about the Lazarus at our doorstep? Have you been giving offense because you have been so selfish and so busy with your own proud way...too busy to show mercy to the needy?

A profitable servant is one who does not give offense. Jesus gave this lesson to His disciples but they missed the whole thing; they were more concerned about those who offended them and how they were going to have to forgive them.

"Then said he unto the disciples, It is impossible but that offences will come: but woe unto him through whom they come! It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."

LUKE 17:1,2

Offenses will come but we can spiritually grow into the place where we do not even feel the offenses. And even if we should feel them, we are able to rejoice over them for they do not really hurt. It is a great secret to be able to delight in an offense even while we are smarting under it.

Offenses will come for they are unavoidable, but "woe unto him through whom they come!" Look where the rich man ended up - in the burning torment of hell. Note the serious consequences of offending "one of these little ones." What little ones? Little sick ones like Lazarus,

the outcasts, the suffering, the needy, the rejected. Take heed to yourselves; learn a lesson from the rich man and Lazarus. It is no problem to show mercy to others when you realize the great mercy God has already shown unto you.

"Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if- he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him."

LUKE 17:3,4

Jesus first taught them about Lazarus and about not giving offenses, and then He taught them about how to deal with offenses received. If your brother trespass against you, rebuke him to his face. Many of the offenses we receive may not be as bad as the Devil would make us to believe. The purpose of rebuking a brother right to his face is that it will call the matter to his attention. It could be possible that he was ignorant and did not even know that he had offended. This gives the brother a chance to defend himself. For example, someone may take offense because I failed to speak to them when they passed me downtown, but the truth was that I did not even see them. So this individual comes to me and asks why I did not speak to him. Then I have the chance to clarify the situation for I can honestly say, "I never saw you... I'm sorry I wasn't aware that we passed each other." Then the matter is straightened out quickly, the offended one sees his mistake and a spirit of brotherly love is established again and the offense is plucked up right then and there never giving it a chance to grow into something big. If we are truly sincere, (and this is the test of our sincerity) we will go to the one that has offended us and not run and tell others about the matter instead.

So if he repents, then we are to forgive him. The apostles quickly responded by saying, "Lord, Increase our faith" (v.5). This, then, is being a profitable servant on the faith side. After all, it takes faith to believe for that kind of forgiving power to be able to forgive an offending but repentant brother seven times in a day. It is a great thing to be able to forgive somebody, especially if their offense continues and is repented over and over again.

"And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you."

LUKE 17:6

How much faith does it take to forgive? How much faith does it take to forgive seven offenses in one day? Just a grain of faith, for the

mustard seed is small, in fact, the smallest of seeds. With but a grain of faith like unto the lowly mustard seed, there is power to pluck up by the root the sycamine tree. Jesus likened this matter of forgiving offenses seven times a day to a sycamine tree, which is a wild fig tree with the bulk of its growth underground rather than that which is seen above ground. But with one grain of faith we can pick up this well rooted sycamine tree, plucking it up but its roots.

We are without excuse! Not one of us can say that we are not big enough spiritually to forgive somebody of their offenses to us, regardless of how many times they have offended. If we are a child of God, having experienced salvation through Jesus Christ, then we all have a grain of faith. If we have the Holy Ghost, then we have a grain of faith. It is up to us to put that grain of faith to work and believe that God will root out our forgiveness, our bitterness, our hatred that rises up within us when somebody offends us.

We hold to our bitterness and unforgiveness sometimes because we enjoy feeling sorry for ourselves in the matter. There are those who never get well because they enjoy being sick. We hold grudges and pout because we enjoy it and it is a good way to get attention. If we are willing to get rid of the pleasure of the thing, then we will get rid of the pain of it. We cannot get rid of the pain because we want the pleasure that goes with it. The serpent offered Eve the pleasure side first, the Pleasure of Revelation. Then he offered the pain of his will, the Pain of Redemption. God works in just the opposite way; He first offers us the pain and afterwards the pleasure. Having offered Eve his will of revelation, will of redemption, he then offered her his will of satisfaction which was death with its pleasure and pain. God's Divine order of operation is pain, then pleasure and glory. If we will but walk down the center of God's will this is exactly what we will receive. Doing God's will is hard at first, but down the road we will enter into the life and the glory of His will. His will brings life, not death.

We have already viewed the aspect of being a profitable servant from the faith side. In the first place, a profitable servant seeks to avoid offending others. As we have already said, it is only as we learn to rule and reign over our unmercifulness that we can also rule over our unprofitableness as a servant of the Lord. We are unprofitable servants when we offend the little ones and offend our brother. As the pearly gate of ruling over unmercifulness is formed within our hearts, we will come up clothed with His mercy and only then will we be able to live without offense to others. A profitable servant looks for his own offenses rather than the offense of others toward himself. If we really love God with all our hearts, then we will not want to offend. If we offend even the least, we offend Jesus Himself. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me." The power to forgive comes through faith, so that places forgiveness on the faith side. It is great to be able to forgive somebody but it is even greater not to offend somebody.

Which is greater, the faith side or the love side? Love is greater than faith;

"And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have ALL FAITH, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity (Love), I am nothing."

I CORINTHIANS 13:2

When we get over on the love side, we will quit counting how many offenses we must forgive; we will stop remembering them altogether.

"Great peace have they that love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."

PSALMS 119:165

When we get enough love toward God then we will not give offense nor will we receive and harbor them.

"But which of you, having a servant plowing, or feeding cattle, will say unto him by and by, when he is come from the field, God, and sit down to meat? And will not rather say unto him, Make ready wherewith I may sup, and gird thyself, and serve me, till I have eaten and drunken: and afterward thou shalt eat and drink? Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. So likewise ye, when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are UNPROFITABLE SERVANTS; we have done that which was our duty to do"

LUKE 17:7-10

**4. Servant Unprofitable**

2. Servant Serving Master



3. Servant Eating and Drinking

1. Servant Working for Master

**I. SERVANT WORKING FOR MASTER**

So Jesus continues speaking, giving His disciples another illustration

pertaining to this matter of being an unprofitable servant. Work is a blessing, both spiritually and naturally speaking. Here was a servant having finished working in the field that comes in to serve his master further by serving his meal unto him. Having done so then the servant can sit down and eat and drink even as the master. The master would not offer to make the meal and serve the servant, even though the servant came in from working in the master's field.

## II. SERVANT SERVING MASTER

This illustrates a spiritual principle that Jesus was trying to get across to His disciples. After we, who are His disciples, have labored in the field of ministry, we must come in and spread a table before our Master, Jesus Christ. We must be careful to keep a right relationship with Jesus for it is possible to teach and preach and still not have this right relationship with Him. If we fail to keep in love with Jesus and stay in that personal relationship with Him, then our service in the field can soon become tiresome. But after we have labored for the Master in the field of ministry, then we are to come into our prayer closet and spread a table before Him; Spread a table of praise and thanksgiving unto Him. We can lay also the promises of the Word on the table and God will feed upon those promises. For example, when you are feeling especially weary from your labors, remind the Lord of His promise; "Remember Lord, you said that you would never put on me more than I can bear...."

## III. SERVANT EATING AND DRINKING

After the servant had finished serving his master, then he could sit down and eat and drink. If you are not eating and drinking at the table of the Lord, then you have missed it on one of these points because God always repays those who work for Him in His vineyard. We serve Him first, and then He spreads a table for us to eat also.

"Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me."

REVELATION 3:20

## IV. SERVANT UNPROFITABLE

Then Jesus concludes His discourse by saying "...when ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." Unprofitable in the respect that we have not added one thing to God by our service. When we are on the love side and showing mercy to the Lazaruses in our lives, we are spent and being spent, but even on this side of love relationship, we have not added anything to the Word, to His glory, to His will. We have only done our duty. Should we fail in doing our duty, God will simply pick up somebody else to accomplish His works and to do His will.

Our disobedience and failures do not subtract from God in any way, nor do our obediences and ministries actually add anything to Him. Regardless of our ministry as servants of the Lord, whether it be on the faith side or the love side, the conclusion of the matter is that we are all unprofitable servants.

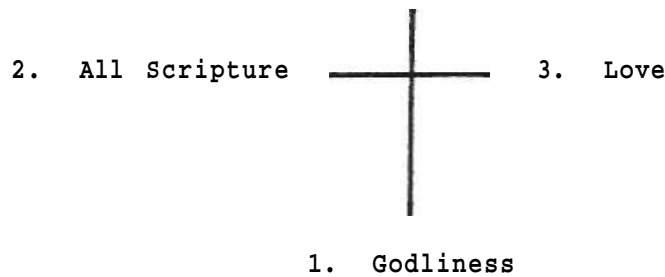
But there is a sense in which we can become profitable servants. Not that we can add anything unto Him, but because we can give Him something to delight and take-pleasure in. As we become more like Him, made in His likeness, image, and stature, we are made into something by the Word and Spirit that the Bridegroom can take pleasure in. There is only one "way" in which we can truly bring Him pleasure and provide a delight unto His heart, and that is by growing up into full mature spiritual stature to where we become the Bride of Jesus Christ. •

People can misjudge us and speak evil of us, sometimes heaping persecutions upon us, but it all fades into oblivion when we hear our blessed Bridegroom say, "You are pleasing unto me." If we want to know real thrill and real glory, then we must grow up to the head realm, into full mature stature, and know that singular delight that comes through union or oneness of relationship with Jesus Christ.

First we must fellowship His suffering, but then be sure, we will also fellowship His delight - an all enveloping ecstasy and delight that goes beyond all human description.

Love and mercy is what makes us profitable. The Mercy Seat was in the head realm of the Mosaic tabernacle. When we grow up there in spiritual stature and can lay ourselves on that Mercy Seat and be filled with the glory of His love and Presence, and His Headship, and His Judgments, and His Covenants (marriage covenants), then we will know what true profit is. Let us study a small stature of truth on what it means to be PROFITABLE.

**4. Manifestations of Spirit**



**1. GODLINESS**

"For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come"

I TIMOTHY 4:8

Godliness means to be like God. By comparison with the eternal profit that Godliness brings, bodily exercise is profitable only a little, little because it is profitable for only this life and not the life to come.

a. Present

Godliness has promise of the life that now is, meaning to have long life thereby giving opportunity to lay hold of and to partake of the Crucified Christ. When we start being like God, then we have the promise of long life. Much of our suffering is brought on by ourselves. There are two classes of sickness, one which comes from God and the other from the world, flesh and the Devil. Eating of the Crucified Lamb is a privilege indeed; what is found inside of Jesus there is no end to, and the same is true of Christ the living Word. As we eat of the same surrender, the same humility, the same suffering of Jesus the Lamb of God, there is always a new Christ on the inside of that experience that we have never before eaten of. Every time we reach through Jesus we also lay hold of the Christ in the same degree and measure.

"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good: let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil."

I PETER 3:10-12

"God does not speak evil of a brother or sister. If He reveals a need to us, and that gate of mercy swings open and we intercede for that one, then He will increase our physical life. If we love life and want to see good days, then refrain our tongues from evil and our lips that they speak no guile. There is power in our tongue to give either life or death, depending on how we use it toward others.

b. Future Life

Our future life depends upon what we do with our tongues in this world. If we put our mouths on the Word and feed upon it and use our mouths to praise God and pray, use our mouths to plead the blood against the past and use the blood to open up deeper ways in God, then there is longer life assured us.

**2. ALL SCRIPTURE**

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works"

II TIMOTHY 3:16,17

All scripture is profitable! This is looking at it from the love side, the mercy side. How unmerciful it would be to accept all there is on the faith side, and to work for Jesus\* even ministering unto Him and letting Him minister unto you, and then stop there. If we would be a profitable servant we must go beyond all this and enter into a oneness of relationship, a love relationship with Jesus Christ. If we are going to grow up into full stature and enter into the Bride and Bridegroom relationship we will need ALL SCRIPTURE. All scripture is another way of referring to the Word and the Word is all a picture of Jesus Christ. It is the Word that tells us all that is hidden for us in Jesus. If we want to be profitable, then we must lay hold of all the Word, grow up into full stature, and be in the Bride of Jesus Christ.

### 3. LOVE

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing."

I CORINTHIANS 13:1-3

To be on the love side is to be on the profit side. Love is what causes God to delight in us. We can have an angelic tongue or speak with our human tongues; we can have the gift of prophecy and have understanding and knowledge, but if we have not come up into the marriage relationship where Jesus can delight in us, we are still unprofitable. even if we have faith to forgive everybody that offends us and can move the mountains of unbelief, etc., and have not love, we have nothing. We can give our body to be burned as martyrs, but without love it profits nothing, or in other words, we are of no profit to Him because it takes love to bring a real union with Jesus Christ. It takes love to make us one.

Love can take the highest and bring it down, and it can take the lowest and bring it up until there is a union. Jesus was the highest that came down to bring us, who were the lowest, and bring us together into union with Himself; nothing else can bring such a union but love.

If we want to be profitable, then we must start practicing godliness for God delights when we start becoming like Him. This is His purpose for creating us in the first place.

"Thou art worthy, O Lord to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things, and FOR THY PLEASURE they are and were created."

REVELATION 4:11

Man carries both an inferiority complex and a superiority complex inherited from our parents. Adam's sin was 'deliberate and Eve's sin was done in ignorance and she was deceived, so we have both aspects of this thing. The reason we get a spirit against someone is because of our inferiority, we feel they are higher thereby making us feel inferior to them. If we will but learn to get off that stool of inferiority, the other fellow will not appear so much higher than we. But we see eye to eye when we get our eyes on Jesus and fall in love with the Bridegroom. Then we see earthly things for what they are - all vanity and vexation of spirit. Love equalizes. Too often we have our eyes on each other, each trying to out-do the other and God is left entirely out of the picture. Nor do we have to sit around on the stool of superiority. After all, we have nothing but what God has given us and we have no reason to be high-minded. Whatever we are, we need to get off our stool and pray for those about us, meanwhile pressing on continually in God for ourselves. Then if the low want to come up and walk with us they can; and if the high want to come down and walk with us, they can. Love is, indeed, the great equalizer and love will make us profitable servants.

#### 4. MANIFESTATIONS OF THE SPIRIT

"But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal"

I CORINTHIANS 12:7

The manifestations of the Spirit of God are the workings of the Holy Ghost and this is profitable. The fire in the Mosaic Tabernacle was symbolic of the Holy Ghost. This fire was carried from the Brazen Altar on up through the entire tabernacle into the Holy of Holies. On the day of atonement blood was placed upon the Mercy Seat. This blood was for the sins of Israel but was also for the renewal of Israel's marriage covenant with God. It took fresh atonement to bring her into fresh union with Him.

All demonstrations of the Spirit found in the Courtyard spiritually speaking are profitable. These are the foot realm demonstrations of the Spirit. And who can measure the profit of the manifestation of the Spirit in intercession and travail at the Golden Altar in the Holy Place?

These are some of the things that are profitable and that He can take delight in. The greatest thing in all the world is to feel Gad's delight; this is a foretaste of what of for us in the head realm of oneness of relationship with Him.

We have seen, then, that it is necessary to rule over unmercifulness if we are going to rule over unprofitableness as a servant of the Lord. There are two aspects to this matter of being profitable; the faith side and the love side. It takes faith to forgive the offenses of others toward us. And it is possible to do many works for God on the faith side, but regardless of our accomplishments, we are still, at the best, unprofitable servants. We cannot add one single thing to the Person of God or to His glory. But there is another sense in which we can become a profitable servant unto our Lord, and that is by moving out into the love side, the love relationship with Jesus Christ. A profitable servant is one who does not give offenses; when we really love God with all of our hearts, then we do not want to offend. If we really love Jesus then we will look for our own offenses rather than others' offenses toward us. When we grow up to the head realm, into oneness of relationship with Him, then we can be filled with love and mercy, and only then can we bring pleasure and delight to our precious Lord, and in that sense then, we can become profitable. The word declares that Godliness is profitable, All Scripture is profitable, Love is profitable, and the Manifestations of the Spirit are profitable, for all these will bring us into full mature stature and into the love relationship of the Bride and Bridegroom. In that love relationship, then, and only then, can we truly be as a profitable servant unto our Master Jesus Christ.

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## INTRODUCTION

The New Jerusalem is a revelation of the Bride of Jesus Christ and its physical description symbolizes the nature of those hearts which have been joined in complete union with Him. The number twelve speaks of perfect government and twelve is seen repeatedly throughout the New Jerusalem. This description is found in Revelation 21 and we notice that there are twelve gates of pearl. Gates speak of the power of opening and closing and these same abilities are formed spiritually within the Bride for she had come under the direction and control of her Heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. To find the spiritual meaning of these twelve gates we must turn to the Parables which teach us, in mystery form, "the twelve categories of truth which reveal the spiritual meaning of the twelve gates found in the New Jerusalem.

We recall that these gates are gates of pearl: "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; everyone several gate was of one pearl..." (Revelation 21:21). To understand the formation of a pearl in the natural is helpful, for the natural types the spiritual, and so it is with the making of a pearl. A foreign object finds its way into the oyster shell, such as a grain of sand, a parasite, etc. Quickly the oyster begins to secrete a substance from within himself, overlaying the grain of sand, a layer at a time, until the intruder is fully covered over with beautiful mother-of-pearl.

Even so we, represented by the foreign object, the grain of sand or the little parasite, should hide away in the secret place and Jesus Christ will begin to overlay us with the mother-of-pearl of His Divine nature. Then the grain or parasite is seen no longer for it has been overlaid with precious pearl. A pearl is a stone, and when Jesus Christ the Rock begins to overlay us with His Rock nature, we become as a stone with its immovable and impenetrable nature. All this takes place in mystery form, for no one sees its secret and inner workings but, nevertheless, the formation of the gate of pearl is taking place within the spiritual heart of the Bride of Jesus Christ.

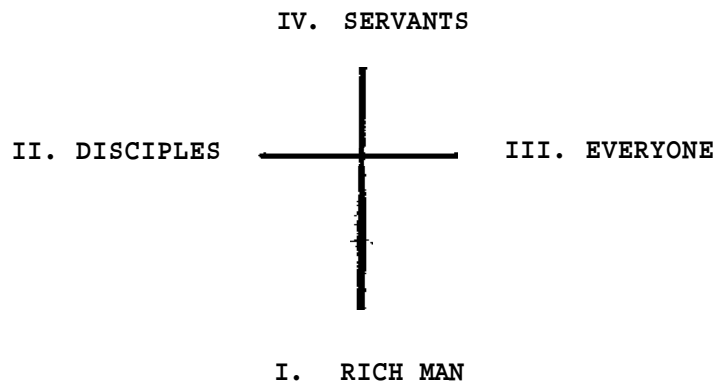
Thus far, we have studied the following gates :

1. Rule over the Word
2. Rule over Evil
3. Rule over Shame
4. Rule over Rebellion
5. Rule over Possessions
6. Rule over Unmercifulness

## RULING OVER MURMURING

Simply put, all our murmuring is due to the fact that God asks us to forsake something. Because we are afraid of what we may have to give up, we refuse to go on for God. The pride of revelation of the flesh always gets things in reverse; the goodness of God wants to give and bless not take away and make life miserable for us. But because of the ignorance of the pride of our own revelation, we murmur and complain when the Lord requires us to forsake the unChristlike things in our lives that only contaminate, hinder and bind us. Before Jesus gave the parable on murmuring in Matthew 20, He preceded it with three examples of forsaking in chapter 19 of the rich man, the disciples, and everyone in general.

Let us study the complete stature on the subject of Murmuring as found in Matthew 19 and 20.



## I. THE RICH MAN

"And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments."

MATTHEW 19:16,17

As he approaches Jesus, the rich young ruler addressed Him, Good Master that he might enquire of him concerning eternal life. From the conversation that follows we understand that the young ruler did not realize to whom he was speaking - the Christ; he saw only Jesus the man. Jesus responded by putting His finger on the man's relationship with God. In other words, if you want to enter into life, then keep God's commandments, His rules, His requirements.

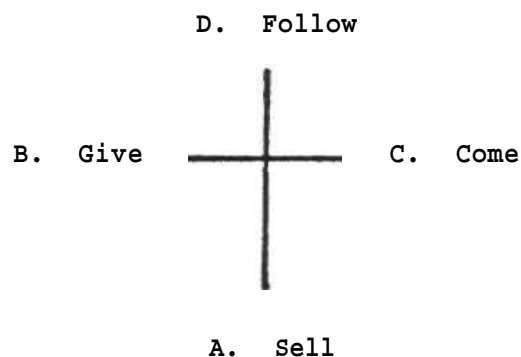
The commandments fall into three groupings - first, that of man's responsibility to God, second, man's responsibility toward the Sabbath Day and thirdly, man's responsibility toward his fellow man. In keeping the commandments, naturally God comes first and then man.

"He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder\*, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother; and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me."

MATTHEW 19:18-21

These commandments relate to the young man's responsibility to his fellow men and he quickly assured Jesus "All these things have I kept from my youth up." This was obviously so, for in the Gospel of Mark it is recorded, "Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest...(Mark 10:21). So his human relationships were acceptable to the Lord but his relationship with the Lord was lacking. Jesus quickly pinpointed the problem when He told the young ruler to go and sell all that he had and give to the poor. He was a very rich young man and these earthly possessions were his god, posing a real hindrance to his going on for God. Although he was not doing it outwardly, nevertheless, he was bowing down to the idols of his possessions in his life. We have many other so-called "riches" in our lives that we need to be poor about. Take for instance, pride. Whatever we idolize in life, we bow down to, worship and serve it in one way or another.

Jesus said, "If you wilt be perfect," meaning maturity and not salvation for this is a free gift of God's grace through faith. Jesus set before him the stature of truth that was the key to spiritual maturity. In other words, giving him the way to possess eternal riches, but the only way was to first remove his major hindrance, the god of present possessions, temporal and passing soon away.



It was necessary that the young man part ways with his earthly possessions and make room for the will of God in his life. So he must "sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, come and follow me. Trading in the corruptible for the incorruptible; liquidating his earthly assets to invest them in eternal riches.

Even as he set this way before Him, Jesus declared that there was a reward in doing God's way; "thou shalt have treasure in heaven." God never asks us to forsake something without giving us a reward in return. Sometimes we forget that it is impossible to out give God, but this is nevertheless true. But if we do not keep this fact in sight, we will murmur and complain as the rich young ruler did.

"But when the young man heard that .saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions"

MATTHEW 19:22

The word sorrowful in the Greek is a very strong word meaning " a grudge, malice, ill will, resent, envy, evil intent, murmur, self-pity." What a beautiful spirit and attitude he had when he came, for in Mark we read, "there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" And when he had his answer (the answer that would have given him heavens greatest and eternal riches) he went away angry, bitter, resentful, murmuring and complaining against God.

It was this sin of murmuring against God that kept the majority of the children of Israel wandering in the wilderness for forty years, causing them to miss entrance into Canaan's land. It is the one sin that will kill us all in the wilderness and keep all of us out of the promised land of marriage relationship with Jesus Christ. But the Bride (pictured as the New Jerusalem in the Book of Revelation) is seen with her twelve gates of ruling power. For one, she has learned how to rule over the sin of murmuring against the will of God. Let God require of us "to forsake" something in our lives and we will quickly see whether or not this gate of ruling and reigning power over murmuring has been formed within our hearts.

"Then said Jesus unto his disciples, Verily I say unto you, That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. When his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved? But Jesus beheld them, and said unto them, With men this is impossible; but with God all things are possible."

MATTHEW 19:23-26

Jesus clearly establishes that He has been speaking concerning the "Kingdom of Heaven" and the "Kingdom of God." Both periods of time relate to the reign and rule of the Bridegroom with His Bride, first in the millennial reign and then the eternal reign during the perfect and final age. True, it is very difficult for a rich man to find entrance because of his love of earthly possessions which are such a great hindrance, but Jesus reminded them, with God all things are possible." Rich and poor alike will have to part ways with their gods before they can be made perfect. Only the spiritually mature will be in the Bride of Christ and the key to this maturity is an unavoidable principle but effectual: sell...give...come...follow!

## II. DISCIPLES

"Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

MATTHEW 19:27,28

It would seem that Peter was more concerned about what he had forsaken than his following of Jesus. This is to typical; whenever we are led by the will of God to forsake something, the enemy of our soul is right there to fill our vision of only that thing rather than the privilege and joy we have in following Jesus. What "thing" in this old world could possibly be compared with walking in obedience and close fellowship with Jesus Christ? Yet, this is too often true, that our thoughts are filled with our "forsaking" rather than being occupied with our calling of following Jesus.

And again, as is always the Lord's custom, the reward is set before them. Our eyes ought to be directed more in that direction, looking ahead to the day of reward, than to be looking back with regret over the things of Egypt we have left behind and forsaken. This was Israel's problem. Instead of allowing visions of Canaan's land to motivate them, they were looking back, regretting their loss and grumbling over the things they had forsaken. Actually, Israel never really forsook Egypt, nor did Egypt ever come out of their hearts. No wonder they never made it through. When we really forsake something, it means we turn away from that thing forever, never to go back to it again.

The Apostle Paul understood this principle and practiced it for he declared "...but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus (Philippians 3: 13,14. There is a reward for those who will forget the things behind (forsake) and press toward the mark; the reward is the

prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus-full spiritual stature and brought into a oneness of relationship with Him! What a prize! Glory-honor-and ruling power. In answering Peter, the Lord established the reward - "ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

But there is a prerequisite to ruling power. They had to forsake and then follow. There are degrees of relationship with Jesus Christ and we know that all believers do not follow Jesus to become disciples- A disciple is a learner, one who sits at the Master's feet to learn. Would that all believers would press on to this relationship with Jesus, but they do not. Notice, this ruling power of reward was directed to the disciples, not to the throng of believers in general.

And we notice that Jesus referred to something in particular when he spoke of their following: "...ye that followed me, in the regeneration..." Certainly this regeneration is not in reference to salvation for Jesus Christ was never saved for He was never lost in sin in the first place. He was without sin, therefore, had no need of salvation as we sinful men know it. The Book of Hebrews gives us some light on this matter of regeneration:

"Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience, Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation"

HEBREWS 9:9,10

This word reformation is the same word as regeneration, its meaning is the same. Hebrews nine establishes the fact that the Old Testament Tabernacle and Covenant were the shadow and type of the second tabernacle (greater and more perfect, not made with hands) who is Jesus Christ. The thought of reformation or regeneration implies "setting things right" which is exactly what Jesus Christ did. Jesus made His appearance in the time when Israel was still under the shadow and type, still under the tutorship of the figure. And suddenly, in their midst, stands One who is walking into a new order, a new covenant; a better sacrifice, better blood, better promises, better hope, better Name, better resurrection. All that he was, was contrary to the religious order of the day.

Now Jesus invites His disciples to follow Him in the regeneration. His was a way of regeneration...reformation...transformation. He is a reformer and is not confined to the principles of the religiously dead world round about Him. This is why they were dead; they had not followed in the way of regeneration, renovation. He, therefore, invites them to leave their religious world (confined no longer to the mere shadow and type) and follow Him, walk on with Him which is the fulfillment of the type, and walk on into regeneration. Those who will so do, will be rewarded with ruling and reigning power; ruling on the

twelve thrones of Israel during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. "...follow me, in the regeneration..." So He invites us today, there is throne power, ruling power, for those of us who will become His disciples and follow on to know Him in His regenerative ministry. We are to be made LIKE HIM! We will not be seated on the twelve thrones to rule over Israel, for this was specifically specified for the twelve disciples of Jesus, but to those who will follow Him in the regeneration, there is ruling power awaiting them. In the Perfect Age, there are those who are seen in the Book of Revelation clothed in white raiment, and they shall rule and reign on the New Earth as kings and priests.

Forsake-follow Jesus Christ in regeneration - a reward of ruling power, throne power. This was Jesus' challenge to His disciples that day, and it is His challenge to us today as well.

### III. EVERYONE

"And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life."

MATTHEW 19:29

Turning from His disciples, Jesus then enlarged His challenge to invite everyone to a reward of everlasting life. As we walk on with Jesus Christ, doing His will, we are, at times, called upon to forsake many things that are dear and precious to us. Not only is there future reward (inherit everlasting life) but there is reward for the immediate present as well. The Gospel of Mark enlarges upon these words:

"And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you. There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."

MARK 10:29,30

In Luke 14: 26 Jesus taught this same principle of forsaking when He said, "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple." The word hate here means "to love less." This is not a fleshly hatred but rather a loving less of these things because we love Jesus and His Kingdom more. If we do not love Him more than these other human loves and attachments of this life, we will

soon be detoured in our walk of obedience to Him. There are times when His call necessitates our forsaking of our home and land, our dearest loved ones. Only as we "hate"-love less, will we have the grace to separate ourselves and walk on with God and do His will.

Houses and lands speak of possessions and stability. Brethren imply the comforts of fellowship, help, and the power of assistance when needed. Sisters represent understanding, fathers are the arm that provides, mothers minister comfort, a wife speaks of pleasure, children are our own proud possessions. This is not an easy "forsaking" to be sure, yet if we would be His disciples, we must then "bear His cross and follow Him." Sooner or later we must all forsake one thing or another; sometimes we even have to forsake the blessings of yesterday in order to walk on with God.

But the immediate reward is a return of an hundredfold. In this life as we forsake the loves of our human attachments, He will reward with a hundredfold of houses, a hundredfold of brethren and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands. How true it is,

"God setteth the solitary in families:"

PSALMS 69:6

And the future reward is to "inherit everlasting life." This word everlasting goes back to the revealed Name of Jehovah in the Hebrew "El Olam"; this name has to do with secret, mysterious things, the hidden life of God that is brought up from the very depths of God. We shall drink of the mysteries and revelations out of the depths of God only by spiritual stature in eternity; we receive resurrection life now by gift when we partake of salvation through Jesus Christ. There are depths of humility in the clear crystal river of life that flow down through the New Jerusalem (which is that eternal, everlasting life that flows in the New City) that can only be experienced and known because we have the necessary stature of humility required to drink of these depths of revelation. This was no small reward that Jesus designated here when he promised them everlasting life.

But, remember, if we are still murmuring and complaining, then we have not forsaken, and without a real forsaking, there will be no reward.

#### **IV. SERVANTS**

A servant is one that is under command; he gets up and serves when the need is there. The parable of the laborers is picturing the ministry of servants and has nothing to do with the subject of salvation. Only believers are privileged to work in the Lord's vineyard. The Son of Solomon tells us of the vineyard ministry:

"...my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyard; but mine own vineyard have I not kept."

SOLOMON'S SONG 1:6

The Shulamite maiden (the espoused Bride) suffers the anger and jealousy of the other believers (daughters of Jerusalem) because they already see how changed she has become under the ministry of the King of Humility. They committed unto her the care of the vineyards and she acknowledges that she had neglected her own as well. Our first responsibility, as believers, is to care for the vineyard of our own heart and then to assist in the care of the Lord's vineyard, in the hearts of others.

All that we have studied in chapter 19 of Matthew was preparatory to the teaching that Jesus was now about to give to His disciples and he unfolded the parable of the laborers before them. His basic truth was stated in 19:30, "But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first." From that, then, he told them a story to illustrate and drive home this truth to their hearts. It beautifully illustrates the need for ruling over murmuring, which murmuring cannot and will not be found in the heart of the Bride of Jesus Christ.

**THE LABORERS**

**D. Ninth Hour Laborers**



**A. First Hour Laborers**

**E. Eleventh Hour Laborers**

**A. First Hour Laborers  
One Penny.**

"For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with

the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard."

MATTHEW 20:1,2

Their agreement was clear and settled from the very beginning; they were to labor that day for the price of a penny. This was all the reward, the stature, that the first hour laborers desired. We err in judgement when we think that it is the amount of work or the length of time involved that determines the reward, or our spiritual stature. It is not based on this at all but rather on how much have we forsaken and how much stature have we laid hold of while laboring in the vineyard. It is possible to put in many years of service for the Lord and yet come in last when the rewards are given; "But many that are first shall be last..."

**B. Third Hour Laborers**  
**Whatsoever is right**

"And he went out about the third hour, and saw others standing idle in the market place, And said unto them; Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right I will give you. And they went their way."

MATTHEW 20:3,4

It was the third hour of the day yet the householder hired them to begin their labor and their agreement was strictly between themselves - whatsoever is right. We are not informed of the detail of this agreement, but the good Householder is just and righteous and so are His rewards. The third hour laborers were willing to trust the righteous judgment of the Householder and to try and lay hold of as much stature as possible in the vineyard.

**C. Sixth Hour Laborers**  
**Whatsoever is right**

"Again he went out about the sixth and ninth hour, and did likewise."

(Verse 5)

The sixth hour laborers had the same kind of faith and trust in the Householder as the third hour laborers.

**D. Ninth Hour Laborers  
Whatsoever is right**

The ninth hour laborers likewise had the same confidence in the Householder as the third and sixth hour laborers.

**E. Eleventh Hour Laborers  
Whatsoever is right**

"And about the eleventh hour he went out, and found others standing Idle, and saith unto them, Why stand ye here all the day idle? They say -unto him, Because no man hath hired us. He saith unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard; and whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive."

MATTHEW 20:6,7

The eleventh hour laborers had the same sweet spirit of truth and faith in the Householder as the third, sixth and ninth hour laborers had, although they came at the eleventh hour. Unless we understand the underlying principle of God's operation when it comes to this matter of reward, this entire situation will appear very unfair and unjust to the various laborers. The parable is told primarily to expose the murmuring attitude of the first hour laborers but it also shows us that rewards are given, not according to the number of hours spent in the vineyard, but according to the stature that is attained. We see in our allegory here that the first hour laborers received a penny as did the eleventh hour labourers. In other words, those who came in last were able to lay hold of just as much spiritual stature as those who had come in first and had labored in the Master's vineyard in the heat all day long.

So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers, and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour, they received every man a penny. But when the first came, they supposed that they should have received more; and likewise received every man a penny. And when they had received it, they murmured against the goodman of the house, Saying, These last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day. But he answered one of them, and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong didst not thou agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is, and go thy way: I will give unto this last, even as unto thee. Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? In thine eye evil, because I am good? So the

last shall be first, and the first last: for many be called, but few chosen"

MATTHEW 20:8-16

**THEIR FLESHLY MURMURING**

**4. Broke their Agreement**

**2. Murmured**



**3. Accused Lord's Judgment**

**1. Worthy of More**

**1. Worth of More**

The eleventh hour laborers were paid for their hire first because the Lord wanted to expose the fleshly reasoning of the first hour laborers, and this it did. They, when they saw the others receive a penny even as they did who had labored all day, began to cry out in protest for they felt they were worthy of more. After all, had they not borne the burden of the labor all through the heat of the day? The first hour laborers placed their pride of revelation above the truth. They thought their spiritual reward and stature should be measured according to the length of time spent in the vineyard rather than personal crucifixion and growth while in the vineyard.

**2. Murmured**

So they began to murmur against the goodman of the house. All murmuring comes from rebellion against the truth, and as such, we are really rebelling against the Lord himself. Their murmuring and continuous flow of words of dissatisfaction revealed how little of their fleshly pride of revelation, redemption, and satisfaction they had forsaken in their lives. Certainly they had not forsaken and denied the self, their old carnal nature.

**3. Accused**

And then they accused His judgment, forgetting that they had agreed to work the whole day for a penny. This penny's worth is symbolic of what all believers start out with. We all begin out in the foundational Courtyard experience, with Blood of Jesus Christ, the fire of the Holy Ghost, and the Waters of His Name, Death and Life as the free gifts of His grace. But with these precious gifts we can all grow up into the full, mature stature of Jesus Christ who is our head.

The first hour laborers agreed to work for one penny. They had been content to stay on the one-penny level of experience and stature. This is what they started with and this is what they ended with. Had they been worthy of more, had they attained more stature in their laboring, we can be sure that the goodman of the house (Jesus Christ) would reward them with what was right.

#### 4. Broke their Agreement

And they also broke their agreement. Their agreement was for one penny, and in their protesting and accusations against the householder, they really broke their bargain and agreement with him. This agreement was broken first of all in their hearts, and then it was later evidenced outwardly as well. Beloved, we can have from God just what we want when it concerns this matter of spiritual growth in stature. This parable does not relate to salvation but describes vividly the fact that when we have reached the end of our journey and we are known as we are known, there are "the last that shall be first and the first shall be last."

What a sobering realization this ought to be to all of us! We will be rewarded in eternity according to the spiritual stature we have attained in this life. Then we will see and know that it will not be what great things we have done for God that will count, but what we have been in God and what we have laid hold of Jesus Christ. May the Lord help us to see the great necessity to rule and reign over the sin of murmuring. Until this gate of ruling power over murmuring is formed in our hearts, we cannot enter into the full Canaan's land relationship (marriage land) with Jesus Christ. Until we deal with our flesh, forsaking, even as the rich young ruler was bidden, the idols of our hearts we cannot have this ruling power in our lives. And as disciples, we must forsake all and follow Jesus in the regeneration that we might rule and reign over murmuring today and at the judgment seat of Christ. Everyone must deny themselves, forsaking the human loves and relationships that are so precious, in order to take up the cross and follow Him, thereby receiving everlasting life. Lastly, let us not forget the parable on the laborers in the vineyard, that we must not vainly rest upon the time we have spent in His vineyard, but that we may open our eyes to see our pride that says we deserve more, that murmurs and accuses the judgment of the Lord, that is willing to break honest agreements in order to exalt self.

God is able to make a way through and bring us up to overcoming power that we might have the gate of ruling and reigning power over murmuring formed in our hearts. Therefore, we will not have to be ashamed when we stand at the judgment seat of Christ. With these twelve gates of ruling and reigning power formed in our hearts, we will be qualified to spend eternity in the New City, New Jerusalem, with our precious Heavenly Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

**INTRODUCTION**

The New Jerusalem is a revelation of the Bride of Jesus Christ and its physical description symbolizes the nature of those hearts which have been joined in complete union with Him. The number twelve speaks of perfect government and twelve is seen repeatedly throughout the New Jerusalem. This description is found in Revelation 21 and we notice that there are twelve gates of pearl. Gates speak of the power of opening and closing and these same abilities are formed spiritually within the Bride for she has come under the direction and control of her heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. To find the spiritual meaning of these twelve gates we must turn to the parables which teach us in mystery form, the twelve categories of truth which reveal the spiritual meaning of the twelve gates found in the New Jerusalem.

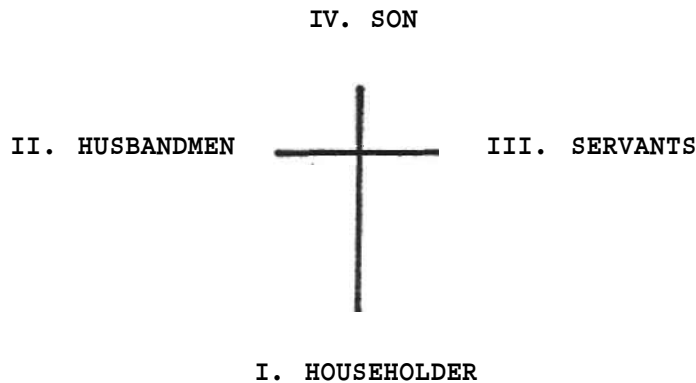
We have studied the first seven gates and in this lesson shall study the eighth gate, RULING OVER REJECTION.

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RULING OVER REJECTION

Sooner or later we all experience rejection and it is painful. Jesus also suffered rejection, however, we find no bitterness or retaliation from Him. He is our divine example and we do well to pattern ourselves after Him.

We shall study the parable of the wicked husbandmen recorded in Matthew 21, and consider the stature of truth presented there.



**I. HOUSEHOLDER**

The householder in this parable represents God the Father and in the account we shall see a stature of truth concerning him.

A. Preparation of the Vineyard

**1. Planted**

"Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country."

MATTHEW 21: 33

The literal vineyard portrays a picture of the spiritual vineyard that God seeks to plant within our individual hearts. But it must be planted by God in the first place, for God's Word tells us that no man cometh unto the Father except the Spirit of God draw him. We cannot come of our own volition and draws us to the place of repentance and then it is God who plants within us His spiritual vineyard.

A vineyard is a fruitful and a living place. When seeds are planted, they are not dead seeds, but living seeds bearing the embryo of life. When we, by faith, accepted Jesus Christ as our Saviour, the Heavenly Father planted a living Vine within us. Jesus is the choice vine.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman."

JOHN 15:1

After a vineyard has been planted it must be cared for. Reading in Song of Solomon, the first chapter, we see the Bride engrossed in caring for the vineyards of others at the neglect of her own. "...my mother's children were angry with me; they made me the keeper of the vineyards; but mine own vineyard have I not kept." If we fail to carefully keep and protect our vineyard it will soon become overrun with weeds, wild beasts, etc, and there will be no productivity, and in time, no vineyard at all. The espoused Bride realized this and began to cry out for the feeding place of her Beloved; she knew she needed to feed and graze near her Shepherd-Bridegroom.

## 2. Hedged it Round About

God always places a hedge round about the vineyards that He plants. A hedge speaks of protection, particularly in keeping out the intruders, especially the little foxes that would spoil the tender grapes on the vine (Song of Solomon 2: 15)

It was hedged round about which is also significant. In studying God's Word we find directions are meaningful. For example, the application of the blood on the horns of the Brazen Altar in the tabernacle, and the Altar itself was designed so that it drew a picture, as it were, of a wheel when it was sprinkled round about. In so doing the priest was encircling the Altar with blood of the sacrifice - a type of the shed Blood of Jesus Christ that will encircle us round about.

As believers, we are hedged round about, encircled, by the Blood of Jesus Christ. This is our protection against the anti-Christ spirits that lurk around and against Satan too. This is illustrated for us in Job's experience when Satan came before God to accuse Job, seeking to destroy him. Job was hedged round about and Satan knew he could not touch Job without God removing this hedge;

"Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side?"

JOB 1:10

From our vantage point, we look back at the cross of Jesus Christ, knowing that His Blood was shed for us, and this Blood not only provides the atonement for our sins, but also the protection we need against the attacks of the enemy of our soul.

The Blood of Jesus is adequate if we will be avail ourselves of its protection. We can never hide behind the excuse, "Oh the Devil got in...I just couldn't make it because the power of the enemy was too strong..." It is for us to plead the Blood of Jesus, recognize that that wall of Blood, that wheel of Blood, is there for our protection. We need to stay under the Blood, stay behind that protecting hedge that is round about the precious and choice Vine that is planted within the vineyard of our heart.

### **3. Dugged a Winepress**

The winepress consisted of two large stones dug from out the ground, and between these stones the grapes were pressed. Obviously the Householder (God) expects fruitfulness from the vineyard He has planted and hedged about. Being a newly planted vineyard there were no ripened grapes as yet which demonstrates the expectancy of the Householder and his faith in the living seed He had planted in the midst of the vineyard.

Oftentimes when a new Christian strikes out on his spiritual journey, there are those who stand about scoffing and depreciating this new spiritual fledgling. But we must remember that the scoffer did not plant the seed, and the vineyard is not his vineyard. The one who planted the seed of the Word of God in us, the One who started the vineyard, the One who hedged it round about, is also the One who planted a winepress in the midst of the vineyard, he has faith in that precious seed of the Word; He knows that it will bear fruit and ripen in due season. What an encouragement this ought to be to each of us who bears within the planting of the vineyard of the Lord, rest assured, God has faith in what He has placed within us and he waits patiently for its fruitfulness.

### **4. Built a Tower**

In the vineyard the householder also built a tower which represents the will of God. In a sense, it pictures God's will as being the very shaft, central pivot point, of the entire vineyard.

### **B. Oversight of the Vineyard**

"...and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country."

MATTHEW 21:33

God did not leave His vineyard without oversight, implying that someone had the responsibility of watchful care over it. In this particular parable the vineyard represents the Jewish nation to whom had been committed the living truths of God and the God-given Tabernacle and the supernatural things pertaining unto it. There was supernatural glory, supernatural fire, and supernatural water in the wilderness. These were some of the treasures committed unto Israel as a nation, and God provided leaders, prophets, and priests to have oversight over it all.

Even so, in this present dispensation, God has given the oversight of the vineyards of believers to pastors, teachers, evangelists, prophets, and apostles. How wonderful it is to know He had appointed these to care for us,

"And he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ"

EPHESIANS 4:11-13

And if there be no one to take the oversight of our spiritual welfare, the Householder will do it Himself. He will be both Householder and Husbandman. Jesus said, "I am the vine and my father is the husbandman." Again, we are without excuse for the Father has made every provision for us that we might all come unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ-grow up to Him who is our head.

### **C. His Expectation of the Vineyard**

"And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it."

MATTHEW 21:34

If God has planted a living vineyard within us, then He expects something out of that vineyard. What was His expectation? Fruit! This is the purpose of planting it in the first place, to bring forth fruit.

This is what ought to really concern us. It matters very little what others expect from us. We have no obligation to please them, but we are under direct obligation to please the owner of the vineyard-providing fruitfulness for the Householder, the One who planted the vineyard and so beautifully prepared it for fruitfulness.

#### **D. Vineyard let out to Others to Keep**

This is a warning to us. If we fail to appreciate the Living Vine that God has planted within us, failing to avail ourselves of the benefits of the hedge round about it, lacking in appreciation for the faith of the Householder in placing the winepress there, and failing to recognize the tower of His will in the midst of the vineyard, then the vineyard can be given to others.

"When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons...Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof"

MATTHEW 21:40-43

Again we see that the parable relates directly to the nation of Israel. This is just what happened, for the treasures of faith committed to Israel were taken from her and given to the Gentiles. It illustrates what can happen to us as individuals as well, for God can take away from us those precious treasures of truth and experience pertaining to the Kingdom of God and give them to others, thereby providing Himself fruitfulness in the lives of others. Forsaken then, it is our loss, for the loss is the entrance into the Kingdom of God which is the eternal, universal reign of Jesus Christ and His Bride.

#### **II. HUSBANDMEN**

##### **A. Responsibility**

Reading in verse 33, we see that the Householder committed the care of His vineyard to husbandmen, which implies responsibility. With every possession we have, responsibility accompanies it. God's Word states that to whom much is given much is required. Every time God gives us something, there is a responsibility attached to it.

As believers and followers of Jesus Christ, we are husbandmen, for a living vineyard has been committed into our keeping. We have the precious seed of the Word of God planted within us, we possess that springing forth of the choice vine which is Jesus, we have the hedge of the living Blood of Jesus protecting us, and we have the winepress and tower as well. With all this comes the responsibility to bring forth fruitfulness.

B. Rejection

"And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise...And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him."

MATTHEW 21:34-39

God sent His servants to see about His vineyard and to gather of its fruitfulness but they were terribly mistreated and rejected by the husbandmen. Sent there to help them care for the vineyard, the husbandmen failed to realize who and what they were rejecting. In rejecting the servants they rejected their own responsibility as well.

We are studying this parable with the thought of ruling and reigning over rejection. When we fail to accept our responsibility for the vineyard, then we are actually rejecting this very responsibility. If we are to be in the Bride of Christ we must learn to rule over rejection of responsibility of that God-given vineyard that He has planted within us. It is our obligation to so care for this vineyard that it will grow into full maturation and fruitfulness.

If we reject this duty after God has sent His servants to help us, then He will take the vineyard from us. Yes, it is possible to have once tasted and possessed salvation and still lose it. God's Word teaches this, and Lucifer is an illustration of one who possessed a great place in God and yet lost it. He rejected the responsibility of being what God had intended him to be and lost it all.

The parable of the talents, the pounds, illustrates this fact also. The man that failed to take care of his one pound had it taken from him. He lost what he had and so can we. The Lord can take our vineyard and give it to someone who will take care of it.

"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof"

MATTHEW 21:43

All Scripture is profitable to us, (II Tim. 3:16,17) and so is this parable, even though it primarily concerns the Jewish nation. She was called the wife of God, but in failing to care for her spiritual vineyard with her spiritual treasurers, God took them and gave them to the Gentile nations. But it also carries a personal warning to each of us. There is

a principle of God's operation here that we can profit by as we observe and learn from it.

### **III. SERVANTS**

#### **A. Suffers**

"...And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another."

MATTHEW 21:35

Not only rejected, but terribly mistreated - what a guilt rested upon the foolish husbandmen. Let us consider the suffering of the servants.

#### **1. Beat One**

How careful we must be as to how we treat God's servants that have the oversight of our spiritual vineyards. God sends them to minister and to help us but oftentimes we fail to recognize God's visitation. Instead of grateful acceptance, we beat (deliver blows and strokes) them. Many of His servants have been beaten literally, some to the point of death, simply because they sought to minister to God's vineyard. And if not a physical beating, there is a lot of verbal beating against God's servants. How we can dissect, berate and negate the evangelist, the pastor, the teacher. And if we do not verbalize our thoughts, we often beat them with our inner attitudes and rejection.

#### **B. Suffering unto Death**

#### **2. Killed**

God's Word warns against heart and tongue murder as well as physical murder. We kill one another's testimony and influence by our malicious tongues. We can, by our inner attitude of heart, so reject someone who is a servant of the Lord that we actually kill their effectiveness in the ministry. The servant of the householder suffered unto death for the work of their master.

#### **3. Stoned**

Stoning was a shameful death in the nation of Israel, for they stoned their heretics, adulterers, etc. Here were the very servants of the householder himself sent by direct command of the Master, yet what a disgraceful suffering and death was afforded them.

#### 4. Slew

What murderous demonstrations were committed against those servants whom God sent to help oversee and care for His vineyard. The servants offered unto death the rejection of the husbandmen. When they rejected the servants they rejected their responsibility as well.

The servants were true to their calling and reigned over rejection even unto death- Jesus is our example of the true, suffering servant of God. He clearly stated that He had come to serve others, not to be served Himself. And in the Book of Hebrews we read of His sufferings:

"...to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings...For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted."

HEBREWS 2:10,18

He, the greatest servant of all, suffered in this world and was obedient even unto death. Jesus reigned over rejection even unto death, doing the Father's will. And we are called to walk in His footsteps and fellowship His sufferings and be made conformable unto His death.

Beloved, we need to understand that it is the lot of the servant of the Lord to suffer. We ought to count it great joy and a precious privilege to walk in our Master's footsteps. Although they are footsteps of suffering, rejection, and even death, they are sanctified and holy footsteps. Even if we have to suffer unto death, this suffering is not worthy to be compared with the glory ahead.

Suffering makes us more like Jesus. It sifts out the superficial, separates flesh from Spirit, cleanses and purifies many things within us. Not every believer is a servant for they are not willing to suffer the rejection, the beating, the killing, the stoning, and the slaying that comes along with this ministry. Keep in mind that a servant is one that suffers, even unto death if need be, in order to minister the help and care for the good of the vineyards of God's people.

#### IV. SON

"Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise, But last of all he sent unto them his son saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves. This is the heir; come let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him"

MATTHEW 21:36-39

## **A. Suffers**

We are coming to the crowning point of the story when we see how the Son of the Householder (Jesus Christ the Son of God) reigned over His rejection when He came. Again and again the nation of Israel had mistreated and rejected the prophets sent by God to minister to His vineyard (Israel). Sending more, they simply continued in their rebellion and rejection, failing to produce the fruitfulness God expected from His vineyard. So the Householder sent His son, for surely Him they would reverence and accept. But He was rejected also- "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11). From the beginning, the Son began to suffer the same rejection the Old Testament prophets had received before Him.

### **1. Plotted Against**

As soon as they saw the son, they recognized that he was the heir and began plotting how they should do away with him. The son suffered the secret, evil scheme of the husbandmen to deprive him of his inheritance. It is unpleasant, indeed, to be plotted against, yet we have nothing to fear. Our God is bigger than any man's plan. Being head over all things, we need not concern ourselves when men plot our destruction or downfall. Men plot against us because of provoked jealousy usually, even as these husbandmen were jealous over the heir of the householder's vineyards.

### **2. Seized Him**

So they seized him to kill him, hoping to lay hold of his inheritance for themselves. Before they seized him physically, they first seized him in their minds. It is this we feel with people at times. Even though there is no outward demonstration we can feel their inward seizing spirit, their drastic force coming against us. This is part of the suffering of the servant we must all go through. There are those that maliciously plot to take from us all that we have. But remember, nothing can be taken from us unless God permits it, and if so, then it is for our own good and for His glory.

The Bride of Jesus Christ is a great servant for she shall serve the Lord throughout all eternity. Revelation 22 describes the Perfect Age dispensation and the New Jerusalem. Among other things, we read:

"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."

REVELATION 22:3,4

We will never be His servants there unless we learn to suffer as His servants here. In the sufferings, we can lay hold of the jasper of humility, which is the clothing of the New Jerusalem- "...even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal" (Revelation 21:11). It is the cold breath of God, His humility breath, His crucifixion breath, -that ministers this jasper nature unto us. It is part of the qualification of the position of Bride. And as Bride, we must have formed within us the gate of ruling power over rejection.

### **3. Rejected**

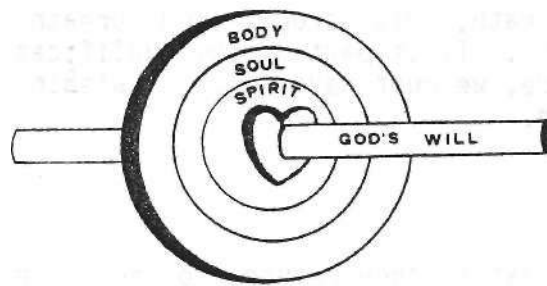
The husbandmen rejected the son, that is they refused to receive him, to agree with him or to believe in him and discarded him, as it were, as someone worthless and useless. Not only must we learn to rule over our rejection of the responsibility we have in connection with our spiritual vineyard that God has implanted within us, but we must rule over the rejection we receive from others. Being a servant, we will be rejected. Expect it! It will come to us all.

### **4. Slain**

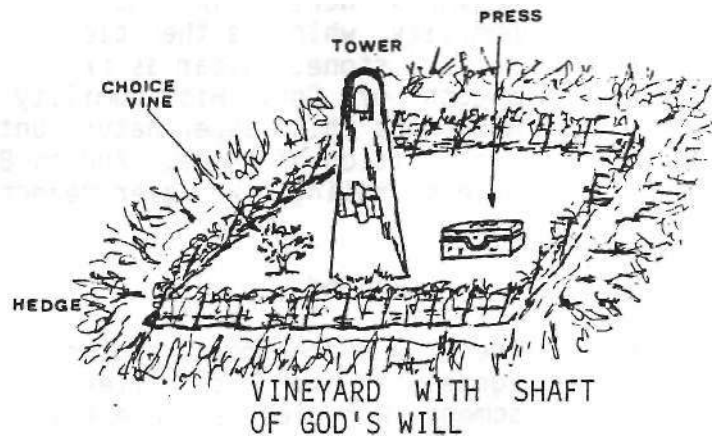
The rejection of the Son of the householder finally ended in his death. The servants of the Lord will suffer likewise. God's servants do a lot of dying within, suffering death to their pride, death to their reputation, death to their friendships, death to their personal ambitions, death to their personal comforts and so forth.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross"

PHILIPPIANS 2: 6-8



MAN'S THREEFOLD  
NATURE LIKE A WHEEL



The Apostle James refers to man's being as a "wheel of nature" (James 3:6). This is an interesting simile, picturing man as a wheel, and God desires to place His will as the directing, controlling shaft of our being in the center of our wheel. So in the vineyard also the tower of God's will stands as the shaft of the entire operation of God's vineyard. God planted a vineyard in man's heart when He placed Jesus Christ there as the choice Vine, encircling it with the precious Blood of Jesus, placing the winepress there in advance of the harvest as a demonstration of His faith, and then placing the tower of His will in the midst of it all. What a great Householder is our Heavenly Father!

With all this in our hearts we have no reason, as sincere and going-on Christians, for not letting that living vineyard within us grow, taking us on up the Holy Hill that we might be in that New City, the Bride of Jesus Christ. We are without excuse.

Now this is only the preparation of the vineyard. Let us continue on to see what else the good Householder did for the vineyard.

## B. Cornerstone

"And when the Lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy these wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

MATTHEW 21:40-42

Jesus Christ is God's only begotten Son, and it was He whom the Householder (God the Father) sent, but when He came he found only suffering, rejection, and ultimately death. But having suffered, He became a cornerstone. A cornerstone is a humility stone for the definition of the Greek word corner means to bow the knee and to kneel and be in subjection. It was prophesied about Jesus being the foundational cornerstone.

"Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make, haste."

ISAIAH 28:16

This prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus Christ:

". . . . Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner."

I PETER 26:7

Even so, the Lord seeks to make us into cornerstones as well. He brings us through suffering, even unto death, that we might become a cornerstone, a kneeling stone. All our spiritual building and work of the Lord is going to begin with this cornerstone. When our knees get bent before God in subjection and prayer, we become as a cornerstone. Then we can begin building our spiritual house and our spiritual work. When building a natural house, the building begins with a cornerstone. It is the starting point of the foundation and must be rightly laid or the whole building is out of plumb. In our spiritual building this is also true. We must begin with Jesus Christ the true cornerstone, and in addition to that, we must permit Jesus to so work in us that we have that cornerstone of prayer, the knee stones, the bending in subjection to God's will as our foundational beginning. The Son is this cornerstone (rejected by the builders) but established by God, the Householder. Jesus suffered to become this cornerstone and so must we, for He intends to make us cornerstones as well:

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ"

I PETER 2:5

### C. Broken Stone

"Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken: but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."

MATTHEW 21:43,44

Jesus Christ is this stone with breaking power; He will break all those who fall upon Him. This is power and everyone desires power but on their own terms. Breaking power comes on God's terms alone, and His terms are suffering, subjection, etc.

If we become like Jesus we can have this power of the broken stone. We must come the same journey as He did; come through suffering and death until we are made a cornerstone - a humility stone of kneeling and bending power. Then we, too, can have the same breaking power as Jesus has. People can come to us, falling upon our spiritual shoulders as it were, and find brokenness which in turn produces intercession and travail so they can go on for God.

### D. Grinding Stone

Notice also, that this stone, with its breaking power, also has power of judgment - power to grind them to powder. Either we come to Jesus Christ, the stone with power to break us before God in humility and surrender, or the stone will fall on us in judgment and grind us to powder. We cannot lightly handle the revelation of the Person of Jesus Christ. Either we accept, receive, obey, and surrender to Him, thereby receiving the blessings of the Stone, or we reject and resist Him, thereby receiving the judgment and crushing power of the Stone. The choice lies with us. And as we become one with the nature of the Son, the Stone with its breaking power and its grinding power, so we also possess these same powers and minister to others in this twofold fashion.

The Greek word broken means union by association. When we fall on this stone it has power to bring us into union and into fellowship and association. It also means completeness and resemblance. It means companionship. What a precious stone! No wonder the Lord said "...this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes."

We find so many lonely people around us. Oh, that they would surrender to fellowship the sufferings of Jesus and permit Him to make them into a cornerstone of humility. For then He would work that surrendering within them, bringing them to a place of power, and fellowship, completeness, companionship - union by association; made one with the nature of Jesus Christ. He is the humility cornerstone with bending power, breaking power. He is the One who works to impart unto us His own nature, giving us that same nature of the cornerstone and the breaking stone.

"And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them. But when they sought to lay hands on him they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet"

MATTHEW 27:15,46

Instead of reception, the words of Jesus were rejected, exposing the hatred and murder that was in their hearts. He stood surrounded by an audience of religious leaders and professors- Surely they should have joyfully received His words, but had it not been for the multitude that stood there, they would have done Him violence.

And so we find it also. People are not thrilled with our witness of the revealed Word. To often they hate us for it, but nevertheless, as faithful servants of the good Householder, we help and minister where we find a receptive heart. But sometimes our words bring only an exposure of heart murder - they would like to kill us. This is the responsibility and privilege of a servant of the Lord.

This gate of reigning power over rejection must be formed in the heart of the Bride of Jesus Christ. She must learn to reign over the rejection of the responsibility of her own vineyard and the vineyards of others. She must reign and rule over the rejection of people as she ministers as the servant of the Lord. With this ruling power formed within her, she can continually mount up into higher heights and deeper depths in her God, even increasing in stature and taking on the nature and power of the Chief Cornerstone...elect and precious.

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## INTRODUCTION

The New City, the New Jerusalem, is the Bride of Jesus Christ which descends from God out of heaven. Her description is recorded in Revelation 21. The predominant number twelve, which is the number of perfect government, demonstrating that the Bride in her earthly journey learned to surrender to the complete government or headship of her spiritual husband, Jesus Christ. In our present study we are especially interested in the twelve gates that are seen in the New Jerusalem. These several gates are of one pearl, or in other words, each gate was made of one pearl so that there were twelve classes of pearls which are formed by the cold breath, the humility breath of God. The word "pearl" traces back to an unused root word in the Hebrew meaning to freeze, or crystal (from its resemblance to ice); therefore, the name pearl links its formation with the cold humility breath of God. These gates, then, must be formed within the spiritual heart of the Bride during her journey here on earth through the cold breath of humility of the Crucified Christ in order for her to be prepared for eternal dwelling in the New City.

There are twelve categories of truth found in the parables of Jesus Christ which fit together with the twelve gates of the New City. They shine forth like twelve beautiful pearls, and as their truths are formed within our hearts, they will govern and rule our lives like gates shut out the world, the flesh and the Devil and to open for the Spirit and truth of Jesus Christ.

The New Jerusalem is a revelation of the Bride of Jesus Christ and its physical description symbolizes the nature of those hearts which have been joined in complete union with Him.

The number twelve speaks of perfect government and twelve is seen repeatedly throughout the New Jerusalem. This description is found in Revelation 21 and we notice that there are twelve gates of pearl. Gates speak of the power of opening and closing and these same abilities are formed spiritually within the Bride for she has come under the direction and control of her Heavenly Bridegroom, Jesus Christ.

To find the spiritual meaning of these twelve gates we must turn to the parables which teach us, in mystery form, the twelve categories of truth which reveal the spiritual meaning of the twelve gates found in the New Jerusalem.

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## RULING OVER UNFAITHFULNESS

### The Parable of the Ten Virgins

The virgins are not the Bride of Christ, but are those attendants who accompany the Bride at the marriage (comparable to the bridesmaids of our western custom). Psalm 45 is an interesting commentary on the notable event of the marriage of the Heavenly Bridegroom and His Bride. The marriage takes place in the King's Palace the New Jerusalem, the New City and the virgins will be there.

"She (the Bride) shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King's palace."

PSALMS 45:14,15

These are the wise virgins, not the foolish virgins (Matthew 25). With great rejoicing, gladness, and dancing, the wise virgins are privileged to accompany the Bride into the presence of the King. On that great resurrection morning when the Bride will be raptured, the wise virgins will be raptured also. In fact, all the overcomers, whether they be guests, relatives, virgins, will be raptured and participate in that fabulous wedding supper of the lamb.

While we are here, let us notice a few facts concerning the Bride as well.

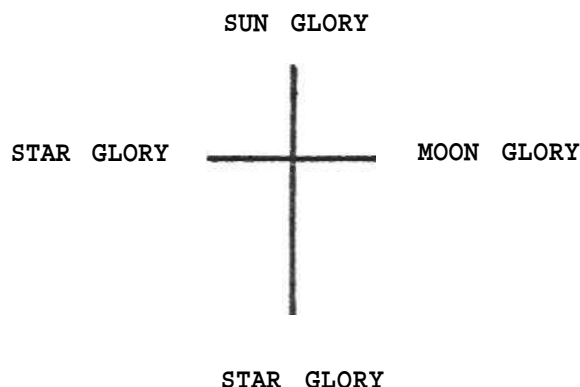
"Kings' daughters were among thy honorable women: upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir. Hearken, O, daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; So shall the king greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him. And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift; even the rich among the people shall entreat thy favor. The king's daughter is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee"

PSALMS 45:9-14

Having completed His work of redemption, Jesus ascended into heaven and is exalted at the right hand of the Father. The right hand speaks of a place of authority as well as a place of eternal and perfect unity with God. This position Jesus now possesses, for after His resurrection, He

was made both Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36). It is in this position of the right hand relationship that we find the Bride standing- "upon thy right hand did stand the queen in gold of Ophir." She has come into spiritual maturity and possesses the unity of oneness of relationship with her Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. The Bride is seen clothed in the gold of Ophir, clothed with sun glory-the mature degree of glory.

In I Corinthians 15 we see the four degrees of glory manifested in the resurrection:

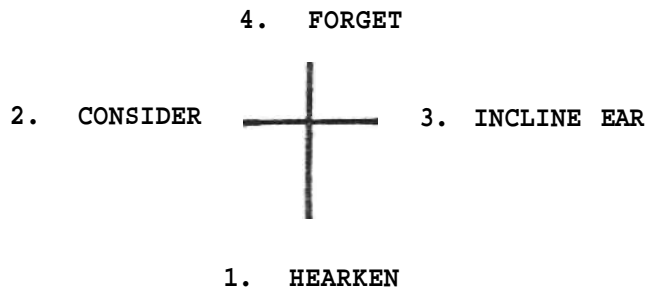


"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead"

I CORINTHIANS 15:41,42

We also have a small stature of truth here showing how the Bride attained this exalted position. She began her spiritual journey as a king's daughter. This was her time of humiliation laying hold of the lessons of humility under the rule of the King of Humility, Jesus Christ. As a daughter, she partook of crucifixion to her will and her fleshly disposition, until she came up into full mature stature, qualifying her to be the Queen of Ophir, the Bride of Christ.

Turning back to Psalm 45 we see a stature of truth.



### 1. **Hearken**

As the king's daughter, the Bride has learned to hearken, meaning to bow down her ear. Giving careful attentiveness, she stretched out her ear to hear what the Word of God had to say to her. Without this carefulness of attitude toward the Word we are prone to bypass or miss some of the essential things that God would speak to His children. Without this openness of ear, keenness of hearing, we are apt to overlook the keys of truth that will open new doors of revelation and understanding. It takes the revelation of the Word by the Spirit of God to show us ourselves, our needs, and our true condition before God. It is the Word of God that teaches us doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness. Without this hearkening to the Word of God, the Bride would never have attained mature stature and oneness of relationship with Christ.

### 2. **Consider**

Second, she considered that which she heard. The Hebrew word "consider" is defined as behold, discern, approve, have experience, gaze, take heed, look on, regard, respect, think. This is not careless hearing of a procrastinator but the serious consideration of the Word heard that is benefit, work, and accomplish the end to which it was sent.

### 3. **Incline Ear**

And then the Bride inclined her ear, indicating the continued position of humility that she maintained before Him. Ever open to His reproof or correction, she walked softly before her King, learning many lessons of obedience and surrender.

### 4. **Forget**

And lastly, she did not forget what she had heard. Carefully bearing the Word within her bosom, she permitted that Word to work graciously in her until she came into full spiritual stature, ready to stand at the right hand of her Heavenly bridegroom as His wife. And she surrendered to forget her own people and her father's house. Because of the vision of the prize set before her, she willingly forsook her human attachments - that represented many natural pleasures, comforts, and securities. But in pressing on in her spiritual journey, she willingly forgot and forsook that she might find this singular unity of relationship with Jesus Christ.

Attention is called to the inward beauty of the Bride: "The king's daughter is all glorious within." The glory of the Bride is spiritual glory of the resurrected Christ which has filled her spirit and soul and is not bared to the view of the carnal eye, but reserved for the holy eyes of the Bridegroom. Her clothing is of wrought gold, with raiment of needlework. The gold symbolizes the divine nature that has been worked in her: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious

promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature" (II Peter 1:4). While she is walking alone, the crucifixion process is taking place, working the beauties of color and design for the precious needlework that will adorn her raiment. The Bride has learned not to resent or resist the pricking, suffering, painful work of the needle of crucifixion, knowing it is preparing her wedding garments with glory and beauty for the Bridegroom. This ministry of suffering, the fine needlework, is often applied through human hands, but nevertheless, it is the workings of the Father's hands.

"Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth. I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations: therefore shall the people praise thee for ever and ever"

PSALMS 45:16,17

What a glorious conclusion to this revelation of the Bride! The Bride has reached spiritual maturity, therefore is able to lead people into higher heights in God for she has already attained this herself. She shall give birth to the man child and lead him to the shoulder realm of spiritual maturity, which implies rulership and government. The man child represents the spiritual children of the Bride whom she brings up to spiritual growth qualifying them to be princes in the earth. These are the princes referred to in Psalms 45 "And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne." (Revelation 12:5).

The opening verses of chapter 12 of Revelation pertain to the Bride and her travailing in birth to bring forth this man child. This man child shall rule in the New Earth throughout eternity.

And the Bride shall receive praise for ever and ever. This same promise is given to the overcomers of the Philadelphia church in Revelation 3:9.

"Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."

REVELATION 3:9

The Bride shall reign and rule through eternity with her precious Bridegroom, Jesus Christ. As they worship and praise Him, she too, shall share in His honor and exaltation. She shall be praised and exalted and worshipped with Him.

We digressed briefly in order to observe the Bride, her preparation and spiritual qualifications, and her ultimate exaltation. But as such, then, we clearly see a distinction between the Bride and the bridesmaids.

and the virgins. They are not the Bride, but the wise virgins do accompany the Bride into the marriage supper of the Lamb. They are privileged to be present at this marriage feast in the palace of the King, the New Jerusalem.

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection."

REVELATION 20:6

This is the first resurrection encompassing all the overcomers regardless of which degree of glory they have been clothed with in this life. There will be the differing glories of the star realm; the guests and the virgins have attained to star glory. Then there is the moon realm which relates to the shoulder realm of the stature of the Lord Jesus (the princes, those who have learned to rule over the night season), and of course the Bride will stand in the full sun glory.

Let us turn to Matthew 25 and study the parable of the virgins. Sadly enough, there are two categories of virgins showing that all virgins are not overcomers nor will they all be privileged to attend the marriage supper of the Lamb. The Lord gives this parable of the virgins to show unto us a lesson on faithfulness. It was a custom among the Jews that the Bridegroom come, attended with his friends, late in the night to the house of the bride, where she expected and waited for him with her bridesmaids. When the cry was made that the Bridegroom approached, the virgins or bridesmaids were to go out with lamps in their hands, to usher in the bridegroom with great mirth and ceremony. On this occasion, five of the virgins were wise or faithful, and five were unwise, foolish and unfaithful. Let us contrast the wise and the foolish.

#### **A. THEIR NAMES**

##### **1. Wise or Foolish**

"Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom. And five of them were wise, and five were foolish"

MATTHEW 25:1,2

The names of the virgins signify their nature and character.

a. The Wise - meaning to have forethought.

A wise person is one who gives thought to his eternal future. To be wise also means to rein in, be cautious, put into practice, gird up loins. A wise person is one who waits on God, open to the teaching and guiding of

the Holy Ghost - cautiously putting into practice the things he learns sitting at the feet of the Lord. And he girds up his loins, which speak of those inner desires that must be brought under the control of God's will and Spirit. So there were those five wise virgins in the group. And as then, we have the wise virgins among us today in Christendom.

b. The foolish - the dull, stupid, heedless ones.

Dull and stupid they failed to make the necessary preparation for the great event that awaited them. Fools live their lives for the present, caring little for their eternal destination. When the critical hour came they lacked that which was necessary and were shut out of the marriage feast. The foolish virgins run after everything they see and hear, failing to wait for the directions of the Lord in all things.

## 2. The Oil

"They that were foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them. But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps."

MATTHEW 25:3,4

a. The Wise - had oil in their vessels.

Their supply of the Holy Ghost was sufficient. They had spent time in prayer in intercession, in travail laying up an extra supply of oil in case the Bridegroom tarried. Their vessels were well filled with the oil of grace and resurrection power because of spending time before the Lord in praise and worship.

b. The foolish - took no oil with them.

Showing little concern over the lateness of the hour or the fact that "the Bridegroom might tarry beyond the expected time, they chose to neglect their devotional life in their prayer closet with the Lord, thus their supply of oil was small.

## 3. Spiritual Vision

"While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out. But the wise answered, saying, Not so; lest there is not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves"

MATTHEW 25:5-9

The Bridegroom tarried, that is, He did not come out so soon as they expected- There is a good reason for the Bridegroom's tarrying; there are many intermediate purposes to be accomplished. God's patience must be manifested, and the saint's tried. Although Jesus Christ, our Heavenly Bridegroom, tarries past our time, He will not tarry past the DUE time.

a. The Wise - had spiritual vision.

They knew they were going to meet the Bridegroom and had spiritual vision enough to foresee that they could not give of their oil to the foolish virgins and have sufficient for themselves. This was a personal matter - each must have his own supply.

b. The Foolish - had no spiritual vision.

They had given no forethought to prepare for this particular hour. Suddenly the cry of the Bride was heard, "Behold, the bridegroom cometh." The Bride was awake, ready, looking for His coming. It was she who in the midnight hour was awake and able to utter the cry announcing the arrival of the Bridegroom. Joel 2:16 tells us where the Bride has been busily preparing herself, "...let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, bride out of her closet." It is in the prayer closet that she has been preparing for the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The Bridegroom came at midnight, the time the virgins least looked for Him, and were most disposed to take their rest, it was midnight that God smote the firstborn of Egypt and when Israel was delivered (Exodus 12:29). the soul is required in the night (Luke 12:20). Jesus Christ will come when He pleases, to show us His sovereignty and will not let us know when, to teach us faithfulness in our duty and to be watchful for His coming.

#### 4. Meeting the Bridegroom

"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut. After ward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, ' Verily I say unto you, I know you not"

MATTHEW 25:10-12

a. The Wise - meet Him

They were ready and went into the marriage supper. The wise virgins knew that he was coming and had made preparation for His coming. Although He came in the midnight hour they had the extra supply of oil to furnish their lamps, thereby lighting their way into the marriage supper.

b. The Foolish - missed the Bridegroom

They had gone to buy some oil for their lamps were going out. While they were gone the Bridegroom came and the door was shut. The door was strut, first to secure those within, and to exclude those without. Although they cried out, "Lord, Lord, open to us," His answer was "I know you not" - knew them not as far as their readiness for the catching away- of the Bridal party. The virgins that were ready were taken but the foolish were left behind. They sought to make the necessary preparation, but then it was too late. The door was shut to the marriage supper of the lamb. The wedding party was gone!

We have noted the outstanding differences between the wise and foolish virgins. Now let us see their similarities:

**1. They all had lamps.**

These lamps represent the Word of God that has been made alive and quickened unto them. Quickened Word is as "a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path" (Psalm 119: 105) And we want to remember that these were all believers, they were all called virgins. Because they were believers they all had lamps of the quickened Word. They all had the light of the quickened Word (Word does not give light until it is quickened) but that light grew dim as they slept because of the late hour.

**2. They all had the same purpose.**

"They all took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom." Our start is important likewise, how we finish. The foolish virgins started with the same motivation as the wise, but the end of the race was not the same.

**3. They all slumbered.**

The word slumbered in the Greek means to nod or get drowsy. When you are drowsy you are not fully asleep, but sleep is not far away. When believers become spiritually drowsy they go through the customary motions of praise and worship, but their hearts are not in it.

**4. They all slept.**

Their slumber brought on sleep that was completely unconscious and at ease. It was not the fact that they slept necessarily that caused the foolish virgins to miss the Bridegroom; they missed because they failed to make provision of the vessel with the extra oil. The original Greek states that their lamps "were going out" rather than "gone out." The foolish virgins thought they were ready, for when the cry was heard they rose up and trimmed their lamps also, only to find that their lamps were going out from lack of oil. Such is the condition of the last days, described in the Laodicean church of Revelation 3: 14-22. A lukewarm church unaware of its true spiritual condition before God, Laodicea

thought she was rich, increased with goods, having need of nothing. Whereas God saw her wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked. Although the church of the last days is a slumbering church, nevertheless, there will be those wise virgins ready for the rapture, having redeemed the time, giving themselves earlier to prayer, intercession, travail, praise and worship before the Lord. This was the extra oil they needed to carry them through the midnight hour that they might go into the Bridal feast, as attendants to the Bride of Jesus Christ.

This parable on the wise virgins and foolish virgins is a great warning to us on the subject of faithfulness and reigning over unfaithfulness. If the wise virgins had remained awake and continued on their spiritual journey they would have been further in their spiritual statures and if the foolish had been faithful and stayed awake and increased their supply of oil, they could have been virgins or bridesmaids at the great marriage supper of the Lamb. The Bride stayed awake and clothed herself with the precious pearl of humility and faithfulness.

Faithfulness is part of the great nature and character of God and His Son, Jesus Christ, and if the Bride is going to be like Him in nature and character, then she, too, will put on faithfulness. The Bride will have the gate of faithfulness formed in her heart which will enclose and shut in all the precious truths of the Bridegroom and will exclude all the unfaithfulness of the world, the flesh, and the Devil.

"Thy mercy, O LORD, is in the heavens; and thy faithfulness reacheth unto the clouds."

PSALMS 36:5

God's faithfulness reaches so high that it does not change with the weather, for it reaches above the clouds, and all the changes of the lower region. The faithfulness of the wise and foolish virgins did not reach above the dark clouds of midnight, but the Bride's faithfulness will be like unto God. She will also be faithful regardless of the spiritual clouds and the ever changing spiritual weather conditions.

"For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens."

PSALMS 89:2

God declares that mercy and faithfulness shall be built up and established forever in the heavens. Therefore, the faithfulness that we lay hold of in this world will help us to rule over unfaithfulness and will also be established in the heavens forever as memorial of the great working power of the Crucified and Resurrected Christ.

"To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night."

PSALMS 92:2

We must praise God by showing forth His mercy in the morning and His faithfulness in the night. The virgins slumbered and slept in the night season instead of staying awake and showing forth the faithfulness of God. It is easy to go to sleep in our night seasons spiritually speaking, but this is a special time to lay hold of faithfulness and watchfulness to be ready for our precious Bridegroom.

"I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness: and thou shalt know the LORD."

HOSEA 2:20

"The LORD promises to betroth Israel in faithfulness and that she should know the LORD or be brought back to her oneness of relationship or spiritual marriage as wife, as it were, with the LORD.

This is a picture also of what Jesus Christ will do for those who rule over unfaithfulness and press on in His faithfulness, putting off the flesh and putting on of the Word and the Spirit of Christ Jesus.

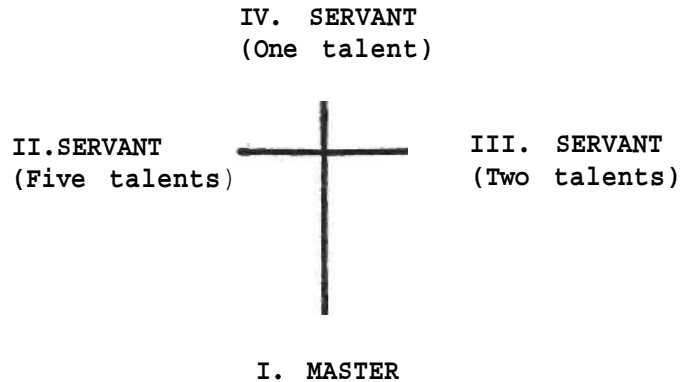
May Jesus help us to be ready and clothed in His faithfulness and humility at His soon coming.

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## RULING OVER UNFAITHFULNESS

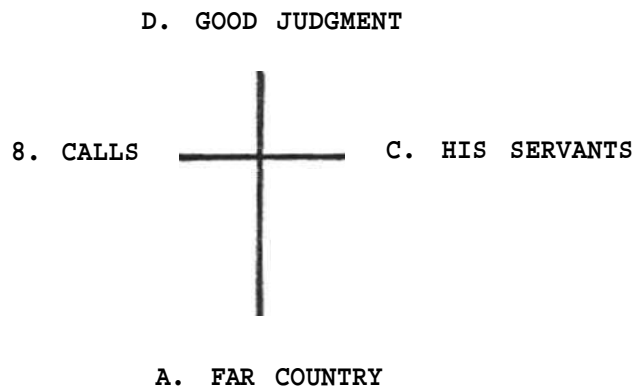
## PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

(Ruling over Slothfulness)



Matthew 25 gives us two parables pertaining especially to the coming of the Lord. The first parable of the ten virgins shows us that the five foolish virgins were shut out from the marriage supper of the Lamb not because of what they did but because of what they did not do; they failed to make provision for extra oil for their lamps that were going out at the midnight hour. The second parable has to do with the talent committed to these three classes of servants, thus implying that we are in a state of work and business. This parable shows the necessity of habitual preparation and actual diligence in our present work and service for the Lord. Neither of these parables are basically concerned with salvation, but are directed to those who are already believers.

## I. MASTER



"For the kingdom of heaven is as a man travelling into a far country, who called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents,

to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey"

MATTHEW 25:14,15

#### A. FAR COUNTRY

We find the Master going away to take up His abode in a far country. The Master represents Jesus Christ who has gone to a far country (seated at the right hand of the Father) and has been made absolute owner and proprietor of all persons, places and things; into His hands all things have been delivered. Therefore, He has committed unto us talents according to our abilities. The Lord Jesus Christ does not desire that any of His servants be idle. He has left us substance and gifts of His Spirit, grace and Word to work with.

"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

I PETER 4:10

We are the tenants upon His land, stewards of His manifold grace.

"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."

EPHESIANS 4:8

He ascended up on high, up to the far away country and gave gifts unto men. The Lord Jesus has truly furnished us with the necessary talents during His personal absence. With the Master gone it is easy to be careless and slothful in our responsibilities. If our Master is standing right over us with His watchful supervision it is so much easier to keep our noses down to the grindstone and fulfill our duties as we ought. On the other hand, when the Master is in a far country and there is nobody to keep a continual watch, as it were, over us, then it is so much harder to be faithful and not slothful.

Statistics prove that only five percent of the people are able to rule themselves. Naturally speaking, only five percent have enough leadership ability and enough self-control that they can work profitably without someone overseeing them. Most human beings have to have an overseer in order to do what they are supposed to do.

But as Christians we have an advantage. Although we may not possess in the natural, this needed ability to keep ourselves faithful in our duties before God, our Good Master left us a Helper, the Holy Ghost. When Jesus

was about to depart He said to His disciples:

"It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you."

JOHN 16:7

We have the Holy Ghost to constrain us, draw us, teach us, convict us, and oversee us, but we must allow Him to do it- Therefore, what we lack in the natural can be formed within us as the Holy Ghost helps us to lay hold of the life and nature of Jesus Christ.. In and through Jesus Christ we can do all things!

We can encourage and push one another toward faithfulness to a certain extent, for example when God's people come to church the pastor can prod, exhort, teach, plead, and do all there is to do to encourage God's servant to faithfulness, but this can only work so far. each of us must make our own choice as to what we do when we are alone and free to make our own decisions. Then how much praying and studying do we do? It takes a very real something inside of an individual to keep him faithful even though his Master is away in a far country.

#### **B. CALLS (Commands)**

It is the Master who does the calling or commanding. The servants are the property of the Master; they have been born in His house, they have been purchased with His precious Blood therefore He has the authority to call and send into His work and service. This truth reminds us that it is not for us to take up our own ministry apart from the call of God. Unless we have been called by the Master and commanded by Him in a particular ministry, it will avail nothing, for it will not be acceptable in the Kingdom of God. The Master does the calling, the placing, the directing. All else, apart from His command, is but fleshly and human endeavor, fruitless as far as eternal things are concerned. There are works which function under the guise of Christian Work but because God is not the commander and instigator, it serves to bless for only now, but bears no eternal weight.

#### **C. HIS SERVANTS**

The Master deals with His servants, His possessions, and His goods. In reality, the servants, being His, are part of His possessions as well. And as such, the Master has the right to do what He wants to do with them. We belong to Him; so do our talents, our abilities, our works, our ministries. Surely He has the right to mete out to each servant the talent, or the work that He desires each one to do.

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price:

therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit,  
which are God's."

I CORINTHIANS 6:19,20

**D. GOOD JUDGMENT**

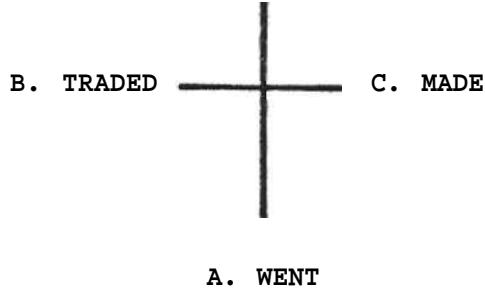
How precious it is when we come to the place where we can stop arguing with the judgment, the legal decision of the Master. The talents are divided according to our abilities and according to the wise judgment or righteous justice of the Master. He does not divide according to our will, according to our wants, according to our desires, but He divides according to His infinite understanding and His holy will, according to what we are able to do. What a comfort it is to know that He requires from us only in accordance with what He has given to us. God's principle is: to whom much is given, much is required.

Why then struggle and contend with the Master? Why should we chaff because He has divided unto one a fivefold ministry, to another a twofold ministry, or to others a onefold ministry? We must learn to trust and rest in the wise judgment of the Master.

**II. SERVANT (Five talents)**

**D. REWARD**

- 1. Well done
- 2. Good
- 3. Faithful
- 4.. Ruler



"Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents."

MATTHEW 25:16

**A. WENT**

Having received his five talents from the Master, we read that he "went." How quickly he demonstrated his obedience to the Master; he received and

he went, he immediately applied himself to the Master's business. So it is with us; when we receive something from the Lord, then it is time to go and obey. Some make the mistake of thinking that they can go when they feel like it or choose to, but this is not so. It is the Master's prerogative to command, then for us to go and obey, otherwise we will never accomplish His will in our lives.

## **B. TRADED**

The servant went and he traded. A true Christian is a spiritual tradesman; a tradesman is one who, having made his trade or his choice, takes pains to learn it and makes it his business to follow it. A true tradesman gives up all for the advancement of it and makes all other affairs bow to it. A true tradesman lives upon the gain of his trade. Traded means he laboured and toiled for gain and increase of His Master's goods. This servant went to work and used the five talents the Master has given him.

### **1. Manufacture Trade**

"And her merchandise and her hire shall be holiness to the LORD: it shall not be treasured nor laid up; for her merchandise shall be for them that dwell before the LORD, to eat sufficiently, and for durable clothing."

ISAIAH 23:18

There is a work, a trade to be done in our own hearts. How precious to know that we can trade the rags of our own self-righteousness for the sumptuous linen of the Bride of Jesus Christ. We can trade the enmity and corruption of our carnal minds, wills, and for the purity and holiness of the precious mind of Christ Jesus. The merchandise of holiness unto the Lord is of infinite value to the Master. The more we trade, the more we gain.

### **2. Merchant Trade**

"Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold."

PROVERBS 3:13,14

How glorious to KNOW that we can trade our earthly knowledge and understanding for the light of His divine wisdom and understanding. A true spiritual tradesman will gladly part with things of lesser value for the things of greater value. The merchandise of wisdom is a treasure

worth more than all the treasures of earth.

### 3. Merchandise of the Field and Vineyard

"She considereth a field, and buyeth it: with the fruit of her hands she planteth a vineyard. She girdeth her loins with strength, and strengtheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night."

PROVERBS 31:16-18

The virtuous woman in this chapter is a beautiful picture of the Bride of the Lord Jesus Christ, therefore she also has to be a true spiritual tradesman. She CONSIDERED the field before she bought it or traded for it. Some people bankrupt themselves by not considering before they buy or trade. The virtuous woman took into account the price of the field, the advantage of the field, etc., therefore she perceived later that the trade, the merchandise was good. The virtuous woman planted a vineyard with the fruits or profits of her own hands. She did not plant on someone else's trading or profit but on her own fruit. Therefore her increase of merchandise was good in her own sight, that is, doubly sweet and precious to her. We must learn to trade the talents the Master has given to us. Failure to put to work what God has already given us is what hinders God from giving us more. When He reveals and quickens some truth in the Word to us and then places somebody across our pathway that needs exactly what He has given to us, then we must get to work and share that precious truth. This is another way we TRADE in the work of the Lord. Work and ministry for the Master takes many forms, but always involves sacrifice and labour - it is work to trade in spiritual things.

### C. MADE

"Then he that had received the five talents went and traded with the same, and made them other five talents"

MATTHEW 25:16

The servant took his five talents and doubled what the Master had given him. You can be sure he did not convert those five talents into ten overnight, but he began to work and labour in faithfulness, and in due season they began to increase. Five talents became ten. The Word says that the servant MADE them other five talents; that is he constructed, formed, shaped or produced ten talents out of the five. Here we see, as it were, a marriage relationship between the works of the Master and his work. He took that which had been given by the Master and formed it, constructed into ten. What a thrilling challenge to know that we can be one with Jesus Christ even in works.

**D. REWARD**

"After a long time the lord of those servants cometh, and reckoneth with them. And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents; behold, I have gained beside them five talents more."

MATTHEW 25:19,20

**1. Well Done**

"And so he that had received five talents came and brought other five talents, saying, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me five talents: behold I have gained beside them five talents more. His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

MATTHEW 25:20,21

The servant must give an account of his improvement of the talents. The account is deferred; it is not until after a LONG TIME that the Master came and the servants were reckoned with. It was not that the Master was negligent concerning His affairs, but everything must be done, in His time and order. We must all be reckoned with as stewards of the manifold grace of God and the advantages we have enjoyed.

The Master's acceptance and approbation of the servant was announced by His exclamation of approval "well done." The servant had performed with skill and efficiency. He had used the talents to produce the desired gain or profit.

We are not to receive our "well dones" from man in this life, but will receive them from Jesus Himself, our precious heavenly Bridegroom. After all, it is this eternal commendation that really means everything. Man's plaudits are fickle and short-lived, but the reward of the Master is true and everlasting.

**2. Good**

"His lord said unto him, Well done" It was by patient continuance in well doing that the servant obtained this honor and glory of being recognized as a good servant, a servant who had satisfied the heart of his Master.

This servant had proven his loyalty and obedience to his Master, for he had taken his goods and ministered them in righteousness. Goodness

belongs to the righteousness and holiness of God. It meant something when the Master called him GOOD; what honor it revealed that the increase of his talent had sprung, as it were, from the righteousness and holiness of his spiritual man, his new nature within. What honor and glory were placed upon him because he had ministered in righteousness, holiness, cleanliness and purity.

### **3. Faithful**

"His lord said unto him, well done, thou good and faithful servant..." It is impossible to be a fruitful servant for any length of time if we are not first a good servant. True faithfulness springs out of holiness, purity and goodness. The recognition of a faithful servant reveals that this servant had continued in steadfast adherence to the person and goods of his Master in his earthly journey. The servant had had undeviating allegiance to his Master's business. The faithful servant had been free from fickleness in affection and loyalty. What rewarding recognition was given to this faithful servant - the one entrusted with five talents.

### **4. Rulership**

"Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

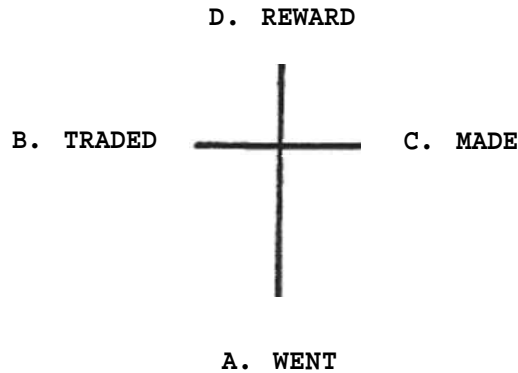
MATTHEW 25: 21

It is usual in the courts of princes and families of great men to advance those to higher places who have been faithful in the lower. Likewise in Christ's Kingdom rulership is a rich enjoyable reward. Observe the disproportion between the work and the reward. There were few things he worked with (five to ten talents), but his reward was ruler over MANY. Entering into the rulership WITH the Lord is a great joy indeed. The closer we walk with Jesus Christ the more we will trade the things of our flesh with its evil propensities, disposition, and appetites for the goodness, righteousness and truth of the Master. We will gain the glory and honor of ruling over many things in His Kingdom. It is this ruling power we all need to covet and seek, and it is part of the reward for faithfulness to our Master in His absence, faithful over the substance He has committed to our care.

### **III. SERVANT (Two Talents)**

"He also that had received two talents came and said, Lord, thou deliveredst unto me two talents: behold, I have gained two other talents beside them."

MATTHEW 25:22



**A. WENT**

With the servant entrusted with two talents we see almost the identical experience except that the ministry was different. This is substantiated by verse 17, "And LIKEWISE he that had received two, he also gained other two" When he received his talents, he stepped out in obedience, beginning to work and labour with that which had been committed unto his care.

**B. TRADED**

This is not just ordinary work, for this word implies labour. In other words, this two talent servant also worked with all of his heart for the Master. He traded and doubled his talents also, even as the one with five. The amount of talents differed, but the percentage of increase was identical.

**C. MADE**

He made two talents into four. He doubled what God had given to him. Surely this, also, was a good servant, trustworthy in the Master's absence.

**D. REWARD**

"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."

MATTHEW 25:23

**1. Well Done**

"His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I

will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord"

MATTHEW 25:23

The words spoken by the Master to the man with the two talents are identical as spoken to the five talent servant. He went and traded and doubled his talents, even as the first servant, so his reward of recognition was the same.

- 2. Good
- 3. Faithful
- 4. Rulership

From the sameness of the reward we see that this parable is not concerned with the question of stature but rather a question of being faithful in ministry. As the five talent servant was rewarded with rulership over many things, even so was the two talent servant and they both were privileged to enter into the joy of their lord. The blessed state of the faithful servants will be one of joy, where all springs of comfort shall be opened and where the fountains of joy from the depths will be broken up. This is the joy of the Lord, the joy that he has purchased and provided; the joy for which He endured the cross and despised the shame.

The five and two talent servants enjoyed the oneness of relationship with the Master in their works; they added their talents, as it were, to His talents. They enjoyed the oneness of relationship with the Master in His character and nature of goodness, and faithfulness. They enjoyed the oneness of relationship in power and authority of the Master - they were made ruler over MANY things.

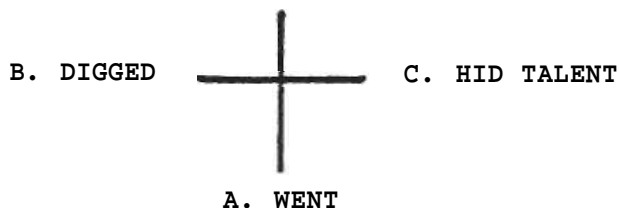
They entered into the oneness of the joy of the Lord. Jesus used His talents which His Father had given Him, therefore the reward of joy and pleasure of the right hand was set before Him, supporting His human soul under paralleled sufferings. This is the joy that He will share in oneness of relationship with His servants who likewise are willing to labour and suffer to trade their talents for more.

IV. SERVANT (One Talent)

"But he that had received one went and digged In the earth, and hid his Lord's money."

MATTHEW 25:18

**D. REWARD**



**A. WENT**

The smallness of our receiving will not excuse us from the reckoning. Though this servant had received but one talent, for that one he is called to give an account.

In all three cases the servants, regardless of the amount of talents committed them, went. Here too, then was a measure of obedience. However, this one talent servant made a good beginning as far as taking the talent and going out, but his accounting to his Master betrays the condition of his heart and soul.

"Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou has not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine."

MATTHEW 25:24,25

"This one talent servant sets forth the excuses which men are perpetually making for their human infirmities and inabilities to keep the commandments of God and to do His will because they have not used or applied the grace and power that would enable them to do so. This servant begets a lie concerning the character and nature of the Master in order to excuse his idleness; he says the reason he did not work was because the Master was a HARD man. That is the Master was tough, dry, harsh, severe, fierce.

This servant begets another lie concerning the ruling power of the Master, that is that the Master expects to reap and gather where he had not sown and strawed. Thus, he thought to encourage himself in his slothfulness. But the Lord and Master expects fruit where He has sown His talents, and His truth.

The third lie this servant begets is that he was afraid, but his bold insolent speech against the character and nature of the Master proves that he had no fear of the Master.

Many go out with real vigor and enthusiasm but fail to lay hold of the character and nature of the Master, therefore they fail to persevere in the absence of the Master. Let us note the behavior of this servant as the story progresses concerning him.

**B. DIGGED**

This servant worked also, but in the wrong way. How God's people need to learn this truth, for it is much easier to obey God and do His will than to labour, to dig, to excavate, to hide the one talent, thus avoiding the will of God. True, it is work to serve God but it is a delight and a joy to work for Him which is not true when we bury our talents and serve the

taskmaster of the flesh, the world, and the Devil.

The one talent servant "dugged in the earth", hiding his talent. This is one of the Devil's tricks to keep God's children busily digging in the earth, the world system that is corruptible and soon to pass away, rather than expending ourselves to labour in those eternal riches of our heavenly Master.

### **C. HID TALENT**

"...and hid his lord's money." The servant speaks as though he deserved praise for his prudence in putting the talent in a safe place. This was not his substance to begin with so it was not his prerogative to choose what he should do with it. The Master had every right to expect an increase as the servant had put it to work, but instead he hid it in the earth. Spiritually then, he hid the God-given ministry and it lay dormant and unfruitful within his won earth. It was only one talent, yet he could have doubled it as well and the Master would have commended him equally with the others. It was not a matter of how many talents, but rather the use to which those talents were put to in the master's absence. This servant begets another lie "lo, there thou hast that is thine," but this was not true because the increase that should have been presented was not given. Therefore this servant also in one sense, stole the Master's increase. Yet the servant accused the Master in order to try and justify himself.

### **D. REWARD**

#### **1. Wicked**

"Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed."

MATTHEW 25:24-26

Upon the Master's return the one talent servant simply handed back to the Master the talent He had given him. Instead of hearing the words "well done thou good and faithful servant," he heard the Master say, "Thou wicked servant!" The Master gave him a name of wicked to suit his depraved, evil character.

The man condemned himself by his own words. He accused the Master of being unjust, expecting to reap where he had not sown. We all know the impossibility of harvest without any sowing. Yet this wicked servant uttered this lie to the Master's face. How little this servant actually knew his Master. How sad when a Christian takes his one talent and hides

it in his earth, and then tries to accuse the Lord of injustice and put the blame on Him. We do not have to be a wicked servant, we can put our weaknesses and infirmities under the precious Blood of Jesus and pick up our one talent and trade for our blessed Master.

## **2. Slothful**

A slothful person is disinclined toward work, lazy and slow moving. There are many such servants in the Christian world today, unperturbed over the crying need of souls on every hand, concerned with only their own comfort and welfare. The one talent servant was just too lazy in spiritual things to do what God had commanded him to do. Has He not said, "Go ye into all the world teaching, baptizing...making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ." And did he not say, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me..." And "ye are bought with a price therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit..." Yes, we are certainly commissioned and commanded by God to serve Him with our talents, whether they be five, two, or only one.

## **3. Lost Talent**

"Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury. Take therefore the talent from him, and give it unto him which hath ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath."

MATTHEW 25:27-29

This servant lost his talent- It is a greater suffering to have had something and then lose it, than to never have had it in the beginning. Once you have known a little something about serving God, tasting of the joy of ministering for Him with your talents, it is a great suffering to have God take your ministry from you.

I am reminded of a precious saint of God who had a lovely talent of singing committed unto her care, but she witnessed of how she rebelled and refused to use her gift for the Lord. Years later, the Lord took this gift from her; she became stone deaf. Oftentimes she sat with tears streaming down her face during the congregational singing, feeling the loss of her gift and suffering from her inability to participate in singing her praises unto God. In latter years she repented over her earlier rebellion, but she has never sung again. That particular gift was lost to her. How often I have heard this child of God exhort others to faithfulness with whatever talent God has committed to them.

Take Samson for example. How intense must have been his sorrow when as a slave we find him grinding at the mill, serving as a beast of burden in

the enemy camp. He had lost his victor, his strength, his knowledge, his sight, his home, his freedom, and worst of all, he lost his ministry of power with God. But how graciously the Spirit of the living God came upon him when his long hair of separation began to grow again and delivered him from his bondage as he shook loose the supports of the building. Although the enemy was destroyed, he also lost his life. Beloved, it would be a great suffering to lose our talents, our ministry in the Lord. There are those who have, yet they persist in carrying on a form of ministry but it is hollow, empty, and unfruitful. A mockery to what it could have been had they served and laboured for the Master as commanded in the beginning.

#### 4. Reward - Outer Darkness

"And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

MATTHEW 25:30

The one talent servant was an unprofitable servant deserving judgment, being committed to outer darkness. There is a stature of darkness taught in the Word of God as follows:

#### d. Mist of Darkness



#### a. Darkness in General

**a. General darkness** is that first layer of darkness in which every man is born, regardless of who he is or where he was born. All sinners dwell in this darkness of error, ignorance, death, destruction and sin.

**b. Outer darkness** is that layer of darkness for those people who once had light. These have deliberately turned from the light to the darkness again. It is just retribution then, that God gives them exactly what they chose - darkness instead of light. There are four distinct classes of people mentioned that will be cast in this place:

1. Children of the kingdom (Israel) (Matthew 8:21)
2. The guest (Matthew 22:13)
3. The unprofitable servant (Matthew 25:30)
4. The evil eye (Matthew 6:23)

**c. Chains of darkness** is yet a deeper layer of darkness. There are angels that are held under darkness in everlasting, chains and those who are in hell in chains of darkness. The angels had light at one time; they were in heaven but they chose to rebel against God and were cast out.

**d. Mist of darkness** or shroud of darkness is the deepest level of darkness reserved for apostates. The apostate is one who has had the truth but held it down and changed it into a lie. Mist of darkness means to be enshrouded, to cover, to entirely wrap around.

The unprofitable one talent servant was condemned to the second layer of darkness, the outer darkness, being as this darkness is reserved for those who have known and have received truth and light, but turned from it and rejected it. Little wonder that there will be such weeping and gnashing of teeth. As already stated, the suffering is great when one has tasted of a relationship with Christ or a ministry for Him and then lose it. How horrible must be the outer darkness for those who have once walked in light.

The Lord Jesus taught the parable on the unprofitable servant to show us the need to rule over the slothfulness resident in our fleshly nature. We all have in one degree or another, a measure of slothfulness that causes us to neglect the talents the Lord has entrusted to us. Only as we crucify this old nature, can we come up with the reigning and ruling power necessary, to override this natural tendency. The Bride, through frequent trips to the Cross, has humbled herself in many ways in order to crucify her natural inclinations until the gate of ruling over slothfulness is finally formed within her. With this formation complete, she is fit to reign and rule with her heavenly Bridegroom throughout eternity.

We are not responsible for the number of talents we possess - this is God's doing. But, we are answerable to what we have done with that which He has committed unto us. How faithful are we? As Master, He means for everyone of us to work in some way for the extension of His precious Name. To serve Him as a faithful and trustworthy servant - what a precious privilege. And being faithful, we may enter into the joy of the Lord!

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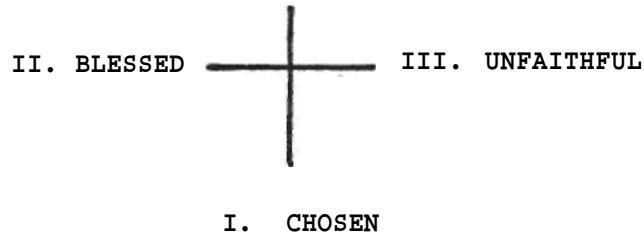
## RULING OVER UNFAITHFULNESS

### UNJUST STEWARD - UNFAITHFULNESS IN UNRIGHTEOUS MAMMON

In studying this parable we see two statures of truth. Let us first notice the stature of the natural, for the natural types the spiritual, and as we understand the natural picture, we will better grasp the spiritual stature of truth.

#### THE NATURAL STEWARD

#### IV. MAN'S WISE JUDGMENT



#### I. CHOSEN

"And he said also unto his disciples, There was a certain rich man, which had a steward; and the same was accused unto him that he had wasted his goods. And he called him, and said unto him, How is it that I have this of thee? give an account of thy stewardship; for thou mayest be no longer steward."

LUKE 16:1,2

First of all, this man was chosen, selected to work for his master From among all the other workmen. The rich man, himself, had made the choice and established this man as being responsible for all his goods. The word steward means householder, a governor, an overseer, a treasurer, a preacher, a chamberlain. Apparently the Lord had a particular rich man and his steward in mind, for he specified "a certain rich man" Then He proceeded telling his story, intent upon bringing home spiritual truth- to His disciples; a truth they must grasp if they were to progress spiritually and possess true spiritual riches.

If we as Christians, everyone of us are stewards and are responsible for some kind of treasure that we have received from God. Each of us is accountable to our Master for only that which has been entrusted to us as an individual. You are not held accountable for the Word of God that has been entrusted to me, nor am I accountable for the Word that is yours. We are not to compare ourselves one with another, but each stand responsible to the Lord for what spiritual truths and riches have been entrusted to our care.

Someone had said, "The world is a house, heaven the roof, the stars the lights, the earth with its fruits, a table spread, the Master of the house is the holy and blessed God, man is the steward, into whose hands the goods of this house are delivered; if he behaves himself well, he shall find favor in the eyes of the precious Lord; if not, he shall be turned out of his stewardship."

It is a blessed and holy privilege to be chosen, picked out by preference; selected, favored by God to be a steward in His Kingdom.

## II. BLESSED

Not only was this steward especially chosen by the master, but he was greatly blessed, for he was entrusted with a position of responsibility. The steward was blessed with the joy of exaltation in his master's kingdom. Although he was blessed with the position of overseer, he failed in his responsibility. The steward, through carelessness suffered his master's goods, to be lost, damaged, misapplied. Therefore, the rich man received the report concerning him that he had "wasted his goods." And because of this the master said, "Thou mayest be no longer steward."

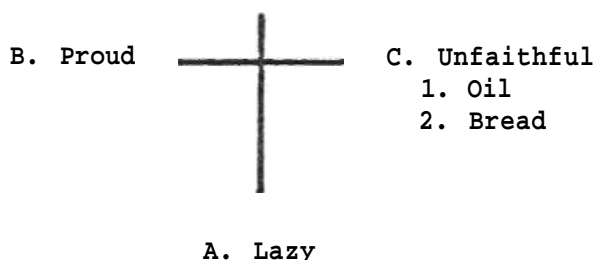
How sad, when the Lord takes from us our positions of blessing, opportunity, or ministry because of our unfaithfulness, because of our "Wasting of His goods." If we fail, then the good Master will take from us and give those things to others who will be faithful and will go on and do the will of God. With privilege and blessing comes responsibility.

## III. WORLDLY UNFAITHFULNESS

"Then the steward said within himself, What shall I do? or my lord taketh away from me the stewardship: I cannot dig; to beg I am ashamed. I am resolved what to do, that, when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses"

LUKE 16:3,4

### D. Worldly Judgment



**A. Lazy**

When the steward found that he was in trouble with his master, he testified with his own mouth of his true condition. He was a lazy and slothful man. Out of a job - why couldn't he dig, taking a job as a laborer? Was he crippled, sick, or incapacitated in any way? No, he -was lazy!

Few seem to realize that work, is a God-given blessing to mankind. Work is honorable if it is honest work, regardless of how menial it may be. Adam male and female were commissioned by God to work in the Garden, and this was before the fall. Working with our hands is often therapeutic, healing to the many nervous tensions we pick up in daily living. It is a privilege to work and we need to recognize it as such, instead of resisting it as people do so often these days.

People do not want to assume responsibility because they are too lazy. Behind our unfaithfulness to God is this lazy spirit. God in no way condones laziness. In fact, He established that the man who does not work shall not eat. Also, one of His laws is, what we sow we reap. If we sow sparingly (lazy sowing) then we reap sparingly (reap little).

**B. PROUD**

"...to beg I am ashamed", too proud to beg. Not only lazy, but proud also. We are unfaithful because we are lazy, and unfaithful because we are proud. It takes real humility to make us faithful. When God tells us to go a certain way it takes humility on our part to go that way, for so often it seems contrary to our carnal reasonings. Times like these make us think (if we sincerely seek to do His will) "I will do it even if it kills me." But doing the will of God never kills us, in fact, it brings us into greater life - we are made alive! We have success!

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth: but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way PROSPEROUS, and then thou shalt have GOOD SUCCESS"

JOSHUA 1:8

"Beloved, I wish above all things, that thou mayest PROSPER and be in HEALTH, even as thy soul prospereth."

III JOHN 1:2

"But rather seek ye the KINGDOM OF GOD; and all these things shall be added unto you"

LUKE 12:31

God has to prove us for a season to see if we will seek Him FIRST, then He will add this success, this prosperity, these things that we have need of in life. If we want true and lasting success, we must meditate on the Word of God day and night, then we have His sure promise of prosperity and good success. There are those who find success and prosperity apart from the will of God, but there is no true happiness in it. When we seek the will of God first in our lives, then He can safely wrap up His will with success and prosperity, for there is no danger of it possessing or ruling us. God is a jealous God, and if we allow our success and prosperity to replace Him as the central pivot of our lives, then there is no real blessing upon it and God will not permit such to enjoy their prosperity in the long run.

**C. UNFAITHFUL**

**1. Unfaithful in the Oil**

"I am resolved what to do, that when I am put out of the stewardship, they may receive me into their houses. So he called every one of his lord's debtors unto him, and said unto the first, How much owest thou unto my lord? And he said, An hundred measures of oil. And he said unto him, take thy bill, and sit down quickly, and write fifty."

LUKE 16:4,5

Here was the root of the steward's problem - unfaithfulness! By his careless negligence he had permitted many of his masters debtors slip by without paying their debts. Realizing that he was to be faced up with his lazy and careless ways, he contacted the various debtors to make them a proposition of easy settlement. The first owed for 100 measures of oil. For quick settlement, the unfaithful steward accepted payment for only fifty. He reduced the debt to the one half.

**2. Unfaithful in the Bread**

"Then said he to another. And how much owest thou? And he said, An hundred measures of wheat. And he said unto him, take thy bill, and write fourscore."

LUKE 16:7

Unfaithful in measuring out the indebtedness of the oil, so he was with the man that owed for the wheat, or the bread. This man owed for a hundred measures of wheat but the steward accepted eighty in settlement of the debt. He reduced the debt a fifth part.

There is more to this parable than many realize. If we fail to

understand the Old Testament we fail in understanding many things that God has recorded in the New Testament for our benefit. To know why these proportions were used here we have to understand about the measurement of oil and bread in the Word of God, recorded for us in the Old Testament Scriptures. Let us pause here to learn of God's measurement.

"And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations. As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony to be kept. And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited they did eat manna, until they came into the borders of the land of Canaan. Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah."

EXODUS 16:33-36

One omer equals 6.70 pints, an ephah is one bushel and three pints. An omer is one tenth or almost seven pints, making it about three and one half quarts. In other words a tenth of an ephah is three and one half quarts. All measurements in Bible days was based on the ephah. This is especially important when related to our offerings and sacrifices unto the Lord, for they must be offered according to God's standard of measurement.

"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and say unto them When ye be come into the land of your habitations, which I give unto you, And will make an offering by fire unto the LORD, a burnt offering, or a sacrifice in performing a vow, or in a free will offering, or in your solemn feasts, to make a sweet savour unto the LORD, of the herd, or of the flock: Then shall he that offereth his offering unto the LORD bring a meat offering of a TENTH DEAL OF FLOUR mingled with the FOURTH PART OF A HIN OF OIL. And the FOURTH PART OF A HIN OF WINE for a drink offering shalt thou prepare with the burnt offering or sacrifice, for one lamb."

NUMBERS 15:1-5

The meal, flour, or bread offering required to accompany the meat offering of one lamb was one-tenth deal (the word meat here means meal or bread). That deal means an omer, a tenth part of an ephah, equivalent to three and one half quarts. So with the lamb offering there was to be an omer, one-tenth deal. Also, accompanying the offering, was one fourth part of a hin of oil. A hin is six quarts, one fourth part amounting to one and one half quarts. This is how God required that all these items be measured out.

The Old Testament sacrifices and offerings were shadows and types prefiguring the coming LAMB OF GOD, Jesus Christ. In the old Testament sacrifices there is a distinction made, a division made between the bread and the flesh. They both are a picture of the body of Jesus Christ, yet this same distinction is held to in John's Gospel, chapter six. The body of Christ is likened unto Bread and also Flesh. The word bread means to feed on, consume, battle, overcome, prevail, to make war. The word flesh basically means begetting power, procreating power; to be fresh, rosy, cheerful. Thus, we see there are two sides or two aspects to the body of Jesus Christ, the destructive side (represented by the bread) and the constructive side (represented by the flesh). As we partake, eat, of the body of Christ we will first experience the destructive aspect, that crucifixion to our Self-life that is necessary before we can partake of the constructive aspect, the resurrection life of Jesus Christ.

This is what the Lord wants us to learn here. If we desire to eat of the Lamb of God, living by His life, so that we can come up bearing His image and likeness, then we are going to have to bring our offering of bread (crucifixion bread) along with it. We cannot eat of the Lamb without the accompanying bread. There is no resurrection life without first partaking of the crucifixion that precedes it. And when we bring the lamb, and the bread, then we also receive the oil (Spirit) and the wine (joy) with it.

The proportions were:

FLESH (One Lamb)

**BREAD**

1/10th deal of flour

1/4th hin of oil

1/4th hin of wine

Notice, the oil and wine were always in the same proportion. See, also, the small portion of crucifixion (1/10th deal of flour) in comparison with the larger resurrection (one lamb). Crucifixion is not so bad after all is it? So with the offering of the lamb came the bread, the oil, and the wine: one lamb, 3-1/2 quarts of meal, 1-1/2 quarts of oil, and 1-1/2 quarts of wine. If we will bring the lamb for construction, and the meal for destruction of those things that are unlike Jesus, then we must also partake of the anointing of the oil and the wine of the joy of His resurrection power. God metes it out. The principle is this: we are not going to have any more construction than we are willing to bring destruction along with the construction. We are not going to have any more anointing of the oil than we are willing to bring of the lamb and the bread. It is measured out to us. We are not going to have any more resurrection power (wine), not have any more ecstasy and delight of that resurrected life than we are willing to bring with the lamb, the bread and the oil.

With this background of understanding we can better grasp the seriousness of the unfaithful steward. The steward was unfaithful in handling the oil and the bread of his master. God measures out more of the bread

(destruction) than of the wine, for He requires three and one half quarts of four (wheat) and only one and one half quarts of oil. The unfaithful steward, on purely his own authority, reduced the indebtedness in the wrong proportion and not as God requires. He made the bread eighty percent and the oil only fifty percent. When we walk according to our standards of measurement we always end up with a confused picture.

Sometimes a pastor is tempted to be an unfaithful steward even as this natural steward was in the parable. If a pastor requires less of the bread offering out of one of his members than what the Lord is requiring, then that pastor becomes an unfaithful steward. How easy it is today, "That is all right. You don't have to bring quite so much bread...we can settle for less crucifixion. Just bring eighty percent and that will be sufficient. After all, much of the fault was with the other party. Don't be too hard on yourself." In other words, it isn't necessary to get down and humble yourself, letting the Lord search out your heart and deal with you guiltiness, until He can finally bring you into a new place of personal crucifixion in your will and pride. A faithful pastor, (overseer and steward) of God's possessions, will require one hundred percent of the bread and one hundred percent of the oil, for God requires full payment of our debt, A pastor has no right to forgive any man's debt to God.

#### **D. WORLDLY JUDGMENT**

"And the Lord commended the unjust steward, because he had done wisely: for the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light. And I say unto you Make to yourselves friends of the mammon or unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

LUKE 16:8,9

We have seen the worldly unfaithfulness of the steward, and now we see the worldly judgment of the master. What kind of judgment does the world put on unfaithfulness? They declare it good - wise! The master commended the unfaithful and unjust steward because he had done wisely. This worldly king endorsed the unfaithfulness of his servant because he was greedy and would rather have the 50 proportion and the 80 proportion than to have the steward being honest, just, and requiring the full payment as he should have done. The master realized that he might have lost it all so he would rather have had that man be unjust and get something out of it for himself than to have the man just and faithful at the chance of getting nothing. This is worldly judgment. They have little interest in whether or not it meets God's standard of measurement, but are only concerned with getting what they can lay hold of by one means or another, just or unjust, right or wrong - this is the judgment of the world today.

Spiritually speaking, the world says, "You don't have to be a religious fanatic about it. A little religion is good but don't get too involved."

Cancel out your bill to God with a partial payment. You don't have to pay one hundred percent of bread, or one hundred percent of oil. Give just a little of yourself...that's enough."

But, beloved, we are not going to eat of the Lamb unless we come to God with the right proportions. We have to have the right amount of the bread, of the oil, and of the wine if we are going to eat of the Lamb. It is not for us to figure out the proportions, this has already been established by the Lord. It is He who measures it all out. We must satisfy our Master, the Lord, if we are to be faithful stewards in His household.

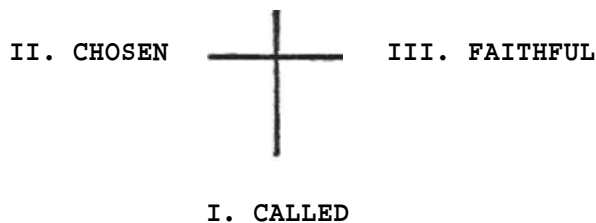
In order to measure up to God's requirement and God's standards, we must reign over unfaithfulness. We must each of us, choose whether we will live to measure up to worldly judgment or God's judgment. Yes, we can walk to measure up to man's expectations and receive a pat on the back or a few words of commendation, but then life's journey is ended and we face all eternity poor with God. I would rather have this world judge me a fool, and carry that tag around for awhile, and have the smile of my Father in Heaven upon me. If God is smiling upon us, we need not trouble ourselves regardless of how much men in this world may scowl upon us. It really does not count for much.

The steward, in the parable, was a chosen man, blessed with a good position, yet unfaithful in the fulfillment of his task and yet honored and called wise by the unwise judgment of this world. God's judgment does not measure these things so, for in His sight this steward was unfaithful, and as such, guilty of failure and loss.

In closing, let us consider a second stature of truth, contrasting the faithful steward according to God's spiritual standards of measurement.

## **SPIRITUAL STEWARD**

### **IV. GOD'S WISE JUDGMENT**



In Revelation 17, we have a description of the Bride of Jesus Christ. Reference is made to the Beast, the Anti-Christ, that will war with the Lamb (Jesus Christ our Lord). When the Lamb comes again He will be accompanied with armies seated upon white horses and clothed in fine linen, white and clean (Revelation 19: 11-14). Those clothed in white linen are those that make up the Bride of Jesus Christ coming back to rule and reign with their Heavenly Bridegroom in the Millennial reign of Christ. But we are especially interested in this study in the

qualifications specified in Revelation 17:14. As faithful stewards, having overcome the natural unfaithfulness that is common to all mankind, those who make up the Bride of Christ have fulfilled the following qualifications:

### **I. CALLED**

All believers are called to attain full spiritual stature:

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the MEASURE OF THE STATURE of . the FULNESS of CHRIST...But speaking the truth in love, MAY GROW UP INTO HIM in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

EPHESIANS 4:13,15

### **II. CHOSEN**

Salvation is for "whosoever will" and saving grace is available to all one an equal basis. And all believers are called to grow up into the mature stature of Jesus Christ, growing up into Him who is the Head of the body of Christ. But there are those believers who are predestined (fenced in) to go on into the oneness of relationship with Jesus Christ, thereby becoming the Bride of the Heavenly Bridegroom. Because of this predestination, God obligates Himself to bring every pressure or circumstance and every force of influence upon such an individual to bring them up to full stature in Christ. We see, therefore, that the Bride is not only called, but she is also chosen.

### **III. FAITHFUL**

And she is faithful. She has overcome the world, the flesh, and the Devil, attaining to a oneness of relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, knowing full union of her will with His Divine Will, walking under His Divine Headship. She is a faithful steward and has proven this faithfulness in the unrighteous mammon of this world.

Beloved, we are not going to be able to cut down on the proportions of the bread and the wine. We are in a day where people are not too faithful over God's substance. The religious world is in its present shape because they have tried to weigh out more oil than they have weighed out bread - I am speaking particularly of Pentecostal circles. They have weighed out more shout and dance (oil and wine) that they have the crucifixion of the flesh and bringing the bread of destruction and this has prevented them from partaking of the Lamb as they should have. We are not going to build spiritually unless we first allow the Lord to cleanse us, deal with our ugly attitudes and dispositions, deal with our fleshly natures, our self-willed determinations, and our natural man with its fleshly pride.

Have you ever wondered why the Lord makes a distinction between the Holy Ghost and fire?

"....he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:"

MATTHEW 3:11

Let me explain. The Baptism of the Holy Ghost is a gift from God and an experience we have in the laying of our spiritual foundation. Our foundation consists of God's three gifts to us, gifts of grace, namely: Blood, Fire and Water as typed by the blood, fire, and water found in the Courtyard of the Old Testament Tabernacle. The Baptism of the Holy Ghost is a gift, but our experience with the fire of God is attained by spiritual growth in stature.

The fire of God refers to the fire of intercession and travail that we experience on our prayer life as pictured by the Golden Altar in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle. Then there is further fire to be laid hold of at the Golden Candlestick, which is the fire of Divine Wisdom, Understanding, and Knowledge. At the Table of Shewbread our spiritual experience consists of laying hold of the fire of faith, and from there we progress up into the Head realm relationship with Jesus Christ, coming under His judgements and covenants.

We have a comparable picture using the metaphor of water in Ezekiel 47. Again it is a picture of degrees of the Water of God's Word as it is quickened to us by the work of the Holy Spirit. By vision, Ezekiel first experienced the water on his ankles, then to his knees, then to the loins, and finally the waters became so big that it was necessary to swim in them. When one has reached this point of experience, we can say they are pretty well baptized. There is growth and progression for the child of God and it behooves us to be faithful stewards of the things that have already been committed unto our care. This is going-on and pressing-on way as we continually lay hold of new places in the Lord, new heights and deeper depths. What a joy it will be to hear the Lord say, "Well done thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the things which God has prepared for you." But how tragic, on the other hand, if God must write unfaithfulness and say, "depart from me, I know you not."

#### IV. GOO'S WISE JUDGMENT

"He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much. If therefore ye have not been faithful in the unrighteous mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's who shall give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the

other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

LUKE 16:10-13

If we cannot be faithful in stewardship over natural riches and treasures, how can we possibly be trusted with spiritual and eternal riches? We all have something, as believers, of the riches of God committed unto us, but what are we doing with these riches? In the natural, we all have something by the way of earthly things that we are answerable for. How faithful are we with these natural riches? Can we be trusted to handle our pay check right, so that we pay our just debts and deal honestly with men? If not, then surely the Lord cannot trust us with His true riches. We must learn to rule over the unfaithfulness that makes us unfaithful with another man's riches, how then can God add those same riches to us? We have to prove our faithfulness with spiritual things in matters that pertain to another man, and then God will add those same things to us as well.

It is at the Golden Altar that the Son of Righteousness rises up to shine forth His rays of faithfulness upon us. Add under these rays we can lay hold of more of His mercy. With mercy and humility upon us, we can better lay hold of faithfulness before God. There is, through Jesus Christ, ruling and reigning power available to us all. As we learn to rule in faithfulness over the unrighteousness mammon of this world, we shall then be entrusted with the true and eternal riches of God's spiritual kingdom.

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## INTRODUCTION

We have been seeing how the parables that Jesus taught fit together with the twelve gates found in the New Jerusalem, the Bride of Jesus Christ. These twelve gates speak of the perfect government found in the New City. Gates have power to open and close, to include and exclude, thus giving us a picture of the ruling and reigning power that must be formed within the spiritual heart of the Bride of Christ during her earthly journey in order for her to be prepared for eternal dwelling and ruling in the New City with her Heavenly Bridegroom. Our study has progressed to the tenth gate, RULING OVER ANXIETY.

The formation of this gate, the power to rule and reign over anxiety, needs to be formed in every one of us.

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**RULING OVER ANXIETY**

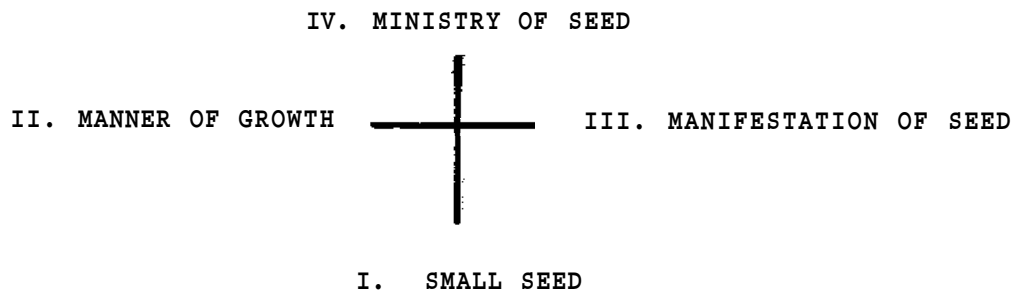
Anxiety means a state of being uneasy, apprehensive or worried about what may happen; misgiving, an eager and often slightly worried desire to do well. All of us know what it is to be anxious over one thing or another. Anxiety takes many forms in our day to day living, and even in the spiritual realm we manifest many anxieties - anxious about our spiritual growth, anxious about not making it, anxious about missing the prize. But when the reigning power of God is formed in our hearts, it will be another gate with closing power against the many anxieties that press in upon us.

For example, in the natural, man has sense enough to build a flood wall when it is needed. Then when he sees the flood waters rising, he closes the gates and keeps the flood back and in control. Even so, the Lord has a gate and a wall that He will build around our hearts. When the floods of the enemy come against us, the wall will withstand the doubts, fears, torments, and questions, and many, many anxieties that the Devil casts in our way. The Lord will simply close the gates within our hearts. As human beings we all suffer these same afflictions of anxieties and fears, but thank God for a gate of faith and trust that can come together, closing out the Devil's flood tides which he sends to engulf us. But the child of God need be anxious for nothing!

Sometimes we are all wrought up over something, and then we get impatient with others because they are not as interested as they ought to be in the matter. But God calls this anxiety and He has bidden us not to be anxious. Really, beloved, we need to learn that we are helpless when it comes to redeeming someone or some situation. We cannot redeem a flea - we cannot redeem ourselves, much less redeem someone else. It has to be done God's way and in God's own time. Our part is to be anxious for nothing,

To be anxious means to be agitated, troubled, frustrated, nervous. Some people say, "I'm not anxious, I'm just nervous." It is that little fluttery feeling, that gnawing inner fear, that inner sense of troubling of the mind that indicates our anxiety. We like to say, "We are concerned," but if this were really so, we would get to work in our prayer closet, praying through on the matter, for only the Lord can do anything about most of our situations.

The parable of the grain of mustard seed gives us a little secret of how to rule over anxiety. The parable falls into this stature of truth:



**I. SMALL SEED**

"And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how."

MARK 4:26,27

To begin with, notice the parable relates to the kingdom of God, which designates the rule and reign of the Bridegroom and His Bride during the Perfect Age - the universal and eternal reign of Jesus Christ. So then, the truth contained within the little parable is of special interest to those of us who seek to be in the Bride of Jesus Christ. This oneness of relationship is likened unto that union found within the marriage bonds, and so, if we are to lay hold of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus - being the Bride of Christ, then we must let the seed of trust take root in our hearts. We must learn now to trust in Jesus Christ to be our Heavenly Bridegroom, letting Him assert His headship over us, letting Him rule and reign over our lives. We must learn to commit ourselves and our circumstances to Him.

How easily we do this in the natural relationship of marriage. Generally, a wife shoulders the lesser concern over the protective responsibility of the family and home. If an intruder were to come, she naturally looks to the head of the house for protection and care. A woman always feels that strength of protection when her husband is at home with the family. Should someone unexpectedly knock at the door it is the husband of the house who usually answers. As the natural husband assumes these protective responsibilities, even so does our Heavenly Bridegroom. How often we insult His Headship, His watchful and loving care over us, with our many troublesome anxieties, doubts, and fears. We fail to let Him answer the door.

This is one thing that is wrong with us even with the religious world. We are altogether too anxious. Preachers are sometimes too anxious to even preach the Truth, lest they offend someone. Their ministry is riddled with constant fears and anxieties, causing them to fail in their responsibility to deliver the Word of God to their flock. As Christians we have faith; faith for salvation, faith for the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, faith in prayer, faith in healing, but this is a new kind of faith we are concerned with here. This is a faith in His headship, believing that our precious Lord, our Heavenly Bridegroom, is well able to take care of us, able to govern and direct in all things. This faith in his Headship begins as a small mustard seed. This good seed of His Word does by degrees, produce wonderful effects in our hearts and lives. Let us begin, like the small seed, to grow in confidence in the Headship of Jesus Christ in our lives.

## II. MANNER OF GROWTH

"And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how"

MARK 4:27

Our parable speaks of a man who has ploughed the ground and planted the seed. He has sense enough to not go out there every day and dig the seed up to check whether or not it is growing. He knows if he just leaves it alone, it will grow. What a mystery! He does not know how to explain this process of growth, how this little embryo of life begins to break through that hard grain of corn, shooting its little root down into the ground, sending its little blade up towards the earth's surface. Although he cannot grasp fully this process, yet he has confidence knowing that growth is taking place. Growth is unconscious and hidden, yet, while the man sleeps, growth continues on.

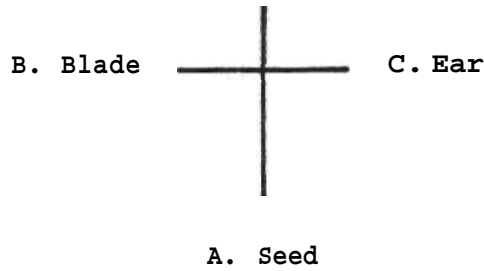
This same principle of growth applies to the spiritual as well. We have to plant the seed of trust and faith in the headship of the Lord on our own hearts, and how quickly the Lord is there to help us do it. All we have to do is talk to the Lord out of our spiritual man. Really, He pays no attention to the fleshly man with all his complainings and groanings, but He does do business with our spiritual man. Simply get down before the Lord and ask Him to help you. Tell Him you want to start learning this trust in the Headship of the Lord. Confess your unbelief and ask Him to help you grow in your faith, and He will do it: The Lord always takes heed to an earnest, humble and sincere heart that seeks Him.

So we go on living day after day, praying, seeking, trusting, and all of a sudden we are aware of a new sense of confidence and trust that seems to be down in our hearts. This is how growth takes place - it is an unconscious, imperceptible thing. Growth is so silent that we are unaware of it. We find ourselves in a similar situation that we have been in before, but our reactions are different; something has taken place. The change has come because the seed of faith and trust in the Headship of Jesus Christ has taken root and begun to grow. This spiritual root system is our confidence anchoring itself in the knowledge of the nature of our God.

Realizing how this matter of growth takes place, we can truly rejoice in every heartache, every test, every trial, every suffering, every persecution, every disgrace. As we continue on in Jesus all these things work together for our good. They cause us to put down our roots in our precious Lord. So we go on living, facing spiritual day and night seasons and suddenly awareness comes that we have grown in our faith and trust in the Headship of the Lord. This is the manner of growth.

III. MANIFESTATION OF SEED

A. Full Corn  
Seed Corn



"For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come"

MARK 4:28,29

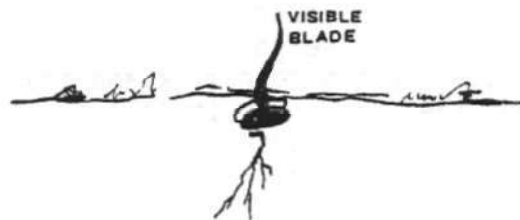
A. Seed Stage



All things, regardless of how great they may become, start with a small beginning, and so also the tiny seed.

Notice, the earth brings forth fruit of herself; everything that is planted in seed form will grow and produce, and in due season, manifest itself for what it really is.

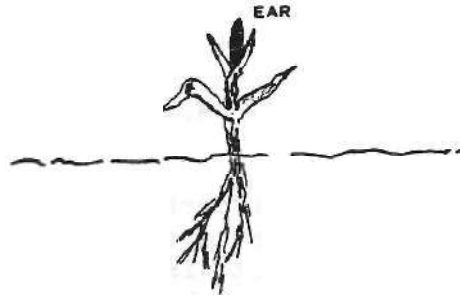
B. Blade



The corn seed, by way of example has been planted, abiding there hidden in the earth. Soon it has taken sufficient root to break through the surface and manifest itself as a tiny green blade.

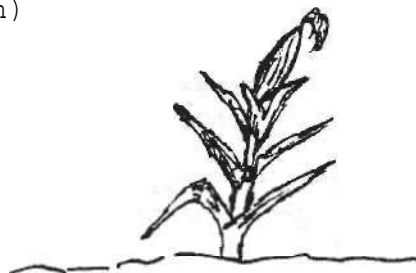
The natural growth is thrilling to behold, but even more so is the spiritual growth, as it takes place in the lives of people. How often we plant the precious seed of God's Word into the hearts of people, then patiently wait to see a manifestation of the life of that thing produced in that person's life. What a delight to see the blade stage manifesting the fact that the seed of truth has taken root downward, anchoring itself in real faith and trust in Jesus Christ. The blade stage is the first real visible evidence we have that truth has been born within that individual's heart.

C. Ear Stage



Growth continues until it reaches the ear stage. When we come under the Headship of Christ, and that seed of trust and faith begins to deliver us from anxiety, this seed of the Kingdom of God, this seed of the Bridegroom continues to grow within, and it is not long before we become a witness to others. This stage of the growth can be eaten by others. It is fresh and green and edible, yet not mature enough to be planted for purposes of reproduction. How wonderful, then, to reach the ear stage of growth that others might be fed and nourished.

D. Full Ear (seed corn)



Growth continues, roots spread out further and deeper, and the corn continues to mature until the corn silk gets real brown. Then the pollen from the tassel falls on the corn silk and travels on down to pollinate every kernel on the ear. Now it is seed corn, capable of reproducing itself - making increase because this ear of corn continued to mature until it has reproducing power.

Even so it is with the Kingdom of God. It begins with a humble seed of trust and faith in the Headship of the Lord. Then, having been planted into the heart of a believer (within his earth), its natural and normal procedure is growth, unconscious growth. Growth that begins as a seed, manifests itself as a blade, then a green ear, and finally reaches full

maturation in the seed corn stage. This kind of growth will deliver the heart of a believer from all the anxieties of life.

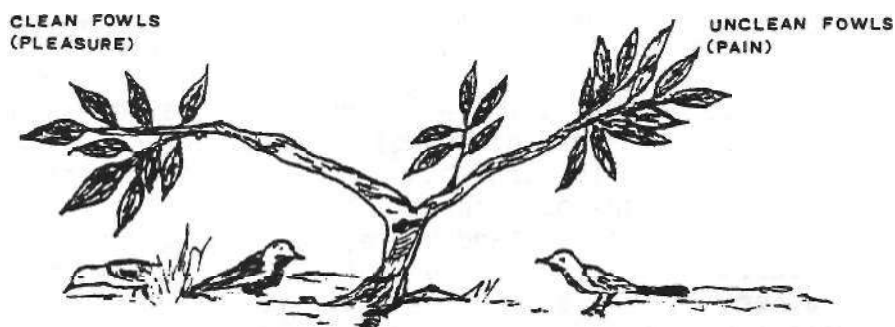
#### IV. MINISTRY OF SEED

"And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it. And with many such parables spake he the word unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples."

MARK 4:30-34

Having reached a stage of maturity, the seed is privileged to have a ministry - ministering the precious message of the Bridegroom and Bride relationship, growing up into full stature and becoming a part of the Kingdom of God relationship with Jesus Christ. Ministering this message of the Bride can only be done by those who are personally a living demonstration of this process of growth and maturation. The root stage is hidden from the eyes of men, although we, ourselves, are aware of the reality of our faith and trust in His Headship, But when the blade stage, the ear stage, and the seed corn stage are manifested, then the growth can no longer be hidden, but is seen by everyone. People know when we are going on for God - it cannot be hidden. But to preach this message of the Kingdom of God is impossible unless we ourselves are a living manifestation of this truth. The Bride of Christ will manifest her growth and have formed within her the gate of ruling and reigning power over ANXIETY.

This subject is still the Kingdom of God which is now likened unto a grain of mustard seed - the tiniest of seeds. It is still dealing with the subject of growth in this matter of overcoming anxiety. When the smallest mustard seed is grown to its fulness of stature, it becomes greater than all herbs and shoots forth great branches. Upon these branches roost the fowls of the air, finding shelter and comfort there .



Scripture tells us of two classes of fowl, the clean and the unclean. In

our parable, the mustard seed has come to full stature and is shown in its ministry, for on its branches rest the fowls of the air - the clean and the unclean birds. God ministers in love, mercy, and grace to the clean and the unclean alike. He sends the rain upon the just and the unjust, and so must we. We, in our ministry, do not choose the birds to which we minister. We have no control as to who shall find rest and shelter on our branches, and must, like the mustard tree, stand surrendered and yielded to all who come. The clean birds that are drawn to our ministry are a joy and delight, but the dirty birds that come will test and try us in many ways. They will create many anxieties unless we have real trust and faith in the Headship of the Lord.

In the beginning, God planted a garden of Eden. In the midst of this garden He set the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which has to do with pleasure and pain. The Bride of Jesus Christ, with her ruling and reigning power over all anxieties, attains spiritual growth to where pleasure and pain are as one within her. This is the state of the mustard tree standing there to minister to "whosoever will," not anxious because the dirty birds are there, but finding equal pleasure even in the pain of these. She certainly takes no pleasure in their sin, or in their uncleanness, but taking pleasure in the will of God that counted her worthy to minister to these needy ones. After all, there is a possibility that they might change! As long as they sit under our shadow, finding their security in our ministry, then there is a chance for them. God's Word reminds us that to whom much is forgiven, that person loves much. What great joy it is to bear with a dirty bird, giving him the benefits of our ministry, and then see him change, see him repent and seek God's forgiveness. Such an one loves much, for he has found greater mercy, and out of all this comes a greater fellowship and union. How sad it is when the religious world fails to understand this principle, but chooses rather to "boot them out" - these dirty birds. Regardless of what spiritual ill there may be, there is hope for change as long as they sit under the shadow of a mature mustard tree - one who has reached full stature and able to rule and reign over anxiety.

The greatest joy a shepherd can know is when he sees a dirty bird change sides and move over with the clean birds. After the shepherd has prayed, wept, worked, and sacrificed for that so-called dirty bird, he has an investment in that soul. Something that has cost us something always has more value and meaning to us, and this is true even in the spiritual. Then, can you imagine the joy when the shepherd is privileged to see that converted "dirty bird" begin to grow up into maturity, and in turn, stretch out his branches that others may come and rest under their shadow?

Let me remind you, we have all been "dirty birds" at one time. All of us have sinned and come short of the glory of God. As we have received mercy, surely we should in turn show forth mercy to others. Our Lord has never bidden us to be anxious about the birds that are resting on our branches. We are just to stand there, stretching out our arm to all mankind, releasing the comfort, the shadow, the refreshment to all alike. It is our Father's business, and He will take care of the rest. This is not my personal anxiety, for the Lord has bidden me to be ANXIOUS IN NOTHING! Beloved, let us wait upon the Lord to form the gate of ruling

and reigning over anxiety which comes as our knowledge of His nature and faith in His Headship comes to full mature growth in *our* hearts.

The life of mortification is a stranger to many of God's children to some extent. How much love do we have for the life of the mortification of the Christ?

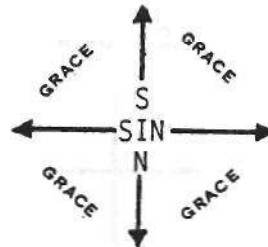
We have covered the first ten points, showing us some of the aspects of the great root of the LOVE of God, which is part of His Divine nature. Surely we need to pray that the Spirit of God will continue to feed and water the root of belief in the nature of God's love on our personal Tree of Confidence. How sorely we need more of God's precious nature of love in our hearts that we might love even as He loves.

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## RULING OVER ANXIETY

### 1. ANXIETY OVER SPIRITUAL LIFE

Anxiety is no small thing in most of our lives. We are anxious over many things, both in the natural and also in the spiritual. As we worry about our natural life, so we also worry about our spiritual life. How readily we give ear to the accusations of the Devil when he taunts us saying, "You haven't really repented...you haven't really done business with God...you really are not saved...you will never make it" His nagging words easily provoke an inner anxiety that does not belong in the heart of God's children. And when he finds a sincere Christian who is really trying to go on for God, he whispers, "Look how high that Holy Hill is...your flesh is much bigger...you might as well quit because you can't make it." What a lie! Which is taller, actually, the Holy Hill or our fleshly nature? The HOLY HILL is none other than Jesus Christ and the truth of the matter is that He is taller; He is greater than anyone's sin or anyone's carnal nature. Does not the Word say that where sin did abound, grace did much more abound? Jesus Christ did not extend Himself only to cover your sin, He went way beyond that. He went above it, He went way out and way down - yes beyond the furthest extent of man's sin.



The Devil attacks God's people in connection with the Word of God. Because the Word and the spiritual stature grows ever so silently and unconsciously within the heart, there is not always an outward manifestation of the work of God that is going on in the heart. Then the Devil comes and torments, making the person feel as if the Word is not working in him at all. Because he is not getting, at that particular time, a gigantic reaction or excitement over the Word, he is tempted to think the Word has by-passed him and that he is going nowhere for God. You see, it is the work of our enemy to make us anxious in any way he can get at us, especially in spiritual matters. But we know that if we will but hide the Word of God down in our hearts, it will grow. Even while we sleep it grows. It works first in the invisible inward man, and then later comes the outward visible manifestation of that life it has brought forth. Sometimes we are tempted to think we are not making any progress at all, and then the Lord permits us to get around others who do not have as much spiritual knowledge and growth as we have, and then the progress of growth is clearly evident. What a pleasant surprise to realize that growth has taken place after all.

**II. ANXIETY OVER NATURAL LIFE**

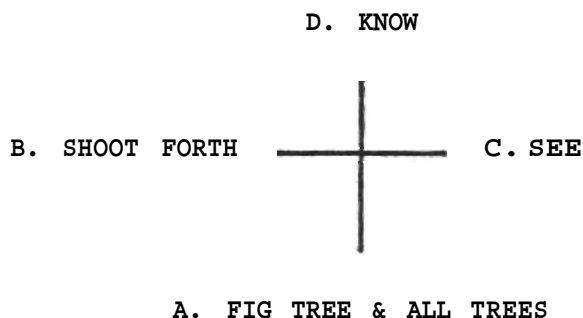
Turning to the 21st chapter of Luke we find Jesus teaching of future things; the destruction of Jerusalem which was fulfilled under Titus in 70 A.D., the second coming of Christ with the rapture of the saints

preceding this great event. In this context He speaks the parable of the fig tree.

"And he spake to them a parable; Behold a fig tree, and all the trees; When they now shoot forth, ye see and know of your own selves that summer is now nigh at hand. So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away, till all be fulfilled."

LUKE 21:29-32

Let us consider the stature of truth in these few verses.



Christ appoints His disciples to observe the signs of the times by watching the fig tree and all the trees. The fig tree represents the Bride of Jesus Christ and also Israel in the natural who was called the wife of God. The other trees represent all other people, both good and evil.

**B. SHOOT FORTH**

The fig tree and ALL the trees are shooting forth, manifesting the life that is in them. The fig tree is symbolic of the Bride of Jesus Christ and of Israel who was also called the wife of God. The fig tree, the Bride of Jesus Christ, is seen putting forth the tender leaves of new growth in preparation for the rapture of the wedding party and the marriage of the Lamb.

"Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that

summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors."

MATTHEW 24:32,33

There is a stir in the Jewish nation, the wife of God, as it were. However, she will not come to spiritual birth until the second coming of Christ when a nation is born in a day. But when we see all the trees (all people) dressing up, making known their true character and nature, as well as the fig tree (the Bride), then we know that the rapture is soon at hand - even at the doors. The fig tree puts forth tender leaves, fresh and green, symbolizing the life that is in her, the spiritual life begotten of God. In the dead of winter there are no leaves, but spring brings forth the budding of new life. All trees represent all other people outside the Bride whether they be good or evil. All trees are dressing up whether they be good or evil. The good trees include the entire wedding party, such as the guests, the friends, the virgins (bridesmaids), the queens, the concubines etc. All these are in attendance at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and all these are shooting forth their leaves also. The time of manifestation is at hand. The wicked are putting forth their leaves in these days too; they are manifesting their nature as never before.

The truth and knowledge of the message of the Bride of Christ is being thrust forth in the earth today as never before in the history of mankind. The early church had this revelation of the Bride of Jesus Christ. Certainly the Apostle Paul had it, and the other early apostles. Down through church history we find those few who have seen this truth in God's Word and pressed on into the Bride and Bridegroom oneness of relationship, but never before has the shooting forth of the fig tree been so widespread and prevalent as today. This is a sure sign of "the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. The wicked are surely putting forth leaves in these days too. We find little respect for the things of God in the day in which we are now living. A generation ago people had more reverence and respect for the things of God even when they were not believers. I can remember years ago when they had revival meetings in the Methodist Church how sinners used to come and stand around the outside of the church, even taking their hats off and bowing their heads when prayer was made. Truly, we are in the time of the "shooting forth of all the trees," people are so quick these days to manifest what kind of life is really in them. You barely have to mention the name of God before you get a profane or belittling reaction in many cases.

### 1. Signs in the Heavens

"And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall

they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh."

LUKE 21:25-28

As the trees are shooting forth, manifesting the life that is in them, the Lord will also shoot forth with signs in the heavens in the sun, the moon, the stars, to substantiate the soon coming of the Lord.

**a. Sun**

The Word of God gives us a threefold witness of what the Lord will do in the sun.

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken."

MATTHEW 24: 29

The sun shall be darkened. To the sinners that have shot forth their leaves of rebellion, darkness shall be their portion, they shall not have a ray of light.

The Word of God also tells us that the sun will scorch men with heat.

"And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire."

REVELATION 16:8

Also, we are told in Revelation 19:17 that an angel will stand in the sun and extend an invitation to all the fowls to come and feast on the dead army of the anti-Christ.

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven. Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;"

REVELATION 19:17

**b. Moon**

Likewise the moon shall be darkened before the coming of the Lord. The moon also will be turned into blood before that great and notable day of the Lord.

**c. Stars**

The stars shall fall; they shall lose their light and disappear.

When the Lord shoots forth with these great signs, nature shall sustain a general shock and convulsion. Man with all his wicked shooting forth shall not compare to the powerful shooting forth of the Lord through the sun, moon, and stars.

The iniquity of all the wicked trees that are shooting forth their thorns and thistles of wickedness provoke God to put signs in the heavens of His soon coming judgment. And as the shooting forth of wickedness seems to abound and increase about us, let us not become disheartened, but rather rejoice, for the day of our redemption draws nigh!

**2. Signs in the Earth**

God will also put signs in the earth.

**a. Distress of Nations**

Surely this is characteristic of people today. Nobody has the answer to man's dilemma. The word distress means to compress, to crowd, to siege, to arrest as a prisoner. Crime is on an alarming increase, but this is just another outpouring to man's increasing distress. The word distress also means to be anxious, to lie sick, and in spite of man's great increase of knowledge these days, we find men sick at heart, confused, and anxious to the point of complete breakdowns. People are lying sick, sick with many afflictions of body and mind - all because of their inner distresses and confusions. So we see all these conditions about us. What are we going to do, those of us who are standing in the earth today as a fig tree? We are to rule over these anxieties that press upon us, reign over them all. In fact, this is the time for us to look up and await our Redeemer - our redemption is drawing nigh.

Our distressed world is getting ready for the anti-Christ to take over. When the nations are distressed enough, then the anti-Christ will step in, making fabulous promises and manifesting a great many wonders before men - speaking peace. He will claim to have the answer and men will embrace him and their Messiah, their Deliverer, their Redeemer.

**b. Perplexity**

To be perplexed means to be confused. Such is the state of affairs today wherever we look. The human race has always been plagued with distresses and perplexities. This is nothing new, but when these signs increase to the point that it becomes the characteristic of the day, widespread and

all-encompassing, then it is an unusual indication pointing to the soon coming of Jesus Christ.

**c. Sea and Waves Roaring**

There will be a marked increase of turbulence in this area as well. Earthquakes, tidal waves, hurricanes, etc., will increase to where it becomes a sign of the times. This violence is ever on the increase with us.

**d. Men's Hearts Failing Them for Fear**

Heart trouble is number one killer today. Heart's cannot stand up under the strain and the demands of the day and hour. Failing to take heed to the many warnings of the medical profession, people go right on with the things that are killing them - drinking, smoking, carousing. And so they go right on committing suicide, physically and spiritually as well.

**C. SEE**

"So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass..."

LUKE 21:31

It is not that we are alarmists seeking to upset people emotionally, but God's Word does tell us to open our eyes and see. We cannot possibly know something until we see it, and we truly see when God opens up our eyes. When He opens our eyes then we really see things for what they are. When we see nations filling up their measure of iniquity, we may conclude their ruin is nigh. Likewise, when we see these things coming to pass, then we will know that the Kingdom of God is at hand.

**D. KNOW**

"So likewise ye, when ye see these things come to pass, know ye that the kingdom of God is nigh at hand. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass away till all be fulfilled"

LUKE 21: 31,32

The generation that sees all these signs fulfilled in their time is the generation that shall not pass away until Jesus is again in their midst. Jesus is coming in just a very little time. The fig tree is putting forth her tender leaves, learning how to rule and reign over the anxieties of the times. Although life is riddled with anxieties, distresses, perplexities, the Bride of Jesus Christ continues to shoot her roots downward in her foundation of the Blood, the Fire (the Holy Ghost), and the Waters of His Name, Death and Life. Nourished from this

foundation, she shoots forth her tender leaves of new growth and life, manifesting to the world the life that indwells her and standing as a sign in the earth that the Lord Jesus Christ is soon here. Thus, we have seen the fig tree and all the trees shooting forth their leaves, as it were, causing us to see and know the season of the coming of the Lord.

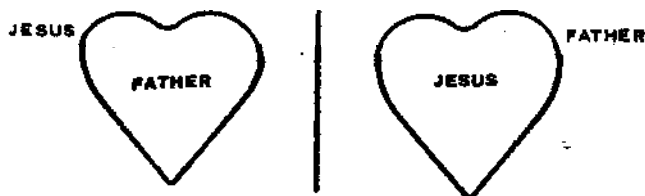
Perhaps I should add a further thought which is a much needed secret to overcoming fully this anxiety of life, whether it be in regard to natural or spiritual things. There are degrees of victory, degrees of overcoming power, degrees of glory, and degrees in the Bride of Christ. Marriage relationship with Jesus Christ describes that oneness of relationship and union that natural marriage types. There is perfecting of this oneness of relationship that can be attained, but few press on to know it. We cannot reign over anxiety until we know how to practice this secret I want to share with you.

Jesus lived in a oneness of relationship with His Father; the words He spoke were the Father's, the works He did were the Father's, the Father's will was His will. The man Jesus lived in complete obedience to the Christ (the Word) that indwelt Him - this is a oneness of relationship. Jesus said,

"\_\_\_\_\_he that hath seen me hath seen the Father."

JOHN 14: 9

John 17 deals much with this oneness of relationship between Jesus and His Father. There are two aspects here that we need to take note of:



"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that thy may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

JOHN 17:21-23

First of all notice that Jesus established the fact that the Father was IN HIM. The Father was invisible, yet He was there with His omnipotent and omnipresent power. When Jesus did the works of His Father, He employed that indwelling power of the Father. We could call this the glory side or exaltation aspect, for out of the omnipotence of the

Father, Jesus wrought many miracles and performed many mighty deeds. And with this power of the Father within Him, Jesus was able to resist the Devil and to live sinless in the face of every temptation.

There is a personal application here. Here is a secret of how we can always win every spiritual battle. We must learn to resist the enemy, rebuke the devils, withstand the temptations, using the indwelling omnipotent power of God that indwells us. We are not fighting a battle of flesh against flesh, but spirit against spirit. If we trust in our own fleshly frailty to war against the enemy, we will know that it will end in our personal defeat. But this is not so if we will put to use the power that indwells us. Jesus is our example.

How do we win the victory? Because of the inward source of supply, we then war outwardly against the enemy. We stand up and resist him, rebuke him, all the time aware of the fact that the real authority and power is coming from the indwelling Christ in us. And then we intercede and travail in prayer. Some battles are won through prayer. Again, this is an outward operation yet backed up by the power that is within us. And then we testify against the Devil. This is a constant thing with us - confessing our faith, standing our ground, realizing who we are in Christ Jesus.

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

REVELATION 12:11

This, then, is the exalted or glory side of the story. Because of the Christ that indwells us as believers, we have the omnipotent and omnipresence of God as our authority and power. Outwardly, we war against the enemy and lay hold of victory in every case by:

1. Resisting the Devil
2. Rebuking the Devil
3. Intercession and Travailing Prayer
4. Testifying to the Devil

But were we to operate only on this side of the picture, we would never come to a real oneness of relationship with the Father. Notice what Jesus said further, "thou, Father, art in me, and I IN THEE..."

Diagram II illustrates this truth for us. Now the situation is reversed, for we find Jesus hidden and invisible in the Father. This is a great secret for victory in our lives - a truth we must all learn if we are to fully overcome the anxieties of life and be in the highest realm of the Bride of Jesus Christ.

This is the humility side, the crucifixion side, for in this relationship we must crucify a great deal of pride and a lot of anxiety. There are

times when we have to have the wisdom of the cony and crawl back in the rock for safety. Many times it is far easier to get up and rebuke, resist, intercede, travail, and testify, than to sit down and crawl back in the rock and wait. This is a time when we have to crawl back inside the Father, so to speak, and not lift one finger to fight the battle, but let Him fight it for us. We sometimes head into a spiritual storm, and after we have pled the Blood, Fire, and Water; resisted, rebuked, travailed, testified, and still nothing has changed, the battle is just as fierce. What to do then? Simply crawl back into the Rock Christ Jesus and wait in humility and with a surrendered spirit until He chooses to deliver you. At times like these, the Devil comes to our door. This is the time not to even talk to him, not even to testify to him. Just say, "I am not talking to you today." Stay hidden in the Rock (Christ) and let Jesus answer the door. When Jesus was on the mountain of temptation He responded to the Devil's temptations in this same way - He crawled back, hidden in the Father. Here was the Son of God with the omnipotent power of the Father within Him. How easily He could have turned the stones into bread and he could have eaten, but He did not fight the battle in this way. He humbled himself and crawled back into the Father, and let the Father redeem Him. He did not lift one finger to redeem himself out of the situation, but waited until the Father sent angels to minister to His emaciated body.

There are times when God works out the redemptive will through Jesus Christ, through the power that is in us, by us outwardly resisting, rebuking, interceding, travailing, testifying. But then there are other times when God works it out by us crawling back into the Father and the Father bringing the redemptive will to pass as we sit humbly submissive, waiting for Him to do the work. People do not always understand us when they find us sitting back in the Father and waiting for His redemption. Sometimes it looks like certain situations need immediate action or attention, and then people misunderstand when they see us not lifting a finger, but waiting patiently IN THE FATHER, hidden in Him, and outwardly doing nothing. Of course, this is a part of our crucifixion, but through it all, we learn to enter into a oneness of relationship with our Heavenly Bridegroom.

We find Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane practicing this same principle of hiding in the Father and crying out only for His redemptive will. His only prayer was that the Father would spare His dying there in the Garden that He might fulfill the redemptive plan of God and go to the cross to die for all mankind. Although his very body was disintegrating and his soul ready to depart, He did not resort to the inward redemption of the presence of the Father within Him. He crawled back into His Father, waiting submissively for the will of God. After awhile the Father sent angels to minister unto Him - again, the redemption came from without, for Jesus was IN the Father.

The Lord is faithful to put us into many circumstances where we can operate on both sides of the fence. There are times when we work on the glory side, using the indwelling power of God in us, but working outwardly the means to our redemption and victory. But then the Lord shuts us up to times where we must take the humility and crucifixion side. We have no recourse but to simply crawl away into the Father, into

Jesus Christ and wait for Him to redeem us, even though we are unable to lift a finger for help.

I have been learning this process for many, many years, but when I was sent to California, the Lord put the crowning experience on it. God has clearly spoken, telling me that the Crucified Message would go to all the world. Many times I saw with my eyes wide open, people coming from Africa, from China, from India - all the countries of the world. It was then the Devil made his appearance to laugh right in my face, telling me that this would never be. I was picked up out of the ministry and in a sense, buried in California. I had no further public ministry. I was cut off from everything visible. It was my time to crawl back into the Father, crawl back into that inner chamber found in the Rock - learning there, the oneness of relationship that I had to learn. It was during this time that I was lifted up and transported by the Spirit of God into the Garden of Gethsemane and I was privileged to view the entire scene there of Jesus making His "abba Father" surrender. This is why I know exactly what transpired there - I have been there. But how the Devil accused and ridiculed me in those days. Many were the anxieties, worries, and frustrations that welled up within me over the message God had placed within me, but I learned to hide in the Rock.

And in this position, we learn to trust. All we can do is lean upon the bosom of the Father and rest there. It is then that we begin to enjoy and enter into the oneness of love relationship with Jesus Christ. Only then is that oneness of marriage relationship perfected within us. As I have already said, we cannot actually and fully reign over anxiety until we know how to practice this principle.

In this second aspect, illustrated by sketch II, we find Jesus hidden away in the Father. Let me repeat, this is the crucifixion side and it is here that we:

1. Surrender (crawl back into the Father);
2. Wait;
3. Trust; and
4. Love (enjoy a oneness of love relationship).

Jesus prayed that we, too, might have this same oneness of relationship that He enjoyed with the Father. He prayed "That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, And I in thee, that thy also may be one in us...that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one..." It takes two to make a oneness of marriage relationship, and thus we need both sides of this process of union. We must let the Spirit of God lead us, for we do not know which side the Lord would have us work on. We cannot get lazy and think we are just going to crawl away into God and let Him do all the work. But on the other hand, neither are we to be only on the other outward, working side where we are permitted to work out our redemption, using the power that indwells us of the Christ. But the Lord is faithful; He will place us on either side (the outward redemption or the inward), for He knows just what each of us needs.

Jesus' relationship with His Father illustrates the very relationship we are to have with Jesus Christ. We have Jesus Christ by His omnipresence within us;

"....Christ in you, the hope of glory."

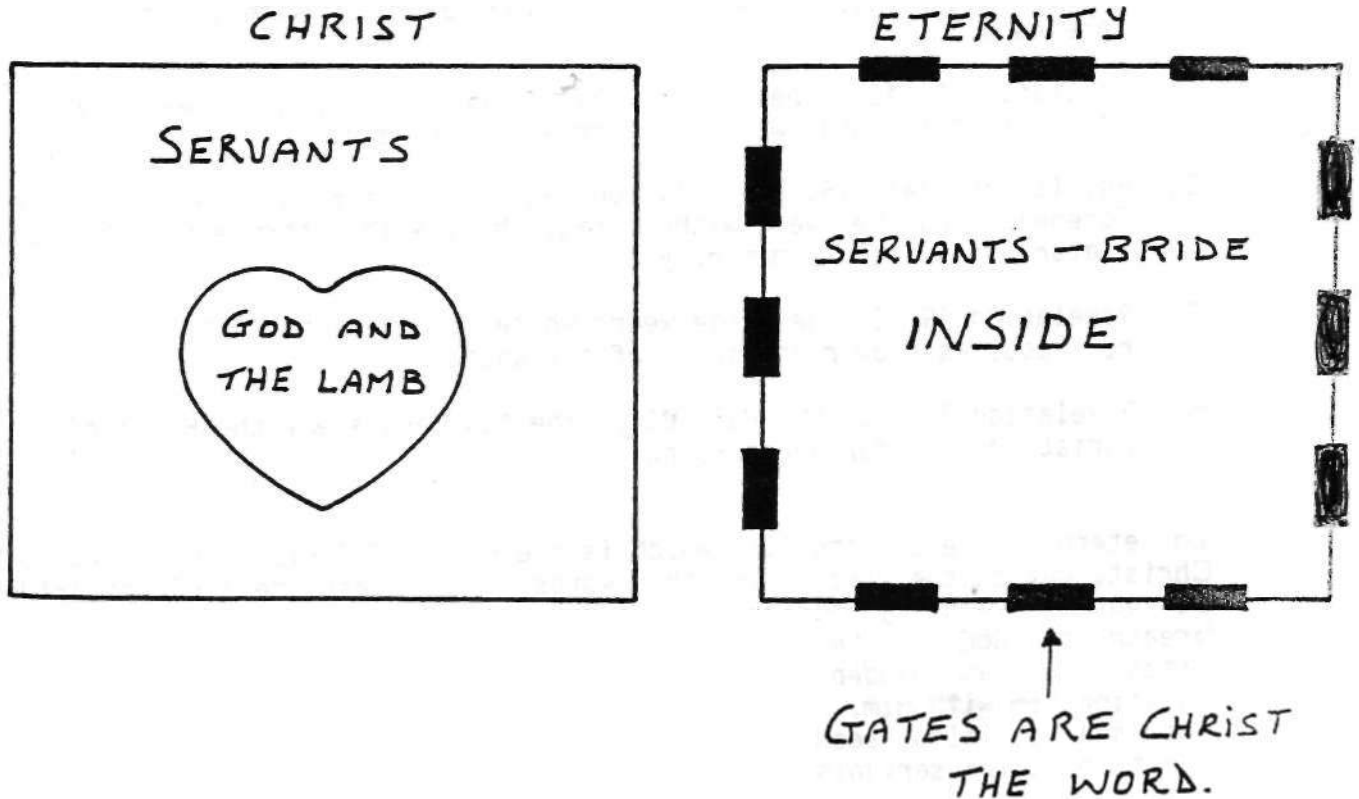
COLOSSIANS 1:27

And there is the other aspect where we put on Christ; are IN Christ;

"For as many of you as have been baptized INTO Christ, have put ON Christ....for ye are all one IN Christ Jesus"

GALATIANS 3:27,28

It takes a great deal of crucifixion and humiliation before we grow sufficiently in spiritual stature to where we are, as it were, swallowed up by Jesus Christ - IN CHRIST. It is one thing to have Christ in US, but it is another thing to be IN CHRIST. In order to be IN CHRIST, we have to surrender like Jesus did in the Garden of Gethsemane. We have to learn to wait patiently for the Lord, and then, (in this position of leaning upon Him), we come into a oneness of love relationship that is perfected. Then oneness has been established.



This same principle will work for us throughout eternity. The gates of the New Jerusalem are formed by the Word of God in us - Truth, Love, Christ. We are told to "put on Christ:"

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof."

ROMANS 13:14

If then, these gates are made up of the Word and Christ is the Word, and we are to put on Christ, then we can see why this City is called the Bride, wife. The Bride of Jesus Christ has put on Christ. This places the Bride inside of Christ, the Word. Inside the New Jerusalem are found the servants of God:

"And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him: And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads."

REVELATION 22:3,4

Let us compile a few facts briefly, concerning the Bride of Jesus Christ,

1. Revelation 22:3,4 Servants (the Bride) bear His Name in their foreheads.
2. Revelation 3:12. The Philadelphia church (in the head realm) was the only church that was inscribed with the Name.
3. Revelation 14:1-5. The 144,000 had the name written on their foreheads and they were without fault before the throne of God (full stature of spiritual maturity).
4. Revelation 19:12. The Bride wears white linen which is the righteousness, or right acts, of the saints.
5. Revelation 21:1. The Holy City, the New Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ adorned for her husband.

In eternity we see the City which is the Bride of Christ who has put on Christ, put on the Word. In other words, the outward dress of the Bride is seen here - her jasper dress, the humility dress made up of the icy breath of God as she has partaken of crucifixion and death in the many times she has hidden away in Christ, learning that oneness of relationship with Him. So the Bride is seen wearing Christ, the Word. But she is also seen inside of Him, and throughout eternity she will function as the servants of God. But the mystery does not end there. We

see, also that God and the Lamb are going to come inside the New City. We are then, in Christ, and yet, God is in us. It makes your senses reel doesn't it?

If I put on Christ here, through humiliation and crucifixion, then in eternity I have the privilege of seeing the face of God and the Lamb and serving as His servant throughout all eternity, but, it is equally true, that then God will be in me!

Surely this is incentive enough to cause us all to seek His precious face, and to long to do His will, lay aside and make no provision for our flesh, desiring only to be like Him. Not all will be in the Bride of Christ. There are varying degrees of resurrection glory (differing degrees of star glory, moon glory, and sun glory) (I Corinthians' 15: 41,42). There are the virgins, the guests, the best man, the queens, the concubines - but one Bride, And the Bride will have put on Christ, will have formed within her the gates that speak of ruling and reigning power. These gates will be controlled by the Christ, the word. Now, these gates are opened or closed according to His will, but in eternity, those gates will be open, never again to be closed, for there is no evil against which to be closed.

In closing, let me remind you again, that the Bride of Jesus Christ has formed in her the gate of ruling power over all ANXIETIES, whether they be related to this life or to the spiritual. The secret is to enter into a oneness or love relationship with Him. Then there is readily formed within us, these twelve gates of His governmental power in our lives.

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**INTRODUCTION**

A parable can be likened unto a gate which swings open wide to the humble and poor in spirit but closes to the wise and prudent. All the parables that Jesus taught fit quite naturally into twelve categories of truth, truth applicable to the twelve gates found in the New Jerusalem. The New City is an analogy picturing the Bride of Jesus Christ, therefore, each dimension, each substance, each detail is of special interest to us. The parables are like twelve beautiful pearls which must be formed within the hearts of those who seek to be in the Bride of Jesus Christ. They will govern and rule like gates to shut out the world, the flesh, and the Devil and to open for the Spirit and Truth of Jesus Christ.

This is our stature of truth comprised of all the parables of Jesus. We have thus far, studied the first ten gates and are now ready to study the eleventh, the gate of RULING OVER UNJUST JUDGMENT.

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**RULING OVER UNJUST JUDGEMENT**

Jesus taught the parables (truth in story form) to show us how to rule and reign over ourselves - our carnal nature, our self-life. With these gates formed within us, they can be opened or closed as God sees fit. One of the greatest blessings is when we can learn to rule over Unjust Judgment, for there is no justice in the carnal nature of man. In fact, this carnal nature of ours is completely opposite and contrary to the things of God. Our parable is one of the greatest parables in the Bible and deals with the unjust judgment of the Pharisee's reaction to a woman's demonstration of love to Jesus. We shall study it as follows:

**IV. PHARISEE ENLIGHTENED****I. PHARISEE'S DESIRE****I. PHARISEE'S DESIRE**

"And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat."

LUKE 7:36

We could not define the man Pharisee even as we pronounce it - fair I see. A Pharisee is one who looks on himself and says, "fair I see." This particular Pharisee had a desire that Jesus come and eat at HIS house. He seemed concerned that Jesus eat, but in his concern, he specified where Jesus should eat - at his house. This was not necessarily a bad desire, but it does indicate a desire to rule and boss the situation.

This is often the case in our spiritual experiences as well. We want Jesus to come and eat at our house and resent when He is eating at somebody else's spiritual table. It may happen that one finds himself in a quiet and meditative mood, whereas there are others who are serving up their joy, their praises, their exuberance to Jesus. Then if we are not careful, up comes our unjust judgment and we will resent or despise what the other fellow is doing. Or perhaps there may be those getting through to real victory in a prayer line, and instead of rejoicing, one finds

that old unjust judgment standing up to resent the time it is taking, feeling it would be much better to get to the study of the Word of God. We resent the demonstration of love to Jesus by others because we want Jesus to eat at our house, our table, instead of theirs. Our unjust judgment depreciates their house and their table. These feelings arise from the Pharisee nature that is within all. We look at ourselves and say, "fair I see," and then we look at others and consider them for very little.

The word judgment means a verdict, an opinion. This verdict can be a favorable or unfavorable one. When God is giving a favorable verdict to someone, then we will be waiting to go to the opposite direction, making it unfavorable. If we are going to grow up into the full stature of Jesus Christ, we are going to have to rule and reign over our unjust judgments and learn to cooperate with the judgments of God which -are always just. Just judgment is found in the head realm of the stature of Jesus Christ. When we have grown to this place in God, then we will become acquainted with God's judgments, allowing them to flow through us toward others, rather than meting our fleshly judgment. Before we can come to this place in God, there will be much crucifixion of our carnal nature and a surrendering of ourselves to God; body, soul and spirit.

So the Pharisee had a desire that Jesus come to his house and eat. And Jesus did just that. How wonderful to know that Jesus will even concede to our wishes at times in order to teach us things.

## II. PHARISEE ACCUSING

"And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee which has bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him for she is a sinner."

LUKE 7:37-39

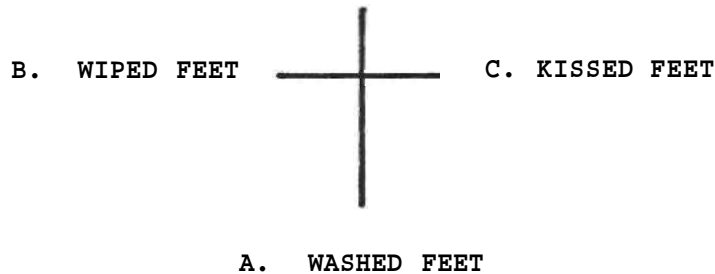
Jesus came to the house of the Pharisee, and the Pharisee was planning on spreading his table before the Master but here came a sinner woman interrupting all his plans. Did he appreciate this great demonstration of love that was poured out upon the Master? Certainly not! His unjust judgment came up with an accusing spirit. The Pharisee kept his thoughts to himself, but nevertheless, he thought them. This was his judgment in the matter.

How often we are guilty of the same thing. We observe others as they demonstrate their love before Jesus, and even if we do give voice to our

opinions, we think and pass our unjust judgment upon them. How quickly we judge someone dancing their joy and praise before God, or someone weeping in intercession and travail, or someone clapping their hands, or someone falling prostrate under the power of God. We judge it flesh - sheer emotion - excessive and unsightly. This very spirit of unjust judgment is one of the main reasons that many churches are bound and dead in their worship service. There is no longer any liberty to worship God in spirit and in truth - the presence of God is not there.

Let us consider this demonstration of love.

**D. ANOINTED**



**A. WASHED FEET**

Her first act of love was the washing of the feet of Jesus. This was the task of the humblest of servitude, relegated to a lowly servant. It was Eastern custom that a servant wash the dust off the feet of the guests upon their arrival at the home. This the woman did, expressing her deep humility even as she ministered her love to Jesus.

**B. WIPED FEET**

Another expression of her humility was the fact that she stood behind Him. She did not make an open show of her ministry, but crept in as unnoticeably as possible to wash Jesus' feet. She had with her a tear bottle and with these tears she washed His feet. All Eastern women had a tear bottle in which they sealed up their tears - the tears they wept at funerals, the tears they wept in prayer, the tears they wept in compassion for others. The larger the bottle, the greater the honor and respect afforded its owner. Also, it was their custom to bury with the woman her tear bottle, evidence of her many acts of benevolence and humility. It was therefore, no small gift she offered unto Jesus that day. His feet were washed with the tears of love and gratitude that flowed that day as well as the tears she had stored up for her honor on the day of her burial.

**C. KISSED FEET**

And then she kissed His feet. Washing His feet with tears, wiping His feet with her long hair (symbolic of her surrender<sup>1</sup>), and then kissing His feet. Such a ministry of love, and all done in a position of lowliness

and humility - working from behind Him in the position of a servant.

#### **D. ANOINTED FEET**

Her last act of love was the anointing with the ointment. Instead of appreciation, the Pharisee began to complain, murmur, and accuse with his unjust judgment of the case. How stupid some of our expressions of love to Jesus must seem in the eyes of others. Nevertheless, these expressions are acceptable and precious to the Lord. Surely it is the will of the Father that poor sinners come and bow down at the feet of Jesus Christ His Son and seek forgiveness, and then pour out a demonstration of their love unto Him. But the unjust judgment of the Pharisee said,

"This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner."

A similar situation is seen when the disciples went away to the nearby village to get some food. Upon their return, they found Jesus talking to the sinner woman at the well in Samaria. They wondered why He bothered to talk with her and Jesus answered them saying:

"I have meat to eat that ye know not of."

JOHN 4:32

Jesus was more concerned about eating of the meat of His Father's will than even partaking of natural food. Jesus feeds upon the will of the Father. When we do the will of the Father, we feed Jesus and His is pleased with our demonstration of love.

Not so, the Pharisee. He came up with an accusing spirit against Jesus because He accepted such worship and love. Jesus received it and -fed upon it, even though she was but a humble sinner.

#### **III. PHARISEE REPROVED**

"And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith Master, say on"

LUKE 7:40

Jesus has a rebuke to minister unto the Pharisee and He begins by saying, "Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee..." How often the Lord speaks in a similar fashion unto us, causing us to stop for a moment in our headlong rush through life. He says, "Stop a moment, I have something to

say to you." Whether or not the matter goes any further than that depends on our attitude. The Pharisee responded by saying, "Say on Lord..." He was open and receptive to the rebuke and correction of the Master. Too often we miss the reproof because of our wrong attitude, our unreceptiveness. Jesus will not press the matter any further unless we want Him to. If we react with a "say on Lord" then He will proceed to reprove and enlighten us. Sometimes this reproof comes directly through Him, but other times it comes through His servants. What is our reaction going to be then? Are we humble enough to receive the Lord's rebuke through another human being? Sometimes the reproof comes through the Word of God. Or the reproof may come through our circumstances. Then it is time to seek the Lord for further explanation.

Only as we continually say to the Lord, "Say on...say on.." will we have opportunity to come to the next degree of experience, even as the Pharisee did. First reproof, then enlightenment.

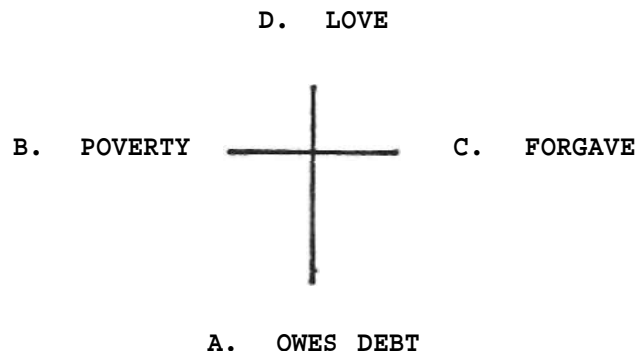
#### IV. PHARISEE ENLIGHTENED

We cannot be enlightened if we do not want Jesus to reprove and correct us. We all need reproof and Jesus is faithful to minister to us along this line of correction because He loves us and wills that we come up into greater spiritual stature - a stature like unto His own. This is the whole meaning to this parable, exposing man's unjust judgment against the demonstration of love toward Jesus.

"There was a certain creditor which had two debtors; the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged."

LUKE 7:41-43

Having been told to say on, Jesus seeks to enlighten the Pharisee by the means of a parable. The parable falls logically into a small four point stature of truth.



**A. OWES DEBT**

Here are two debtors, one owing 500 pence and the other only 50 pence. It was a just debt, therefore, it had to be reckoned with. In God's sight we become thieves and robbers if we do not pay our debts to our fellowmen. What a sad thing it is when Christians feel no compunction over their failure to be honest in their business dealings, putting a reproach on the Name of Jesus Christ. This failing alone, will keep many a Christian behind when the Rapture takes place.

**B. POVERTY**

They both owed an honest debt and they were both poverty stricken, unable to pay back their debt. The one owing 500 pence was more deeply indebted (500 pence worth) than the man owing only the 50 pence. Yet, both were insolvent and helpless in the face of their indebtedness.

**C. FORGAVE**

The creditor saw the hopelessness of the situation and was gracious enough to forgive them both of their indebtedness. Simon, being interrogated by Jesus as to which one would love the most, admitted that the one who had been indebted for the most, the 500 pence, was forgiven the most, and therefore, loved the most.

**D. LOVE**

In other words, we can say that we have in contrast here 500 pence worth of love and 50 pence worth of love. Their love and appreciation equaled the amount of their forgiven debt. It was difficult for Simon to admit this. Notice, he answered Jesus, "I suppose." The light was coming through; Jesus had achieved His purpose in telling the parable. Simon began to realize that this sinner woman who had been forgiven so much, no doubt had a greater degree of love. Simon had to reevaluate her demonstration of love and was acceptable to Jesus. The poor little woman had no self-righteous thoughts about herself as the Pharisee did. She did not see herself as "fair I see," knowing there was no fairness in her. She did not want to get out in the light where everyone would see her, so she crept down at the feet of Jesus behind Him. There she wept out her tears of gratitude, broke her tear bottle and emptied it out upon His feet, washing and wiping His feet with her hair, kissing and anointing the feet of the Master. According to Eastern custom, that was the greatest degree of humility one could perform in asking forgiveness.

How often do we exercise our unjust judgment as we observe the worship of others in our service? Being aware of someone's past life, or even their present failings, do we discredit and even feel a sense of irritation with them when we see their praises and their worship to the Lord? It is so easy to sit on the sidelines and judge people as being unworthy. Or, we may conclude that their whole demonstration is nothing but a show of the flesh, trying to attract attention to themselves, trying to impress people, trying to put themselves out in front. These thoughts come out of our unjust judgment. We need, like the Pharisee, to be enlightened.

Those who are forgiven much, love much. Those who are forgiven a small indebtedness are inclined to be selfrighteous in their estimation of those who are forgiven much. But let us not be confused, thinking that we all ought to go out and sin much in order to love much. This is not what Jesus is trying to show here. The object is not to sin much in order to love much, but Jesus is trying to expose the selfrighteousness of the Pharisee's unjust judgment. It is a fact that if we have been small sinners, then we may not appreciate as fully as we ought the greatness of God's forgiveness and deliverance from the penalty and power of sin, as perhaps a big sinner does. Nevertheless, as we grow in the knowledge of the Word and the Spirit, our gratitude and love will increase because we will see our many sinful attitudes and judgments that need to be repented of. Thus, as we repent and lay hold of new realms of forgiveness in Jesus, we will also be filled with new realms of His love. As our spiritual understanding, grows, so our love grows. There is no need to sin in order to love.

"And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

LUKE 7:44-47

The very thing that Simon had begrudgingly accused and condemned with his unjust judgment, Jesus commended. Jesus reviewed the case further: "You made no provisions for my needs. You failed in ministering any love to me, but she washed, she wiped, she kissed, and she anointed my feet.

I wonder what is more important to us. Which would we rather do - please man or please God? This is a choice all of us have to make. When we stand before God we are going to be judged out of His books (Rev. 20: 12)

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

II CORINTHIANS 5:10

What are we going to answer Him when He asks us. "Did you praise and bless my Name? Did you lift up holy hands in the sanctuary? Did you clap your hands and make a joyful noise unto the Lord? Did you worship me in the dance? Did you shout unto my Name with a voice of triumph?

Did you humble yourself before me?"

These are but some of the instructions of worship given to us in the Word of God. We are going to answer for what we have done with this Word of Truth, this Word of Light, this Word of Direction. In that day it will not be a valid answer to say, "Well, Lord, I didn't do it because my pastor didn't approve, or my denomination didn't approve, or my wife didn't approve, or my friends didn't approve." We must be doers of the Word and if not, then we deceive OURSELVES.

What a great day it will be if, when He opens the records, we can say, "Yes, Lord, I received the precious Blood of Jesus at the Brazen Altar, as it were; I took on the Waters of Your Name, Death, and Life, at the Laver; I got Holy Ghost intercession and travail at the Golden Altar of prayer; I came under the light of the Golden Candlestick and lived under your wisdom, understanding, and knowledge; I ate of your strength, your faith, your Governmental Bread at the Table of Shewbread; and I stood before Your Ark of the Covenant many times awaiting for your judgments (favorable or unfavorable) and entered into your precious Covenants there." What a fantastic day of triumph and rejoicing that will be, if we are able to confess that we have partaken of the full stature of Jesus Christ, from His feet up to His Head,

"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the MEASURE OF THE STATURE OF THE FULNESS OF CHRIST:"

EPHESIANS 4:13

"Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven: for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little."

LUKE 7:47

Jesus was going to make the point clear with Simon. There was to be no "I suppose." This was Simon's enlightenment on the subject. The fact is inescapable! Forgiven much - love much. Forgive little - love little. Watch it, Simon, for your unrighteous and unjust judgment will make you err. And, too, small sin has a tendency to make us self-righteous when we get around those who have sinned much. Self-righteousness is blinding also, causing us to make wrong judgment.

It is true, in the beginning, that a big sinner starts out with a big sense of gratitude and love, having been forgiven much, whereas a small sinner starts out with a smaller degree of love. But that is just the beginning. As they continue on in their spiritual journey, they should end up the same - with the same full stature of gratitude and love. The big sinner has many trees of sin developed in his life, and these trees are so easily seen by himself and others as well. Trees of alcoholism, trees of moral corruption, trees of dishonesty, are so evident and must

be acknowledged. This is not true of the tree of pride, envy, jealousy, etc. They are more hidden but far more difficult to deal with for this very reason. God does not differentiate between sin. Sin is sin whether it be in the physical realm or in the moral or spiritual realm. We are tempted to look askance at those guilty of outward sins, whereas the respectable appearing man escapes, yet his hidden sins of pride hold him equally guilty before God. The man with the outward sins finds it is much easier to humble himself and confess his needs before God. The other man is blinded by his self-righteousness and finds it difficult to admit his need. Both must come the same route of confession and repentance. Then God forgives. And each time we surrender an area of our flesh for crucifixion, He rewards us with a new layer of the revealed Word of God. This is how we go on for God; this is how we grow up in God - taking on the stature, likeness, and image, of Jesus Christ.

Without a doubt we all need more of the formation of this gate within us, we need to lay hold of ruling and reigning power to overcome this unjust judgment this is in us all. When unjust judgment arises within us, then we must confess and repent of it. There is fresh cleansing for us in the precious Blood of Jesus. There is new forgiveness for us at the Throne of Grace. As we stay on our faces before God, the Word and the Spirit of God will form this ruling power, the gate of ruling over unjust judgment. With this gate formed within us, the Lord is able to shut the gate when the accuser comes around to accuse and belittle us. And the Lord can open the gate and release His JUST JUDGMENTS through us to all men.

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**RULING OVER UNJUST JUDGEMENT**

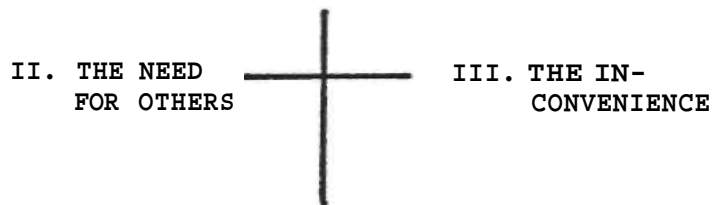
Having observed Jesus in prayer, one of His disciples said unto Him, "Lord, teach us to pray..." Jesus responded by giving them the following pattern:

"...Our Father which art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."

LUKE 11:2-4

This was followed by the parable of the importunate prayer. Let us consider the stature of truth Jesus continued to teach the disciples how to pray.

**IV. THE ANSWER**



**I. THE NEED FOR BREAD**

**I. THE NEED FOR BREAD**

"And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;"

LUKE 11:5

This need was for bread. If we went and pounded on our friend's door at midnight to borrow some bread it would not surprise us if his reaction was, "What on earth is wrong with you? Why didn't you go to the bakery today and get your own bread?" Even though he is a friend, as in the parable here, he just might not get up to accommodate us. We could hardly blame him could we?

Bread was needed, but why did not the man have his own provision of

bread? Why was it necessary for him to go to a friend and beg bread? Jesus taught a real secret here in connection with prayer and with the bread of His Word. One of the greatest unjust judgments we are guilty of is that thought within us that somebody else can get the bread but we cannot get it for ourselves.

Interesting to note that the man begged for three loaves of bread. Three is the number of God, for He is a triune Being. Three loaves imply the need for the complete bread of God - the Word in its fulness of perfection.

## II. THE NEED FOR OTHERS

"For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?"

LUKE 11: 6

The unexpected host begs bread for his friend who has come unannounced and unprepared for. Undoubtedly, we have all experienced the embarrassment of the arrival of unexpected guests and an empty pantry. It was a meaningful illustration Jesus used, and quite forgivable in the natural, but how say when this lack of provision is found in a spiritual sense. Too frequently this is the experience of many when it pertains to having a supply "of the Bread of Life to feed the hungry wayfarer on life's journey." Nevertheless, here stands an embarrassed host, pounding on his friend's door and begging for some bread. He needs bread for himself, but the pressing issue at hand is that he must have bread for the needs of others, so he continues to plead for bread.

## III. THE INCONVENIENCE

"And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee."

LUKE 11:7

The friend protests because of the great inconvenience. After all, is it not midnight and has he not locked up the house for the night? And too, the whole family is in bed. What an unreasonable demand. If he wants bread, let him come back in the morning and then he can have his bread. But the man wanted his bread right now. The need was now - the hunger was now! These people had been on a long journey and they needed something to eat now.

The host knew the need of these others and he refused to be turned away empty handed. He kept on knocking. He kept on pleading, determined to

persuade his friend to give him bread. The friend would not get out of bed, but the host kept on pleading, begging, persuading until he got his bread.

#### IV. THE ANSWER

"I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him many as he needeth."

LUKE 11:8

Not for friendship's sake, not for past favors rendered, but because of his' importunity, the man finally got up out of bed and gave the host all the bread he needed. The word importunity means shameless demanding, immodest, bold, saucy, insolent. His request became a bold, demanding, immodest and shameless cry that would not be denied. What a racket he caused in the quietness of the midnight hour.

He got what he came for because of his persistent insistence and refusing to give up. Some of us would have backed off long before this point because our pride would not let us stand there and beg on like that. We would have turned away, hoping to prevail on someone else, but not so with this man. He would not receive no for an answer. The only way to get rid of him was to give him what he asked for. The friend realized that he was going to be troubled all night long if he did not do something about this need of bread. So he got up and gave the three loaves of bread to his importunate friend, sticking it out the door at him just to get rid of him. The man had no sense making such a nuisance of himself when all decent people were in bed.

The story may seem funny in some aspects, but it well illustrates what Jesus was trying to teach His disciples. Here, again, we find unjust judgment. The friend said, "It's too inconvenient. I cannot get up and give bread to you now." When people seek help, then is the time to give it. If the need is tonight, then the help should be tonight, not tomorrow morning when perhaps the need has passed away or someone else has had to step in and meet the need. Our own selfish comforts and personal opinions bring us to unjust judgment when we are faced with another person's need. They need bread but unjust judgment causes us to say, "Come back tomorrow - it is too inconvenient right now."

Jesus continued to apply His parable by teaching the disciples -the spiritual meaning and how to get their prayers answered. Let us consider a stature of truth on the spiritual application of this matter.

## IV. ETERNAL BREAD

II. OTHERS

III. OVERCOME  
INCONVENIENCE

## I. THE NEED

## I. THE NEED

In His parable Jesus teaches how to get things from God. The rule He set forth here works in many directions, for example, this principle of importunity tells us how to study the Word of God, how to go on for God, how to get our prayers answered. The first thing is to ask. To ask means to beg. Even as Jesus illustrated, the host paid no attention to the lateness of the hour, nor his own weariness, nor the cool reception he received. He simply pressed in his claims until he got what he came for. It is this kind of asking the Lord taught His disciples to do.

"And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you- For every one that asketh receiveth;"

LUKE 11:9,10

Everything we get from God is built on the foundation of prayer. Our foundation of prayer. Our foundational experience is that of salvation through the Blood of Jesus, and this we appropriate by faith through the agency of prayer. Another foundational gift is the fire of God, symbolic of the Spirit of God. What we experience and receive through His ministry we receive by prayer also. We have to ask for the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. The completing portion of our foundation in Jesus Christ is that of water baptism which we also receive by asking for it. As we progress in spiritual growth upward in the stature of Jesus Christ, we do so through the asking power of prayer: In fact, our entire spiritual experience is contingent upon our asking, our pressing through into the presence of the Lord by the means of prayer.

This is how we lay hold of the bread of God's Word. We need to ask, to pray, to beg, to plead, to shamelessly demand, just like the man begged for bread for his friends. So we pray, "Oh, Lord, I beg you, lead me in the Word. I need the bread of your Word. Lord I beg you, I implore you, I beseech you...help me to understand." Then we get up and read and meditate over the Word of God, but still it seems like a closed book, a dead letter. Nothing seems to come alive in it. Then we go right back again and begin to beseech God a little bit more: "Lord, I ask you for bread. Lord, I am hungry. Lord, it is midnight and I cannot go to bed

tonight until this hunger is satisfied." Then back to the open Book again.

Beloved we have to learn to ask according to our need. We are not going to receive the anointed and quickened Word of God unless we shake off all half-heartedness and become urgent in our asking. We have to learn how to beg God for the bread - importunately. Sometimes we ask for the Bread of the Word according to our wants rather than our needs. Ask according to the need. Open eyes see the need, and out of that need comes the cry of a hungry heart. And we are not to ask only for our own need but to ask for the needs of others as well.

## II. OTHERS

Sometimes we forget the needs of others. The man in the parable was primarily concerned with the needs of others and it was for them he pleaded so insistently in the midnight hour. We must remember, too, that this need was pressed upon him at a very inconvenient hour also, but he overcame his own inconvenience that he might plead for bread for the others.

## III. OVERCOME INCONVENIENCE

Our unjust judgment will say to us. "This is not a convenient time. I will study and pray tomorrow." How many times have we missed God's appointments when the Spirit of God has tugged at our hearts, seeking to draw us aside into the prayer closet. He often comes at such inopportune times, and because of the inconvenience, we are tempted to brush aside that still small voice and disregard the tugging at our hearts. We will never get anywhere in God in any respect, unless we learn to rule over this unjust judgment within us that brings us to the wrong decision every time.

After we have asked, we must also learn to seek. The word seek means to track down something, to trace. The word circus and circle both come from the word seek. Each word suggests the same idea, that of running around, 'tracking down in a circular fashion, like a trainer runs around and around in the circus ring. Symbolically we know the circle speaks of the wheels of God's Word. The word seek also means to explore, to try out, to scent out, to test, to try, to probe, to examine. What a great thing it is to seek. No wonder Jesus continued.

".....seek, and ye shall find; ...and he that seeketh findeth."

LUKE 11:9,10

The pattern of the Old Testament Tabernacle is a beautiful portrayal of the stature of Jesus Christ. The courtyard of the Tabernacle corresponds to the foundation of the stature, and it is here that we do'

our asking. We ask for the free gifts of God provided for us in Jesus Christ, namely blood, fire and water. Our seeking in prayer takes place in the Holy Place of the Tabernacle where the Golden Altar symbolizes our prayer life. In the Holy Place we find the Golden Candlestick where we lay hold of the humility light of Jesus Christ. With all other natural light shut off, and only the light of the humble mind of Jesus to guide us, we begin to seek the things of God at the Altar of prayer there. Here we start, so to speak, to circle about, to scent out, to try to examine, to test, to track down the spiritual goodies that God has hidden from the wise and the prudent. It is not long before we sense the fragrance of the frankincense that rests upon the twelve loaves of bread on the Table of Shewbread in the Holy Place. These represent governmental bread, and here we begin to partake of Jesus Christ the Bread of Life. Here we begin to enter into the hidden mysteries, the heights and depths of God's Word. See how beautifully it works together. Prayer (the seeking) holds the central position and to the right is the light of the Candlestick to enlighten the Word that is found to the left of the Table of Shewbread.

Jesus taught His disciples how to get their prayers answered, and how to get their needs met. We must first begin asking, asking out of our foundations of blood, fire and water. Then we must enter into the Holy Place and begin to seek, to circle about, to trace or to track down what God has for us. While in prayer, the Lord will oftentimes give us a clue to some mystery of His Word. Take that clue to some mystery of His Word. Take that clue, begin to trace it down through the Scriptures, through your concordance, and God's Spirit will lead into a new area of truth and revelation. Or perhaps it is a little seed thought or phrase that someone drops along the way in conversation or in preaching in the house of God. Take it to your prayer closet, begin to seek God over it, begin to search it out in the Word. That little seed will begin to take root, and before long it will begin to spread forth its little branches and then bear forth its fragrance and fruitfulness. Too often we drop these precious seed thoughts into the basket, brushing them carelessly aside, neglecting to follow through, failing to seek further truth in the matter. How many precious things have we lost, forgotten, neglected?

The Bride of Jesus Christ has reached spiritual maturity because she has overcome with reigning power the unjust judgment of her carnal heart. In spite of inconvenience of time and circumstance, she has faithfully asked and she has diligently done her seeking in the holy place of prayer. We must earnestly seek the wheels of God's Word and of God's Spirit. Seek them out, trace them down, dig, explore. Whatever God puts across our pathway we must get out our Bible, get out our concordance, and prayerfully study the matter through. Then seek the illumination of the Lord with prayerful seeking - importunate praying. Study and prayer enlarges our souls. Meditation brings us into the heights and depths of God's Word.

First we ask, then we seek, and thirdly we knock:

"...knock, and it shall be opened unto you...and to him

that knocketh it shall be opened"

LUKE 11:9,10

After we have come up, starting with our asking for the blood, the fire and the water, and then done our seeking at the Golden Altar in the Holy Place, then we can begin to knock.

The word knock comes from the word knuckle. How do we make a knuckle? - by bending our fingers. It represents a surrendered, bent will, which is accomplished by our seeking in the Holy Place. When we seek after Him, after His light, after His Word in the Holy Place, we begin to see ourselves for what we really are. We see our carnal nature, our fleshly pride, our self-will. It is here in the Holy Place that we learn to bend our stiffneckedness, laying our will down in surrender to His divine will. Only then is it possible to make a knuckle, as it were, out of our yielded will and with that knuckle we can knock at the Bridegroom's door in the Holy of Holies. Then we can knock and say, "Jesus open the door. Look at my bent will. I want to know a oneness of relationship with you. I want to be made one with you. I want to be in the Bride and live only to do your perfect will." Until God has bent the will and formed it into a knuckle, there can be no real knocking at the door of the Bridegroom.

The five foolish virgins knocked on the shut door of the Bridegroom but it was too late. They got their wills bent too late, so they missed entrance into the marriage supper of the Lamb. Beloved, now is the time to bend our wills or it will be too late for us also, God is no respecter of persons. The price tag is the same for us all. There is no knocking at God's chamber without a bent will in our lives.

Before Jesus came up on resurrection morning He went to the Garden of Gethsemane, kneeling down He bent His will to the will of the Father saying, "Father, not my will but thine be done." He came up on resurrection morning with full stature and full glory. There is no finding the Word of God, there is no studying the Word of God apart from this bending of our will. Yes, it is possible to come up with a little intellectual knowledge of the Word of God, but it will only produce death within ourselves and toward others as well. Oftentimes God withholds the Word from us because He is waiting for us to bend our will to His. When we begin to curve our will down in humility and surrender, then we make a spiritual knuckle out of it, and with it we can begin to rap on God's door. There we find the Bread of the Word of God. There we find the fish, and the egg that He promised, unfolding power.

We lay hold of the spiritual stature which brings us to Eternal Bread by asking, seeking and knocking. We must let God teach us how to bend our will into a knuckle and then knock on the door of the Bridegroom. If we fail to bend our wills and knock we will never become the Bride of Jesus Christ. But how simple it is to receive the things of God. All we have to do is ask, seek, and knock - He does the rest. It is God who does the giving; it is God who does the answering. Nevertheless, it is vitally necessary that we learn to reign over unjust judgment that wrongly tells us that God is not interested in our needs or that suggests that we do

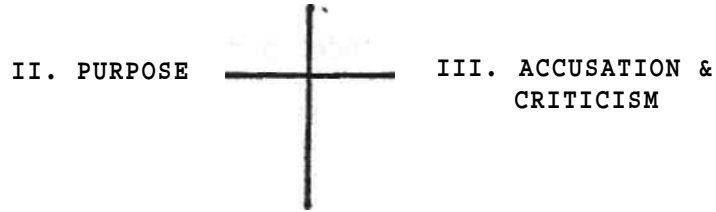
not have what it takes to make the Bride.

God has bread for all of us and enough bread of His Word to supply others as well. With this bread we are all able to grow up into the full spiritual stature of Jesus Christ and enter into the relationship of His Bride.

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RULING OVER UNJUST JUDGEMENT

IV. WORDS OF JESUS



I. THOSE WHO DREW NEAR

I. THOSE WHO DREW NEAR

"Then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him."

LUKE 15:1

Chapter 14 gives us the background for this occasion. Jesus is guest in the house of one of the chief Pharisees on the Sabbath day. Before Him stood an afflicted man with dropsy and every eye was upon Jesus for they wondered what He would do under these circumstances. Would Jesus heal on the Sabbath day?

"And Jesus answering spake unto the lawyers and Pharisees, saying, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? And they held their peace. And he took him, and healed him, and let him go;"

LUKE 14:3,4

Jesus sits in the midst of the educated, intellectual, and spiritually elite of His day - as far as the world considers the elite. Not only these were there, but also a great multitude;

"And there went great multitudes with him."

LUKE 15:25

Aware of their ulterior motives (for they came not to hear the Word of God but to find fault wherewith to accuse Him), Jesus began to speak in parables, first to the spiritually proud and self-reliant intellectuals, and then to the multitudes that pressed around Him. He gave them the parable of the tower of His will, of the King going forth to war, of the savorless salt. He was striking out at their Pharisaical religion - touching the Pharisees first.

Then He turned to the multitude and began to put the Word of God strong before them. He established the fact that no one could follow Him unless they had real sincerity, real salt, inside. Obviously, the multitude began to draw back for Luke 15:1 tells us that "then drew near unto him all the publicans and sinners for to hear him." Had the others not withdrawn it would have been impossible for them to "draw near" as they did.

God will have a people, a sincere people, who will press on in to know Him. As the Word of God is preached, it divides the multitudes, separating the curious and insincere from those who are permeated with the true salt of fidelity, eager to know and do the will of God. IF He does not get them from among the intelligentsia, the elite, the spiritual leaders, then He will get from among the publicans and the sinners. This is not to belittle those with education, for surely there is no premium on ignorance with God, but the contrasting factor rests upon the choice made for the wisdom of this world or the wisdom of God. Many intellectuals have made their choice for the wisdom of God, but too many others are blinded by their pride and have made their choice for the wisdom of this world. Because of their great need, the publicans and sinners oftentimes find it easier to turn their hearts towards God.

## II. PURPOSE

"And the Pharisees and scribes murmured saying, This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

LUKE 15:2

As stated, the Pharisee and scribes are watching Jesus to find fault and accusation. They murmur amongst themselves against Him because He receives the sinners instead of brushing them aside lest they defile Him. In fact, He has even been seen eating with them.

This other group that is pressing in close to Him is motivated with a sincere desire to hear the Word of God. What hope does this prophet of God have to offer them? These, then drew near with a right purpose in their hearts.

### III. ACCUSATION AND CRITICISM OF PHARISEES AND SCRIBES

Angered by those who drew near to Jesus, the Pharisees and scribes began to murmur, criticize and accuse Jesus. They knew their motives were right, for the earnestness of their desire was reflected upon their very countenances. The proud and arrogant Pharisees stood aside in disdainful judgment on the whole scene. And they were angry because as they had withdrawn, others had stepped in to take their place. It was now clearly evident that there were two camps here; one, removed and fault-finding, the other, open and receptive to the words of life that fell from the Master's lips. Shown up for what they really were, the Pharisees and scribes began to taunt Jesus saying, "Look at Him - he associates with sinners. See how he fellowships the publicans." Ignoring them Jesus turned to those hungry ones who had pressed in closely to Him and began to teach them the three parables that show how important are the souls of men - even the publicans and the sinners.

### IV. WORDS OF JESUS

(Three Parables)

These three parables that Jesus spoke that day show us the importance of human souls to:

- a) The Son of God (the Word) personified by the Good Shepherd;
- b) The Holy Ghost represented by the woman in the parable of the Lost Coin; and
- c) The Heavenly Father represented by the father in the parable of the Prodigal Son.

Together these three parables impress us with the importance of a human soul to the entire Godhead - Father, Son and Holy Ghost.

#### A. THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

Our first parables teach us the importance of a human soul to the Good Shepherd who is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said,

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine"

JOHN 10:14 and

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth life for the sheep"

JOHN 10:11

Jesus Christ is Immanuel (God with us), the Word who was made flesh that He might redeem sinful mankind. The stature of truth in this parable is as follows:

**4. The Joy of the Shepherd**

**2. The Care of the Shepherd**



**3. The Strength of the Shepherd**

**1. The Condition of the Sheep**

**1. The Condition of the Sheep**

"What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it."

LUKE 15:4

The sheep was lost - Lost in sin. Lost to God - cut off from His presence. Lost in himself.

The ninety and nine refers not to any little flock here on earth, for all the earth was lost, all mankind was lost. Jesus left His sheepfold in heaven, the angels that never sinned, for they were safe and needed no repentance. But here was a lost sheep, lost to the flock of God. What a great day of awakening it is when we realize that we are that one lost sheep. We are hopelessly lost until this realization breaks through. Acknowledging ourselves as lost, then there is redemption available. No wonder we can sing with such joy, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me..." Oh the joy to be that lost sheep, lost but found!

**2. The Care of the Shepherd**

"...and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" The phrase find it in the original Greek has the thought of finding it out. This is the care of the Good Shepherd. No place is too low nor too high for him to search out, find out the whereabouts of his one lost sheep. So it was with Jesus Christ. He went into the depth of the valleys of humiliation and He climbed the mountain heights of obstacles and man's opinions, until He finally climbed the cross, dies, descended into Hell - all for you and me - all for that one lost sheep.

Oh, I treasure my salvation! I think of the many times Jesus came to the nightclubs where I was laying my instrument, finding me out, telling me I did not belong there. It never satisfied my heart regardless of where I played or what I did, I was always unhappy inside because I was lost and Jesus was finding me out. How thoroughly He stalked my trail those days, seeking to find me. All this because He loves the lost sheep. Surely, as the song writer has written, "No one ever cared for me like Jesus..."

### 3. The Strength of the Shepherd

We have seen that the sheep is lost; this is his condition; also the love and concern the shepherd demonstrates in his care for the sheep. And what an encouragement it is to recognize the strength of the shepherd-

"And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing,"

LUKE 15: 5

When the shepherd found the lost sheep he did not whip it, beat it, or accuse it. He did not say, "Where have you been so long? Why did you not hear me when I called you? What is wrong with you? Why did you wander off in the first place? Why have you caused me so much trouble? None of this was said. The good shepherd happily lifted the lost sheep upon his shoulders, letting it ride upon his strength.

So it is with our Good Shepherd. He seeks us out until He finds us. Then without accusation of reproof, He offers us His shoulders. He gives us His strength to ride upon. He does not expect us to climb up out of the valley, but says, "Son...daughter, come, climb upon my shoulders and I will carry you until you are able to walk." He carries us along until our legs and our feet spiritually speaking, grow big enough and strong enough to walk on our own. Then He expects us to walk in His footsteps, following close behind our Shepherd. But until then, He carries us along on His strength.

We are without excuse. None of us can say, "I cannot make it. No use trying, I have not got what it takes to walk the Christian walk." In the beginning when we are new and weak and just coming out of our lost condition, our precious Shepherd carries us on His shoulders. His strength is there to support us during our weakness. We can all make it, riding on His shoulders. The trouble with many is that they are too proud to admit they are lost in the first place, and then, too, they are too proud, to climb up on His shoulders, acknowledging their own insufficient strength and ability. But to those of us who will humble ourselves and admit our lost condition and all of our weaknesses, there is the strength of the Good Shepherd to bear us along in the beginning of our journey.,

This is why none of us have anything to boast of. We all started out on our spiritual journey helplessly weak, and were it not for the strength

of our Shepherd that carried us along, we would never have made it, any of us. We cannot take credit for anything. It was His grace alone that bore us along. The times we could not walk, He carried us. Every time we stand up all we can see are those shoulders of strength that carried us through many valleys and over many mountains when we were unable to walk. How can any of us possibly claim any self-glory? The glory is His, for it is all His mercy, His love, and His grace that has brought us along thus far.

#### **4. The Joy of the Shepherd**

##### a. Personal Joy.

We notice first the personal joy of the shepherd" "...he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing..." There are no reprimanding words, no accusations, no complaints that the sheep is too heavy to bear, only the fact that he went REJOICING! Only those who have experienced the joy of being a soul winner can begin to understand the personal joy of the Good Shepherd.

A pastor suffers many things, but he also knows some of this personal joy as an under shepherd. As a servant of the Lord, a pastor walks with Jesus, walks down to the very jaws of death and hell with human beings to bring them up into spiritual life. He has the privilege of lending his shoulder, alongside of that of Jesus (being yoked together with Him) to help others through their rough places. What a personal joy it is, then, to see them progress and begin to grow their own spiritual feet and legs and begin to take their first tottering, groping steps. How terribly it hurts, then, when the other sheep come along and begin hitting them on the head and criticize them and finding fault, even as the Pharisees and scribes did that day. Beloved, we cannot always look at just what we see in people today because then we are prone to judge unrighteous judgment. This is why we judge unjust judgment about human souls. In their opinion that little sheep looks like he is in terrible shape. They think he should have matured and grown up much faster than that, but they do not know how far the Lord has already brought that little one. Only by the revelation of the Spirit of God could they possibly know the pit from whence the Lord had dug this one out. Failing to know the extent of the mire and the depth of the pit causes the others to make an unjust judgment, deeming this one sheep hardly worth the effort. But not so with the Good Shepherd. He feels only that personal joy of having found His precious, one lost sheep. To Him the burden is not too heavy. He joyfully carries the lost sheep on his shoulder, happy to lend him His strength.

##### b. Friends

##### c. Neighbors.

"and when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which, was lost. I say

unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

LUKE 15:6,7

Some day we are all going to go to our heavenly home. How wonderful it will be when Jesus Christ calls all of His friends and neighbors in to help celebrate that great occasion! He called His friends; He called His neighbors. This event takes place in heaven where the angels are His friends and neighbors.

When a sinner repents, the angels shout for joy in heaven. In the book of Job we read that the sons of God (the angels) shouted for joy when God laid the foundations of this literal earth of ours. When those angels see God lay a spiritual foundation in some poor lost sinner's soul they start shouting over that spiritual foundation. They are so excited about the will of their Father. They know that it is not their Father's will for this soul to be lost. The sheep, in the parable, represent a human soul, an eternal life that will spend eternity somewhere - heaven or hell. This soul is a living soul and God does not want it to be lost, destined for hell, so the angels rejoice and shout for joy, over every soul that is redeemed.

And they shout because when a sinner repents, a lost sheep is found; it presents them another opportunity to minister in the will of God to this soul. Every repentant sinner has a guardian angel that watches over him. The Lord reaches out, selecting a ministering angel for each soul as it is saved. They are ministering spirits, ministering to the redeemed, those who are the heirs of salvation. So the angels shout for joy over the finding of each lost sheep, and they shout for joy for each new assignment to serve God as a ministering spirit.

Sometimes we are tempted to think no one cares for us. We feel all alone and deserted, but this is not true. Each of us, as redeemed ones, have a personal angelic ministering spirit that is concerned over us. That angel shouted for joy over every step we take in going on for Jesus. We are not orphans. He has not left us comfortless. We have Jesus, we have the precious Holy Ghost comforter, we have a Heavenly father, we have our guardian angels. Surely we are blessed with much love, concern and care.

Let me remind you, Jesus spoke this parable of the Lost Sheep to the publicans and the sinners. In spite of the scorn and accusation of the self-righteous Pharisees and scribes, Jesus continued to speak the words of Life to those who hungered about Him. He let them know what the Son of God thought in this matter of the value of a human soul. Yes, He received the sinners. He sought them out, He ate with them, He made Himself accessible unto them because He was not guilty of unjust judgment as others were. Blinded by their earthly minded wisdom they judged them of no account, but Jesus with His heavenly vision saw the publicans and sinners as exceedingly precious lost sheep.

He was the Good Shepherd, willing to leave the ninety and nine safely

secured ones, to go after that which was lost. And He sought until He found it. Can we possibly understand the shout of joy and the rejoicing of His heart when He exclaimed "REJOICE WITH ME; FOR I HAVE FOUND MY SHEEP WHICH WAS LOST!"

We have seen how valuable is the human soul to Jesus Christ, the Good Shepherd. Reigning over unjust judgment He left the heavenly sheepfold to trod the dark places of this old world searching for one lost sheep. He esteemed no suffering too great, no valley too dark, no mountain too high to climb because He cared so much for the lost sheep. When at last the sheep was found He tenderly carried it upon His shoulders until it was strengthened and able to follow closely in His footsteps. Greatly did He rejoice with His friends and neighbors because the one lost sheep was found.

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**RULING OVER UNJUST JUDGEMENT**

**A. THE CREDITOR AND TWO DEBTORS**

"There was a certain creditor which had two debtors the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged."

LUKE 7:41-43

The first parable concerned a sinner woman's demonstration of love to Jesus. She kissed His feet and anointed them with ointment because her heart overflowed with love for her Saviour. When the Pharisee saw this, he spake in his heart against Jesus. Unjustly, he judged Him as lacking in the attributes and qualities of a true prophet, saying

"This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner."

LUKE 7:39

Jesus was not lacking in discernment. To the contrary, He looked on her heart and her demonstration of love was precious to Him. He also discerned the thoughts of the Pharisees and reproved him for his unjust judgment.

**B. FRIEND AT MIDNIGHT**

"And he said unto " them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth."

LUKE 11:5-8

Unjust judgment caused one man with bread to turn a deaf ear to a call

for help. His neighbor had a great need, yet according to his judgment, it was too late, too difficult and too inconvenient to minister. Only after persistent and shameless knocking and crying did the man on the inside rise to give bread to the one at his door. This pearl of truth was formed in the heart of the Bride in the fifth chapter of the Song of Solomon. When her Bridegroom asked her to serve His friends with the honeycomb, and the honey, and the wine and the milk, her first reaction was to feign sleep. By saying she had already taken off her coat and washed her feet she was judging it too inconvenient to serve. When she suffered the loss of His presence, she soon began to have righteous judgment. She counted no suffering too great or too inconvenient as she searched for Him. She was concerned only in the restoration of her union and fellowship with the Bridegroom.

In the beginning of the fourteenth chapter of Luke, we find Jesus eating bread at the house of one of the chief Pharisees. And in spite of the fact it was the Sabbath Day He healed a man who was sick with the dropsy. Knowing their self-righteousness and realizing they were more interested in tradition and outward form than in ministering to the needs of one afflicted in his body, Jesus began to speak to them in parables. Had they been wise they could have recognized their own pride reflected in the story of the guest who chose the high seats at the feasts, only to be asked to take a lower position when a more honorable one arrived. He continued testing these Pharisees with the Word, giving them the requirements of a disciple, until at last they must have withdrawn. Thus, they made room for the publicans and sinners who pressed in near to Jesus in chapter fifteen. The publicans and sinners had a good motive; they wanted to hear Him. But the Pharisees and the scribes spoke against them, thereby revealing again their own unjust judgment- Their opinion of the importance of another man's body was made quite clear when Jesus healed the man with dropsy. Personally, they cared little whether this man was healed or not. They used the Sabbath only as an excuse to criticize and judge. When Jesus continued to teach publicans and sinners after they had lost interest and moved back, their attitude toward the publicans and sinners revealed how unimportant a human soul was in their judgment.

### **C. THE IMPORTANCE OF HUMAN SOULS**

The last three parables dealing with Unjust Judgment have to do with Ruling over the Importance of Human Souls. These He gave to the publicans and sinners to teach them, as well as the Pharisees and scribes, how important a soul is to God.

#### **1. The Lost Sheep**

The parable of the lost sheep reveals the great worth of a human soul to Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As the Good Shepherd, He left the heavenly sheepfold to walk the dark valleys of this old world, searching and seeking for one lost sheep. He climbed all the way up Calvary's hill and descended into the portals of the damned to lay hold of the keys to death and hell to lift us out of the muck and mire of sin. He lovingly carries us upon His shoulders until our spiritual legs have grown sufficiently for us to follow His footsteps back into the heavenly sheepfold.

Beloved, He did it once as He walked through this life, and He continues to do it daily for each one of us. Through His Spirit and His Word He seeks us out and draws us back from our ways of self-will and determination, our ways of sin and pride. In addition, He plants our feet firmly in the pathway of holiness and sets our faces once more toward the prize of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus. Praise His Name! Great is the love of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, for every human soul.

## 2. The Lost Coin

The parable of the lost coin, which we will study in this lesson, shows the importance of human souls to the Holy Ghost. Although multitudes followed Jesus, His primary interest was not in numbers. He came and died on the cross of Calvary to save the world, but He was not interested in quantity alone. He was concerned with quality. Knowing the multitudes followed Him for the loaves and fishes they received, Jesus often took His disciples aside and taught them privately. He wanted them to grow into spiritual maturity, into the oneness of relationship that He, Himself, knew with His heavenly Father.

"Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

LUKE 15:8-10

The lost silver coin has to do with a lost marriage relationship. Because a coin has to do with value, in this parable we will see the value or importance of the marriage relation to God.

Our Bible was penned in the Eastern countries, therefore a heavy thread of Eastern customs is woven throughout its pages. Failure to understand these customs blinds many to precious truths that were very clear to those listening to Jesus speak these words. Today a few would associate a silver coin with a marriage relationship because at our marriages the bride and bridegroom exchange wedding rings. However, when the Bible was written it was traditional for the husband to present the bride with ten pieces of silver engraved with his name. These she wore across her forehead, upon her veil, to show that she was legitimately married. It was not the actual cost of these ten pieces of silver which made one of them so valuable; it was the marriage relationship they represented that cause each to become a priceless treasure.

With this thought in mind, let us now consider carefully the parable of the lost coin. God had a very definite reason for saying it was a woman who suffered the loss of one piece of silver. He wanted to show the

concern that the Spirit of God, represented by the woman, has for this lost relationship. God never lost all ten pieces of silver; only one was lost. He has other unities of heaven that we know nothing about, but He lost the marriage relationship with the human soul when Adam male and female sinned in the Garden of Eden. In the book of Proverbs wisdom is personified as a woman, and it is with the wisdom of God that the Holy Ghost goes searching for the lost coin, the lost marriage relationship with man.

Certainly in the natural, a lost coin is powerless in its lost condition. It has no voice to call out, "Here am I, come, restore me to my position with the other nine coins." It has no arms to pull itself up to a higher position, a place of greater light. Neither does it have legs to move itself to where it might be more easily found. It can do nothing except to lay in the exact place it fell. And so it is with man. If the Spirit of God had not begun searching in the Garden of Eden, we would still be lost and undone, with no hope of restoration to unity and oneness with God.

Sinners were not in question here because the Good Shepherd went out searching for the lost sheep, and He found it. Jesus was talking about the lost marriage relationship between God and man. When the woman lost a coin she made all the house light with a candle and began to seek diligently for it. Likewise, with the fire of wisdom, understanding and knowledge from God's Golden Candlestick burning brightly, the Holy Ghost began sweeping this old world for every single piece of silver that belonged to that lost coin called mankind.

In the Old Testament Tabernacle the Golden Candlestick was in the Holy Place. Its seven lights burned with fire from off the Brazen Altar and pictures for us the Fire of the Holy Ghost. The Candlestick is a picture of the Word of God being lit up by the Spirit of God. There is no real understanding of God's Word without a revelation from His Spirit, because it was His Spirit that wrote the Word of God. So we see the Holy Ghost began to light up the Word of God and sweep through the house where the lost coin was. How useless for preachers to sweep with the Word of God when their own souls have not been lit up by the Holy Ghost fire. On the other hand when we sweep with Holy Ghost revealed Word, every once in awhile we find a little bit of the silver belonging to the lost coin of marriage relationship with God. It takes wisdom of God to find all the little bits of coin, for only He knows the depths of sin and the darkness into which some of this coin fell; It is His wisdom and His Word which must seek out and reclaim every fragment of the coin.

God personifies the Spirit of Wisdom as a woman in the book of Proverbs to show that we should court wisdom, woo her and seek to please her. The ministry of wisdom helps us understand the concern of the Holy Ghost for this lost relationship. It shows us how the Holy Ghost searches for the coin that is lost down in the miry clay of sin. Let us go to Proverbs to consider the ministry of wisdom.

**A. WISDOM INSTRUCTS**

"To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity."

PROVERBS 1:3

The Hebrew meaning of the word instruction is chastisement (literally with blows or figuratively with words), reproof, warning or instruction. It also means restraint, a bond, check, correction, discipline, doctrine, rebuke, teach. How contrary to the carnal mind does wisdom work. Many times life's hard blows and the stoney rebukes we receive from others are in reality nothing less than wisdom seeking to correct, instruct and teach us the way of humility. If we will receive, apprehend, find acceptable and apply to our daily life the instruction of wisdom, it will minister like a broom to sweep away the cobwebs of ignorance and darkness from our minds and hearts. Thus, we will acquire the discipline which will enable us to perceive the line of conduct that is just and right. When the instruction of wisdom has swept and cleaned our hearts, we will be able to distinguish between truth and falsehood, good and evil. Only when we apprehend her words of understanding and accommodate them to ourselves do they become useful in restoring the lost relationship between our hearts and the heart of God.

**B. WISDOM CRIES**

Wisdom sweeps for the lost coin by crying which means to shout, cry out, cry loud.

"Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets: She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates; in the city she uttereth her words, saying, How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? and the scorners delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge? Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you."

PROVERB'S 1:20-23

Boldly she goes forth. Wisdom cries publicly and not to a restricted circle of disciples. Wisdom cries without, in the streets, in the chief places of concourse, in the gates and in the city.

4. City

2. Chief Places



3. Gates and Doors

1. Streets

1. Streets

"Wisdom crieth without; she uttereth her voice in the streets:"

PROVERBS 1:20

Wisdom begins to cry even to the unsaved and begins to sweep away the thoughts of procrastination concerning the salvation of the soul. Wisdom truly cries outside in the street. She calls, "What are you doing out here?" When I was a sinner it seemed I could hear someone calling to me every time I was in a nightclub, "What are you doing in here? You don't belong." I always felt like I was trying to hide from something or someone. Now I know it was the voice of wisdom crying and sweeping, looking for that lost coin. Wisdom was not in the king's house where the maids had it all nice and clean. She was out in the city streets, down in the muck and mire. All this is a picture of the Word of God. The Bible said all scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness. God's Spirit lights up the candlestick of His Word and then wisdom cries out, constantly sweeping with her words, as it were.

2. Chief Places

"Doth not wisdom cry? and understanding put forth her voice? She standeth in the top of high places by the way in the places of the paths"

PROVERBS 8: 1,2

Notice that before she was in the low place with the lowly. Now she is sweeping in the high places for the high ones. She sweeps in the high places of learning and in the high places of society. She sweeps in the heights of this world looking for a lost coin. Thus, none may have an excuse for their ignorance and error, nor for their carelessness and unbelief. Because Wisdom in her faithfulness cries alike in all places, to all people, none can say they never heard. Wisdom cries aloud and

does not spare: she puts forth her voice as one desirous of being heard. God declared His Word from the high place of Sinai, and Jesus declared His Word in the sermon on the mount. God has always been faithful to cry in the high places.

### 3. Gates and Doors

"She crieth at the gates, at the entry of the city, at the coming in at the doors."

PROVERBS 8:3

Wisdom cried in all walks of life, to the poor, to the soldiers, to the ordinary ones and to the high ones. When wisdom cried in the gates she reached all that passed by on the road regardless of their rank or condition. Her discoveries and directions were given to all promiscuously. Wisdom met them at the gates of the city and followed them to their very doors, crying with sweeping words of warning and instruction.

"Unto you, O men, I call; and my voice is to the sons of men. O ye simple, understand wisdom and, ye fools, be ye of understanding heart."

PROVERBS 8:4,5

Wisdom cries not to angels (they do not need her message), not to devils (they cannot receive her words) and not to brute creatures (they are incapable of receiving wisdom). But she cries to the sons of men who need and can receive her message. Though the sons of men be ever so foolish and simple, yet wisdom will enroll them as scholars in her class and will sweep in their hearts, and will impact understanding to them. One of the great ministries of wisdom is to cry throughout the whole book of Proverbs warning us of our froward ways.

### 4. City

"She crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the openings of the gates: in the city she uttereth her words, saying..."

PROVERBS 1:21

She cast her net in the city in hopes that it might be filled with the souls of men. Wisdom seeks not a corner to hide the truth in, but boldly cries the truth, and its virtues within the city. She pathetically cries. In earnest she utters her voice; she utters her words with all possible clearness and affection. She desires to be heard and heeded.

Beloved, we cannot find the lost coin in ourselves; we must let wisdom look for it. She instructs and she cries. She keeps lighting up the house with her candlestick and she continues sweeping with her words until she finds every bit of that lost piece of silver that has to do with marriage relationship with God.

We use the terminology marriage relationship not because it is a literal thing, but because God used the natural marriage to symbolize and to show what it means to be one with God. Jesus said,

"I and my Father are one."

JOHN 10:30

And He prayed in chapter seventeen that we might be one with Him and His Father as they are one together.

Thus, in the parable of the lost coin we have seen the value of the lost coin and the marriage relationship it symbolizes. It meant so much to God that the Holy Ghost went out searching in the miry clay of sin for the lost Bride that God had ordained to be one with Him.

Ruling over unjust judgement which would say that one small coin, one little piece of silver could not be worth all the anguish and the trouble it would take to restore it, the woman searched until she found the lost coin. Then she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost.

When that lost marriage relationship was found it was a happy time.

"Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth."

LUKE 15:10

How precious! The angels of glory stand waiting for the lost sheep, the bits of silver of the lost coin and for the lost sons to be found. When speaking of angels the Bible says,

"Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

HEBREWS 1:14

They minister for the ones who were the lost sheep, the lost coins and the lost sons.

Even after we have been found, wisdom continues to sweep in the dark

recesses of our hearts. She shines her light to show us our own lost coin, as it were. As she reveals attitudes and dispositions which have marred our unity with God, the pearl of humility must rule over unjust judgment that would disregard, ignore or think lightly of anything which separates us in any way from the Lord Jesus Christ. This marriage relationship is of great value in the eyes of God. His Holy Spirit sweeps through the whole world, in the low places and in the high places, seeking every particle of the lost coin.

Such concern on God's part should inflame our souls with zeal to let wisdom instruct us and restore as to perfect marriage union with Him. Let us pray fervently for the eleventh pearl, the eleventh gate called Ruling over Unjust Judgment, to be formed in the wall of our spiritual heart.

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**RULING OVER UNJUST JUDGMENT**

Failing to rule over the importance of gratitude, Simon, the Pharisee, unjustly judged a sinner woman's demonstration of love. He despised the woman's public display of her love and appreciation to Jesus for the mercy and forgiveness she had received. When Jesus accepted the woman's gift of love, Simon doubted Jesus was a true prophet. By giving the parable of the two debtors, Jesus proved His powers of discernment; He exposed the very thoughts of Simon's heart.

The sinner woman and Simon were both transgressors. The woman expressed her gratitude when Jesus forgave her for transgressing God's moral laws. Faith in God's mercy and His power to forgive sin saved the woman. The word saved in the Greek means to heal, preserve, to be made whole. Through her demonstration of love, the woman was made whole, spirit, soul, and body. Gratitude brought peace.

Jesus forgave Simon for transgressing the natural laws of courtesy, yet we never read Simon ever expressed gratitude for the mercy he received.

God, work this gate in her hearts. Let us rule over the unjust judgment of our flesh that belittles the necessity of demonstrating our love and appreciation for God's mercy and grace to us.

To show the necessity of ruling over the importance of the Word of God, Jesus taught the parable of the importunate friend in Luke 11: 5-10. Only a pressing need constrained the man in this parable to go out at midnight in search of bread, and so it is in the spiritual realm. The Bread of God's Word frequently takes second place to natural needs. The cares of life usurp most of our thoughts and attention until some extreme emergency arises. Then, we realize the importance of God's Bread. Without the strength of the Word of God we can never stand in the time of testing and trial. How we need to pray for God to form this gate in our hearts so we can rule over the importance of God's Word.

When the sinners and publicans moved in to hear the words of Jesus, they drew quick disapproval from the religious crowd. Jesus taught three parables on ruling over the importance of human souls to comfort those sitting at His feet, he showed the sinners His love as the Shepherd, the love of the Holy Ghost and the love of the Father.

The parable of the lost sheep reveals the love of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, for human souls. He left all the glories of heaven to search for one lost sheep called mankind. The sheep never would have found his way alone. If this gate of ruling over the importance of human souls had been missing in the heart of Jesus Christ, the sheep would have perished in his lost condition.

The parable of the lost coin shows the love the Holy Ghost has for human souls. Man's sin broke the marriage relationship with God. So great was the love of the Holy Ghost that He began sweeping the world for the lost silver coin. God's spirit, portrayed as a woman in Luke 15: 8-10, began crying in the low places and in the high places. Through the Word of God

and the wisdom of God the Holy Ghost will continue to let the eleventh gate rule until all the lost silver is found.

This brings us to the last parable on ruling over the importance of human souls. The parable of the lost son reveals God's love, the Father's love, for the souls of man. Let us consider the stature of truth concerning this parable in Luke 15: 11-32.

#### IV. THE ELDER BROTHER



#### I. MISTAKE OF YOUNGER SON

##### I. MISTAKE OF YOUNGER SON

The story of the younger son begins with a mistake, a wrong decision, a wrong choice. In spite of the fact that he was the younger son, the least important in the family, his choice affected others. His wrong decision touched his Father, his elder brother, and indirectly the servants of the household.

##### A. Give Me

"And he said, A certain man had two sons: And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living."

LUKE 15:11-13

This was no baby speaking, and what he asked for was no small thing. He wanted the full inheritance which ordinarily passed to the heirs only upon the death of the father. The younger son wanted his full part while the Father still lived. He demanded his Father to relinquish all authority over him and his inheritance. The son said, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." In other words, "Father, take your hands off my portion. I don't want you controlling it, giving it to me a day at a time. Give my inheritance to me now. Let me boss it." Great spiritual pride and ignorance provoked such words.

As the Creator, God is the Father of all. This does not mean all are saved because salvation comes only from a personal experience with Jesus Christ. Many people are like the younger son. They want to take the natural life God gave them and use it for their own pleasure. They use the talents and abilities God bestowed upon them for self-exaltation. They want to leave God completely out of their lives. In effect, they say, "Don't tell me what to do or where to go, Father. Just let me alone. I can take care of my own life; I don't need you. I can boss it." When God turns it over to them, they soon find how inadequately they can boss. They waste their substance and many times ruin their lives.

The first mistake of the younger son was to say, "Give me." He insisted upon having the inheritance in his own hands. Parents with young children frequently face this problem. A child begs to carry a heavy sack, but the parent refuses because he knows the weight of the sack. Persistent and often unreasonable pleadings on the child's part result in the burden being placed into frail arms. Of course, the child falls down under the weight of the sack. Did the parent suddenly think the child was able to carry the sack? No, He still knew the sack was too heavy for the immature child to carry. The decision to place the heavy weight into young arms came when the parent realized the child would acknowledge his weakness in no other way. Likewise, no wise, loving Father would give an immature son his full inheritance just because he asked once for it. The Father divided the inheritance to the younger son when He realized this was the only way the son would learn his lesson.

#### **B. He Took It**

"....And he divided unto them his living. And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country."

LUKE 15:12,13

In years past, before my Physician Shepherd cured me of the wants, I used to go to the Lord, weeping and crying "Oh Lord, I want to do this thing, or I want that thing over there." He stopped me by saying "All right, if you want that thing bad enough, I will give it to you." Fear of God gripped my heart and I drew back my hand before I took the thing, saying, "No, Lord, I won't make that choice. It might not be the right one. I know you always give the best to those who leave the choice with you. Lord, you choose for me." When I gave Him the choice, He chose another thing for me.

Today I am so happy He never gave those things I cried for. I would have missed the stature in the Word of God that He chose to give to me.

The younger son made his second mistake when he kept his hand out. Without changing his mind, he took his possession and began to boss it.

The desire to rule and reign is born in all of us and at an early age it

begins to assert itself. The Devil knows just how to take advantage of the fleshly desire to boss. He realizes dead works never produce real life for the kingdom of God. The Devil, therefore, seeks to lure Christians into the pathway of all works and no prayer. If this fails, he uses other tricks to ensnare Christians who by fasting and prayer, lay hold of the true substance of God. The Devil knows if the Christian can be persuaded to take the gifts of God into his own hands, he will soon minister only death. God's Word can wound and kill if it is given out of season. Spiritual pride causes Christians to beat people over the head with their great knowledge of the Word of God. The arm of flesh brings no life. There is death at both extremes. Life is in the middle, in the straight and narrow way of the Lord Jesus Christ. Seek God first in the Word and in the Spirit; then go forth to minister His life to others as He leads.

God gives substance for the purpose of bringing us into marriage relationship with Jesus Christ. Through union with Jesus Christ we grow into spiritual maturity and become one with God, His Father. Only then can we become true servants of God. The younger son rejected union with his Father, but his independence lasted for only a season.

### **1. Stranger**

"...And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country."

LUKE 15:15

Joining or union with a stranger came only after he willfully separated himself from his Father. The Greek word join means to glue, to stick, to cleave, join self. Instead of allowing the substance to join him to the Father, he joined himself to a stranger. He travelled into a far country, a strange land, and he married his soul to a citizen of that country. Because he refused to accept the Father's kind of joining, he also experienced another kind of service.

### **2. Service Changed.**

"....and he sent him into his fields to feed swine."

LUKE 15:15

He became a servant for swine. Responsibility for keeping this low degree of uncleanness alive was now his. What humiliation for a son of Abraham, It is impossible to join oneself to a stranger without also feeding his swine, his unclean spirits. A time comes in every life when we must take a stand for the will of God. If we join ourselves to the world, the flesh or the Devil, we can expect to serve their unclean spirits and desires. It is not God's will for His children to pour out their lives as servants of uncleanness.

### 3. Diet Changed

"..and he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him"

LUKE 15:16

In the beginning the younger son feasted at his Father's full table. Now he longed for satisfaction from the husks of the swine he fed. Desire for satisfaction went beyond natural, physical hunger; it reached to his very heart. The word belly in the Greek means a cavity, the belly, the matrix, the heart.

Natural swine are satisfied with husks; they have no appreciation for clean wholesome food. Neither do swine spirits have a stomach for spiritual food from the Father's table. The younger son desired satisfaction from the husks, but he found no delight in his new diet. The husks of life never satisfy the external cravings of the immortal soul. Only the Word of God and the Spirit of God satisfy the soul and spirit of man.

#### C. HE WASTED IT

"...and there wasted his substance with riotous living"

LUKE 15:13

The Bible says the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country. Why did he do this? He wanted no suggestions from his father. He wanted to be free to manage the substance according to his own will. When he started bossing his substance, he soon wasted it. In truth, the substance still belonged to the Father. It was not the younger son's by inheritance; it was the Father's gift to him.

The son used his Father's substance to exalt himself. He deceived the citizens of the far country into thinking the substance was his own. In their eyes he made himself very great, exalting himself at the expense of his Father.

How often have we seen the very same thing in the spiritual realm. God gives the treasures of His Word and His Spirit to Christians only to have them go into a far country. Through pride and pretense they exalt themselves with His substance. No mention is made of where they obtained their treasures; they take all the glory and honor for the substance. Such a one soon finds his portion of substance depleted and wasted. The Father shares the experiences of the younger son. Much suffering comes because of a wrong choice. Willful separation from the fountainhead of all substance brings great poverty, famine, and humiliation. God, grant us wisdom to appreciate the Father and His house, the source of all our blessings, the source of all our life. The younger son needed to learn

the mystery of living in God's Will. Some love the will of God when it exalts them, but they draw back when humiliation comes. The secret is in loving the hand that controls our exaltation and our humiliation. One brother expressed this thought very well. He said he is like a yo-yo in the hand of his Father. All he has to do is to follow the string. When the Father loosens the string, he goes down until God pulls the string back up. God never leaves the yo-yo down at the bottom. When we learn our lessons of humility in the low place, our Father will say, "Come higher." If we love the will of God, we can rejoice whether we are being exalted or humiliated.

Ignorance of this secret caused the younger son to claim his Father's substance prematurely. His desire, his motive, and his attitude were wrong. True prosperity and success could never be born out of such evil and wrong.

#### **D. JOIN**

"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine"

LUKE 15:14,15

#### **4. Companionship Changed**

"....and no man gave unto him"

LUKE 15:16

No man came to offer comfort, encouragement, or hope. Once surrounded by family, friends and servant, he was all alone now except for the swine he served. When he said, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me," he had visions of exaltation. No suffering, poverty, famine, or humiliation crossed his mind. He had no thought whatsoever of changing the Father's companionship for the company of swine. He never pictured himself despised, deserted and hungry, nevertheless, these things all came his way because he said, "Father, give me."

God knows how to bring us to the end of ourselves. Sometimes the only way we learn is when he, like the Father in this parable, permits us to take our own way.

#### **II. REPENTANCE OF YOUNGER SON**

The greatest sin is not in making a mistake in the beginning. It is worse to continue in the wrong direction after one's eyes are opened to a mistake. The younger son asked for his inheritance, then wasted it in

riotous living. His final position as servant to swine was the ultimate humiliation for any Jew.

Down in the pigpen he came to himself. In other words, he came face to face with reality. No longer did he live in the dream world created by his imagination. Sensible reasoning returned. He saw the swine in all their uncleanness and realized their husks would never satisfy his hungry soul. Then he remembered the servants in his Father's house had bread to spare. The servants in God's house are the angels of heaven, and they eat the Living Bread of heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The younger son recognized and acknowledged his sin. The fulness of his transgression came before him causing him to say,

"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee:"

LUKE 15:18

How did he sin against heaven? He sinned against the angels in heaven when he began to boss his substance. The responsibility of angels is to minister to those who shall be heirs of salvation, but they are helpless to minister to one who takes his substance and goes into a far country. In this parable the Father still had servants, but they could serve no bread to the younger son as long as he stayed with the swine. We sin against the angels when we go away from the Lord. We rob them of their ministry to us.

The younger son decided to return to his Father, confess all his wrong and beg forgiveness. No visions of exaltation filled his head. To the contrary he humbly approached the Father saying "I am not worthy to be called thy son." Gratitude and appreciation for his Father and for his Father's table wrought surrender in his heart. He returned home willing to accept the lowest position in the house. Hired servants have no claim to the love or companionship of the Father, but they do get to eat bread from His table.' When the younger son returned, he expected no glory or honor. He hoped only to share the table with those who had once served him.

Notice the change in the son. In the beginning he said, "Give me the substance. I want to rule my own life." He returned willing for another to command his life and to provide his needs one day at a time. His lesson was a hard one, but he learned it.

### III. THE ATTITUDE OF THE FATHER

The Father's attitude is revealed in two ways. First we see His attitude toward the younger son and later toward his elder son. Great love motivated His actions toward each son.

In the study of the lost sheep, we learned the Good Shepherd showed His love for mankind by leaving the ninety and nine in the sheepfold and

going to search for the one lost sheep. The very nature of the sheep made it impossible for him to find his own way. The lost coin was just as powerless to lift itself from its fallen state until the Holy Ghost proved His love by sweeping the world for the lost silver.

The lost son differed from the lost sheep and from the lost coin. He was born into his Father's family and was created in the image and likeness of his Father. He could discern many things impossible for a sheep to understand. The son also inherited a will from his Father; he possessed the power of choice. The younger son was lost because of ignorance or because of weakness. He was lost because he chose to be lost.

The younger son failed to appreciate his position in the family. Although he was the younger son, he was not without power and authority. He lacked respect for his Father's wisdom and authority, for His person, His table and His Name. By his actions, he proved his ingratitude.

The Father could have withheld the substance from the younger son, thus, making it impossible for the son to pour out His life serving swine in a far country. The Father could have kept him home, but force would never have caused the son to really love his Father or to appreciate His provisions. Unfathomable love enabled the Father to surrender for a part of His life and substance to be poured out in service to swine. He surrendered for that life to suffer, to be lost and to even die in a far country. In humility beyond human comprehension, the Father waited for the son to come to himself and willingly return to love the Father and to love His life.

"...But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

LUKE 15:20

If the Father saw him afar off, then the Father had to be looking, watching for him. He also saw when the boy turned his heart back toward his Father. This moved the Father's heart with compassion, with tender love. Quickly the Father rushed to meet the returning son and falling on his neck, kissed him.

What a merciful attitude the Father showed. Before the son had time to confess, the Father kissed him with the kiss of forgiveness. Nevertheless, the son confessed his sin just as he planned to do. The Father spoke no rebuke. Instead, he commanded the servants to bring forth the best robe to clothe the son. He called for a ring for his hand and shoes for his feet. It was time to kill the fatted calf. It was time for celebration.

"For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

LUKE 15:24

The Devil says, "If you return and serve God, just look at all the things you must give up." The Devil lies. The younger son went out full, but he came back empty. This old world has nothing to offer except poverty, hunger and shame.

God is not asking us to give up something. He wants us to come to Him so we can receive something. Nothing thrills the heart of God so much as when a lost son returns home. Many times the Devil may say, "It won't do any good to repent. God won't forgive you." But upon the authority of God's Word, He will forgive. God loves souls. He watches afar off, and He will forgive. God kisses all who come to Him with the kiss of forgiveness. He clothes them with salvation. He gives them a ring of authority and shoes to walk in His will. Our Father spreads a bountiful table in His house.

Many sermons have been framed around the story of the prodigal son, the one who took his inheritance and wasted it in riotous living. Less famous is the son who never left the shelter of the Father's house. One certainly expects great spiritual maturity from the son because he never knew the poverty, the hunger or the shame that came to his brother.

The younger son's humility and repentance brought joy to the Father's heart, but his return drew a very different reaction from the elder son. Before we discuss the Father's attitude toward the elder son, let us consider a stature of truth concerning the elder son.

#### **IV. THE ELDER BROTHER**

The elder son stayed home; he never went to the pigpen, but he was not without sin.

##### **A. ELDER BROTHER INQUIRES**

"Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing. And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant."

LUKE 15:25,26

When the elder son returned from working in his Father's field, he heard music and dancing. Recognizing the sounds of joy and gladness, he called one of the servants and asked the reason for such celebration. The elder son reminds one of the rich young ruler who inquired what he must do to inherit eternal life and then went away sorrowful because the answer failed to please him. So it was with the elder son. The news of his brother's safe return sparked no joy or gratitude. To the contrary, great indignation and wrath filled his heart.

**B. ELDER BROTHER ANGRY**

"And he was angry, and would not go in; therefore came his father out, and entreated him."

LUKE 15:28

Self-righteous pride often provokes anger in hearts of those who have never backslidden. The elder son actually resented the mercy shown to the repentant son. This kind of anger is a result of spiritual blindness.

The younger son demonstrated his personal ingratitude for his Father's table, his Father's companionship and his Father's Name when he decided to pour out the life and substance of the Father in riotous living. The elder son exposes the same ingratitude when his brother returned home.

Beloved, the privilege of eating at the Father's table is a tremendous blessing and not one to be taken lightly. The younger son deliberately chose to walk away from the Father's table. When he later changed his mind and returned, the Father killed the fatted calf. Once more the son ate at the Father's table, but all the meals the Father served during his absence were forever lost to the younger son.

The elder son sat daily at his Father's table; all that his Father owned belonged to him. Yet he never took advantage of the substance. The younger son wasted the Father's substance through misuse. The elder son let the substance go unused and in this way wasted it. No anger would have filled his soul if he had really appreciated the life, the strength, and the stature that his place at the Father's table afforded him.

**C. ELDER BROTHER REBELLIOUS**

"...and would not go in."

LUKE 15:28

Anger is but one step from open rebellion. The elder son refused to go in. Thus, he revealed his own lack of concern for his Father. Although he walked in his Father's presence, the boy never discerned His suffering heart. The younger son's return eased the pain in the Father's heart. True concern for his Father would have caused him to rejoice over his brother's return just because it brought relief to his Father. But the elder son could not fellowship the Father's gladness because he never shared His suffering.

When the elder son walked willfully away, the Father kept His attitude right. He waited in love and humility for the son to come to himself and return to his Father's house. In mercy and forgiveness, the Father went out to meet the repented son.

Notice the Father's attitude toward the elder son. The Father owed the son no explanation for the celebration. Yet in true humility, He Left the younger son and all the festivities to go out to the rebellious son. He proved His love for this stubborn son by entreating him, that is, pleading with him and trying to reason with him. The Father used his own words and his personal presence to invite the son to forsake anger and rebellion. He beseeched the son to come near and share his personal joy. Such love, humility, and mercy should break the hardest heart.

The elder son proved by his sullen, angry, jealous and rebellious attitude that he never really used the Father's substance. He never really ate the fruit of love and mercy.

**D. ELDER BROTHER'S ACCUSATION**

"And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many-years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends"

LUKE 15:29

A wrong spirit caused the elder son to accuse the Father. His first accusation began, "Lo, these many years do I serve thee..." Was his first accusation justified? Did the elder son really serve the Father? When the younger son asked for his portion, the Word says,

". . . .And he divided unto THEM his living."

LUKE 15:12

According to the law, the elder son was entitled to a double portion of the inheritance. Therefore, when the younger son received his portion, the Father divided a double portion to the elder son. How could this son rightly say he served his Father if he never helped himself to the double portion. How could he have served without using the substance? The Father divided his living unto THEM. The younger son took his substance and wasted it in riotous living: the elder son ignored the substance.

The elder son said, "I did right, Father, but you did wrong" The elder son actually accused the Father of unrighteousness, just as self-righteous pride always accuses the nature of God. Frequently we bring railing accusations against God's children when in reality our accusations are directed against God.

The elder son's next accusation was:

". . . .neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment."

LUKE 15:29

The first and great command is to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. By his actions, the elder son proved he transgressed this commandment. If he had loved his Father with all his heart, he would have accepted the Father's decision, even if the Father had given the younger son the double portion.

Instead of rejoicing in his Father's will, the elder son said, "...and yet thou never gavest me a kid..." The calf is a larger animal than a kid, a little goat. "I'm the elder son, I deserve the double portion, but you didn't even give me the smallest share." Notice how he accuses the Father of partiality. This also proves his ignorance of the abundance of his Father's substance. The Father's abundance could never be depleted by one fatted calf; he had plenty for both sons.

In verse 30, the elder son says, "But as soon as this THY SON was come..." In other words, "He is still your son, but he is no brother of mine." Thus, he absolved himself of responsibility, washing his hands of all moral obligation to his brother.

The elder son's next offense was to call his brother's sin out from under the Blood. He reminded his Father:

"But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots."

LUKE 15:30

The younger son repented for all his sins, he turned his back and walked away from the filth of the pigpen, and he set his face toward his Father's house. When God forgives sins, He washes the sinner clean in the Blood of the Lamb and puts his sins behind His back, in the sea of forgiveness. If God forgives and forgets, then no man has a right to call sins out from under the Blood of Jesus Christ. It is a direct attack against God's nature of mercy to forgive sin and the power of His Blood to cover sin.

The elder brother was in a bad shape, but he failed to recognize his spiritual condition. The younger brother transgressed with outward sins while the elder son was guilty of inward sins. Outward sins are easier for man to recognize, but both sins are the same in God's sight. Sin is sin, regardless of who is committing it. Sin will defy God to His face. Many times Christians are deceived into thinking they have no sin simply because they have never left the Father's house. They ignore the unclean attitudes of their hearts which rise up as a personal accusation against God's holy nature.

Despite the elder son's rebellious disposition, the Father's attitude is unchanged. He said,

"Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." Luke 15:31

The Father did not call him a devil, or refuse to defile Himself by speaking with this elder son. He still called him, "son." He reminded him that He had nothing that did not already belong to the son. This is further proof that the elder son had never used the portion his Father divided to him.

Consider the purity and perfectness of the Father's attitude:

"It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found."

LUKE 15:32

New life is just cause for rejoicing. Thus, the Father killed the fattest calf to make a fitting, a necessary celebration.

When the elder son mentioned the younger son, he referred to him as "thy son," but the Father called the younger son "thy brother." He reminded him that his relationship and his obligations were unchanged. How sad that we read of no repentance or humility on the part of the elder son.

We can, nevertheless, profit spiritually from the lives of these two sons. As Christians we sometimes find ourselves walking in the footsteps of the younger son. We think we are suddenly mature enough to assume God's position of authority over our lives. Other times, we stand in the shoes of the elder son, making bitter, rebellious accusations against our Father. Repentance and humility is the answer in both cases. Our Father stands ever ready to forgive us and take us back into His family.

Surely none can stand before God and say, "No one ever care for my soul." The eleventh gate of ruling over unjust judgment is perfectly formed in God's heart. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, left heaven to search for the one lost sheep. The Holy Ghost swept the world for the lost silver coin, and the parable of the lost son shows the Father's love and concern for both of His sons. Beloved, human souls are important to God. Let us pray for the eleventh gate to be formed in our own hearts. When this gate rules, we can exercise righteous judgment toward every man.

— oOo —

**INTRODUCTION**

Pearls are among the most valuable gems in the world today, and many people will stand on the shore to watch a man as he dives into the darkness in quest of a pearl. Breaking through the inky waters, the diver comes out clutching an oyster in his hand. "Where is the treasure?" some ask as they view the unimpressive little sea creature. The diver, knows that the plain little oyster is the hiding place for pearls, and his burning desire for treasure sends him back into the waters again and again. Just as God hides natural pearls inside the body of an insignificant looking oyster, so also does He conceal His spiritual pearls of humility truth in the parables that Jesus taught. The wise and prudent, being unable to see beneath the surface of these simple stories, miss completely the beautiful and priceless principles of humility that God has hidden inside each of them.

While in the Spirit on the isle of Patmos, John, the beloved, saw the holy Jerusalem coming down from God. The twelve gates of the City, the Lamb's wife, portray the ruling and reigning power of humility that God formed in the Bride's heart during her earthly journey. In the parables of Jesus, she found twelve degrees of humility which ruled her heart like gates. These gates of pearly humility opened her heart wide to the Spirit and Word of God, but closed it to the evil and the undesirable.

In our study of the twelve gates of the New Jerusalem, we have progressed to the twelfth gate which has to do with ruling over prayerlessness. The first parable that Jesus taught on this subject deals with ruling over the lack of determination to pray. This is a very needful lesson because in the beginning of our spiritual growth, our prayer time is the first to suffer as the cares of life compete for our attention. Ruling over our prayer life is most difficult, and only through much perseverance do we reach a place of consistency in this area. Let us consider now the parable that Jesus gave to teach the truth of ruling over the lack of determination to pray.

— ooo —

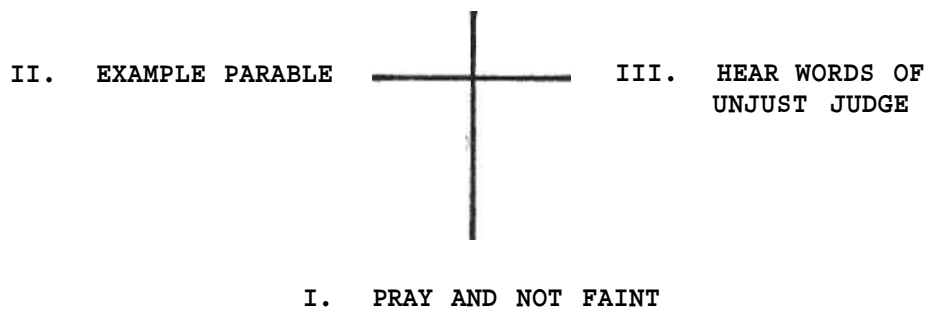
## RULING OVER PRAYERLESSNESS

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry . day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth"

LUKE 8:1-8

Since all the Word of God is laid out in the form of a cross, it is natural to find that this particular parable follows the same pattern.

## IV. GOD, THE JUST JUDGE



## I. PRAY AND NOT FAINT

"And he spoke a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint."

LUKE 18:1

The word prayer means to pray to God, to supplicate, to worship, to pray earnestly for, to make prayer. When Jesus told the disciples, "men ought always to pray and not to faint..." He revealed that fainting is not an inevitable solution in times of stress. To the contrary, when sorrows, heartaches, and burdens come, man can CHOOSE to worship God, to pray and to make supplication to Him. The choice is ours: we can choose to faint

or choose to pray. No one ever faints while praying, but many Christians faint spiritually because they fail to pray.

The Greek meaning of the word faint is to be bad or weak, to fail in heart, faint, to be weary. The Devil certainly realizes the value of constant prayer. He knows that victory will be his if he can talk a Christian out of spending time with God in prayer. So he sets about to destroy the prayer life of every believer. Without communion with the Lord, the Christian will eventually grow weary in the way and faint in his heart. "Why pray?" the Devil asks. "You can't make it. The way is just too hard. Why don't you give up and forget about all this useless, time consuming prayer?" The Devil is a liar. The truth is that Jesus Christ died so we could make it. Moreover, He has been resurrected and now stands at the right hand of the throne of majesty making intercession for us to make it. God's Word tell us that

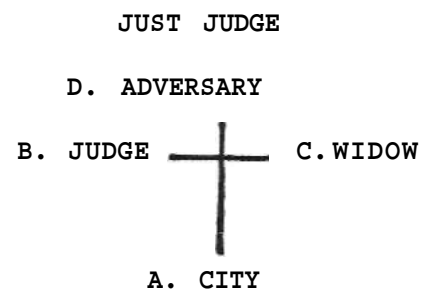
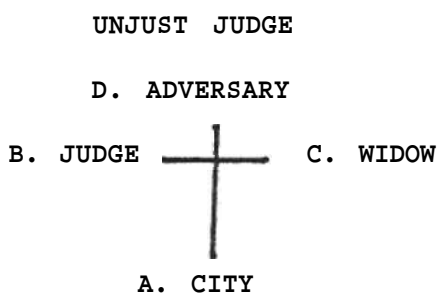
"...the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous human being move God, how much effectual are the prayers of our High Priest, "...who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."

HEBREWS 7:26

Did Jesus not promise that if two believers agreed to pray together -for the will of God to be done, that it would be done for them by the Father (Matthew 18:19). Right now . Jesus is praying for us to grow into spiritual maturity and get our human wills married to the will of God. Beloved, just imagine how powerful our prayers become when we choose to agree with Jesus in prayer instead of fainting. When we start praying, "Jesus, I love You and want Your will. I want to go on; don't let my flesh cause me to faint," our prayers ascend to God along with the intercession of Jesus Christ. Will God not answer the prayers of a righteous man? Will He not hear the intercession of His Son? Faint not because the answer is on the way.

## II. EXAMPLE PARABLE

After telling the disciples to pray always instead of fainting, Jesus gave the parable quoted in the beginning of the lesson as an example of someone who prayed and did not faint. In this parable, Jesus compares the unjust judge with the heavenly Judge who is just and righteous.



**A. CITY**

"Saying, There was in a city a judge."

LUKE 18:2

The Spirit of God mentions specifically that the man was a judge in a city to inspire respect for him. This man was no young beginner just starting his career in a little out of the way village. He was, instead, a very busy and prominent judge in a city.

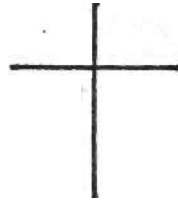
**B. JUDGE**

"Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:..And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."

LUKE 18:2-5

**4. Gave His Word**

2. Regarded not Man



3. Rebellion

1. Feared not God.

**1. Feared Not God.**

The judge was a man of position and authority, yet he feared not God and very boldly told everyone. Shamelessly, perhaps defiantly, he said, "I fear not God." Without the fear of God and without the Word of God, he had no guide lines or principles of righteousness, except his own seared conscience, to govern his decisions. He could not, therefore, have rendered just or right judgment.

**2. Regarded Not Man**

The judge had no fear of God nor regard for man. How could one expect him to respect God's creation when he had no respect for His person? When God gave the ten commandments in the 19th chapter of Exodus, He dealt first with the laws concerning man's relationship with Himself;

then He gave the laws that touches man's relationship with others. The fear of God is what causes us to respect one another. Apart from God, man is deprived and corrupt.

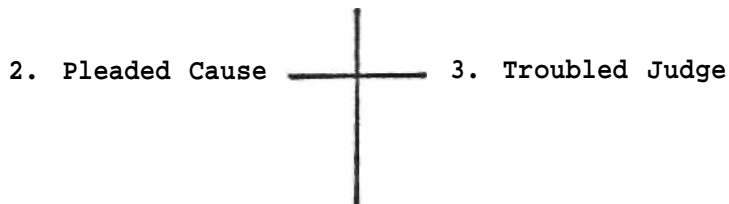
Before we proceed further on the stature of the Unjust Judge, let us consider the widow woman in this parable.

**C. WIDOW**

"and there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for awhile; hut afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me."

LUKE 18:3-5

**4. Worried**



**1. Came Continually**

**1. Came Continually**

The city exalted the judge and made him more important while at the same time making the widow's life harder. In a small village everyone would have known her, but doubtless, she was only one of many in the city who had pressing needs. Individual identities and needs tend to blur as the multitude of faces increases. How easy it would have been to ignore one poor widow woman. Did she faint because she was a widow, poor and mistreated? Did she faint because she had only an unjust judge to turn to for help? No. Realizing that the judge's position gave him the power and authority to avenge her, the widow looked beyond his corrupt character and came to him continually. The response of one who lacked respect for God and for man would have been neither soft nor kind. Not by word or deed did he encourage her, yet she continued to come.

**2. Pleaded Cause**

Every time she approached the judge, she reminded him of her need. This took much humility and faith on her part to go again with the same request.

### **3. Troubled Him**

Ignoring her pride, the widow continued to bring her need to the judge's attention. In other words, she made a nuisance of herself. Fear of what other people might think of how the unjust judge might resent her did not cause her to faint. Yet how often Christians faint in their prayer life because they feel ashamed to have others know they are still crying to God for vengeance. They seem to think that God is weary of hearing the same petition. Beloved, by our continual coming, we prove our faith in God's righteous, holy nature to hear the cries of His children, and we prove our faith in His omnipotent power to deliver all who call on Him.

### **4. Wearied Him**

The Greek meaning of the word weary is very interesting. It means to hit under the eye (buffet or disable an antagonist as a pugilist, fighter, professional boxer), to tease or annoy into compliance, subdue one's passions, keep under, to weary. Just as professional boxers gain the victory over their opponent by hitting them so often in the same place that they lose all resistance, so also did the widow repeatedly hit, as it were, the judge with her request for vengeance.

The words revenge and avenge have different meanings. Revenge implies the infliction of punishment out of a spirit of malice, enmity, and retaliation over personal injury. Although people hurt our feelings, it gives us no license to call judgment down on their heads. The offense may have been done ignorantly, with no deliberate desire to hurt or to oppress. This type of crime calls for mercy and forgiveness on our part. Vengeance, on the other hand, is the just and fair punishment meted out to correct a wrong situation. Since the widow worried the judge for vengeance, we know she wanted only what was justly hers.

We return to the stature of the Unjust Judge to pick up the third point and fourth points.

### **3. Rebellion**

We have already seen how this judge had no fear of God nor respect for his fellow man. "And he would not for a while..." This reveals the judge's open rebellion against the widow's honorable claim. Perhaps he refused to act in her behalf because he was too busy. Her adversary might have been an official of the city, or he might have had no real concern for justice. Whatever his reason for refusing her request, he caused the widow additional suffering, but she did not faint. All the more persistently she cried. "Avenge me of mine adversary.

### **4. Gave His Word**

At last the unjust judge said,

"....Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her

continual coming she weary me."

LUKE 18:4,5

Out of a desire for privacy, the judge pledged to avenge her; even in giving his word the judge was selfish because he had nothing good upon which to build. He had no fear of God, nor respect for man. If a woman without God, could seek an unjust judge who in the beginning gave her no hope of mercy, should we not plead our cause before a just judge?

#### **D. ADVERSARY**

Although Jesus failed to name the widow's adversary, we will still know something about him. Speaking through the prophet Isaiah, God said,

"....plead for the widow"

ISAIAH 1:17

Moreover, He gave special commandments against mistreating widows and orphans.

"Ye shall not afflict any widow, or fatherless child. If thou afflict them in any wise, and they cry at all unto me, I will surely hear their cry and my wrath shall wax hot, and I will kill you with the sword; and your wives shall be widows, and your children fatherless?"

EXODUS 22:22-24

In order to oppress the widow, the adversary, like the unjust judge, had to be lacking in the fear of God and of God's judgment. In addition, he must have lacked even the natural feelings of mercy and compassion toward one who is suffering. He may have been a mortal man, but he had the nature and character of Satan.

Beloved, widows and orphans are only two classes of people that God commands us to treat kindly. He gave commandment against mistreating the poor, the child of God, the servants of God, and the sinners because He desired that we show the same love and mercy towards others that He shows to us.

#### **III. HEAR WORDS OF THE UNJUST JUDGE**

"And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith"

LUKE 18:6

What words did Jesus want us to hear? "I will avenge." He was neither just nor holy. He feared not God and respected not man; he even rebelled against the thought of having to avenge the widow. Yet because of her importunity, her insistence, he gave his word to avenge her.

What does this parable mean to us. Beloved, in the beginning, man's soul was married to the soul of God. We lived in a paradise of joy and delight, clothed in garments of light and righteousness until our adversary, fallen Lucifer in the form of the Serpent, stole our hearts away from God. He left us naked and destitute, widows in our souls. The Devil stole many priceless treasures from us. He stole our husband, our unity with God; he stole our peace and righteousness, and we will never recover these spiritual possessions unless we ask for them.

"...ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask and receive not, because ye ask amiss."

JAMES 4:2,3

God wants us to pray continually to the Righteous Judge for vengeance from our adversary. He wants us to cry, not out of a desire for self-exaltation and glory, but out of a sincere desire to know Him, to be married once again to His will.

Sin changed man leaving him corrupted and depraved. Sin, however, did not and cannot change God. He remains the same yesterday, today and forever. He was just as merciful to Adam, male and female, after they sinned as He was before they ate of the forbidden fruit. If the unjust judge avenged the widow when she persistently cried to him, will not God who is merciful and holy, avenge us when we cry to Him for our linen righteousness, for our paradise of unity, for our marriage union with His will?

#### **IV. GOD, THE JUST JUDGE**

The widow had a sincere faith, a consistent, immovable faith. In spite of her poverty, in spite of her adversary, and in spite of the unjust judge, the widow did not faint. She had an unfailing faith in natural justice. This parable should inspire faith in God's nature to render righteous judgment to those who choose to pray and not faint.

"And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of Man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

LUKE 18:7,8

D. LOOKS FOR WIDOW  
CLASS OF FAITH

B. BEAR LONG



C. SPEEDILY

A. WILL AVENGE OWN ELECT

**A. WILL AVENGE OWN ELECT**

If the unjust judge avenged one for whom he had no personal feelings, how much more will the just and holy God avenge His own elect in the natural and in the spiritual realms"

Egypt oppressed Israel for over 400 years before God said,

"....Israel is my son, even my firstborn: and I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn."

EXODUS 1:22,23

Beloved, God avenges His children. Let us not faint, therefore, when human adversaries seek to steal our Christian reputation or when they oppress and persecute us. Sooner or later our Father, our righteous Judge will avenge us. Our concern, then, should not be when others come to gnash upon us, but rather let us pray lest we become an adversary against any of God's elect. If we keep our relationship right with God, we can treat everyone else with love and compassion for His nature of righteousness and justice will be flowing through us.

"...which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?"

LUKE 18:7,8

**B. BEAR LONG**

Why does God bear long? Is He so weak that He must accumulate enough power to avenge us? Is He deaf that He cannot hear our cries? Of course not, Isaiah said,

"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that he cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear."

ISAIAH 59:1

Is God lacking in mercy? Does He take pleasure in watching His children suffer? Beloved, God's mercy is everlasting; It endureth forever. It is His mercy which causes Him to bear long with man.

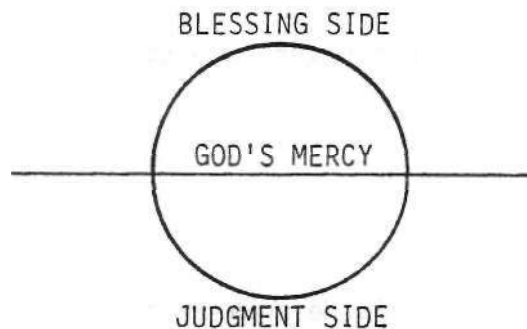
The Greek meaning of the word bear is to be long-spirited, forbearing, patient, bear or suffer long, have long patience, patiently endure. We know that God is unchanged by sin, but as human beings we are unable to make the same claim. All too frequently we react with many emotions that are not like Christ when someone hurt us. Through His long-suffering God accomplishes a twofold purpose. First, He gives us an opportunity to pray out all the malice and bitterness which comes up in our hearts against our adversary. Until we have a spirit of mercy and forgiveness toward our enemy, it is impossible for us to have unit with Him. The qualities of mercy and forgiveness are attributes of the nature of God; our fleshly nature prefers to hold a grudge. If God avenged us instantly, we might never deal with the wrong attitudes lurking in our carnal hearts. How faithfully God's principles work. Does His Word not say,

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin AT US, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"

I PETER 4:17

Beloved, when we cry to the righteous Judge for vengeance, we can expect His judgment to begin first with us. After praying and waiting on God, we come up with a right spirit toward God who permitted the suffering and a spirit of forgiveness for our adversary.

God's mercy is like a giant wheel which turns continually. Perhaps a drawing will be helpful here.



Failure to understand the heights and depths of God's mercy causes many people to accuse God's nature. They think He judges just because He is a mean, ugly God, but the truth is that His judgments are as much His mercy as His blessings are His mercy.

God's second purpose in bearing long is to give our human adversaries an opportunity to repent while they are still on the blessing side of God's wheel of mercy.

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

ROMANS 2:4

Although Satan, the Devil, the Serpent, and the Dragon is our adversary who has no place of repentance, we also have human adversaries and God gives space and time for these human adversaries to repent. God does not lift His presence and His blessing from us the very moment we sin, and neither does He pour judgment out on our human adversaries without giving them an opportunity to right their wrong behavior. Consider how useless it would be if God moved on our adversary to repent before He persuaded our hearts to forgive. God gives the Holy Ghost time to convict each heart and allows each individual time to repent willingly. If our human adversaries refuse to repent even after our heart is willing to forgive, then God moves to avenge.

#### C. SPEEDILY

"I tell you that he will avenge them speedily."

LUKE 18:8

God's mercy causes Him to bear long, giving ample opportunity for repentance, but when He avenges, He does it with the speed of lightning. Very quickly He moves the adversary from the blessing side of the wheel of mercy over to the judgment side. If God lacked the mercy to judge us, some might never come to repentance and thereby be doomed to eternity in hell. May we all learn from this parable to repent quickly while still on the blessing side of His mercy.

#### D. LOOKS FOR WIDOW CLASS OF FAITH

"...Nevertheless when, the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

LUKE 18:8

When the Bridegroom comes back, He will find many levels of faith in the hearts of the overcomers of the wedding party. He will, however, be looking for a special kind of faith, a faith which not every believer has. Although the wedding party, returns with Him to the marriage feast, they are not the reason Jesus comes back. He is coming back for His Bride. He will be looking for hearts with this widow class of faith. He will be searching for those who did not faint but knocked persistently and consistently on the just Judge's door until God avenged them of all the possessions that the Devil had stolen. Beloved the Bridegroom comes especially for His Bride. He looks especially for His Bride, and in her heart He finds the widow faith. In this life she cried like the widow. "Avenge me of my adversary," until her soul and spirit knew again perfect unity with the heart of her precious Bridegroom.

The Bride of Jesus Christ is not going to faint. When the Bridegroom returns, He finds her praying because she let Him form the pearly gate of ruling over prayerlessness in her heart. She let nothing keep her from prayer. If this gate is formed in our hearts we, too, can shut the gate against the adversary, against unpleasant circumstances, and open it wide, toward God in prayer.

Thus we have seen the first parable dealing with ruling over the lack of determination to- pray. To teach this truth Jesus said, "...men ought always to pray, and not to faint." He also gave an example parable of the widow crying to an unjust judge for vengeance. Because of her persistent faith the unholy, corrupt, rebellious judge finally said, "I will avenge." Hoping to inspire faith in God's nature, Jesus said for us to hear the words of the unjust judge. Beloved, God, the just and righteous Judge WILL avenge His elect though He bear long with them. Let us seek God until this gate of ruling over the lack of determination is formed in our hearts.

oOo

**RULING OVER PRAYERLESSNESS**

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others; Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for every one that exalteth himself shall be abused; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted"

LUKE 18:9-14

**IV. GOO'S VERDICT**



**I. SIMILARITY**

"Two men went up into the temple to pray ."

LUKE 18:10

By starting this parable with the similarities between the Pharisee -and the publican, Jesus closed all doors of accusation against God's righteous verdict. If one had been a child, some might have accused God of being partial, either to the child for his innocence or to the man for his maturity. On the other hand, if the humble one had been a woman, they might have said, "The judgment is unfair because it is easier for a woman to cry; it is easier for a woman to humble herself." But the Word of God says two men went up to the temple to pray.

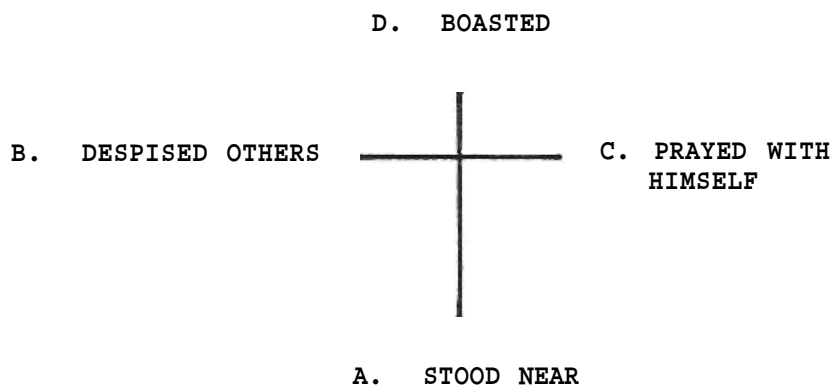
The temple stood on Mount Moriah. So, when Jesus said they went up, He meant that. Since this was before motorcycles and helicopters, they each

had to put forth effort to reach the temple. Both men took the same steps physically. They went to the same place with the same respect or purpose, which was to pray. This, however, is where the similarity ends, for the attitude, the approach, of each is very different.

**II. THE PHARISEE**

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess."

LUKE 18:11,12



**A. STOOD NEAR**

When the two men reached the temple, their paths parted. The temple, like the Tabernacle in the wilderness, had an outer court where the nation of Israel came to sacrifice and worship God, a holy place where the priests went daily to offer incense and worship, and a holy of holies where God's presence dwelt. Into this last place the Holy of Holies, the high priest could go only once a year on the day of Atonement. No Gentile convert to Judaism could ever enter even the outer court; they could go no further than the court of the Gentiles which lay outside the outer court of the temple. The Pharisee, then, left the publican in the court of the Gentiles and went to stand in the court of the temple. Physically, space-wise, the Pharisee could stand much closer to God. Moreover, he was a Jew by birth, which meant he grew up with God's Word being recited daily in his ears. Yet he allowed neither natural nor spiritual blessings to work humility in his heart. Trusting in himself, in his own righteousness and goodness, the Pharisee stood proudly in God's presence.

The spirit of trusting in self comes from the spirit of adultery which works in both the natural and the spiritual realms. When the spirit of natural adultery gets on a man it causes him to trust in himself. He

feels the power of that spirit and thinks he is the greatest, most attractive man of all time, the answer to every woman's prayer. It causes a woman to think that her beauty and charm makes her more alluring than any other. Neither realizes that all the power and beauty belong to the spirit of adultery coiled about their loins. And so it is in the spiritual realm. If the spirit of spiritual adultery is on us, we come before the Lord, like the Pharisee, trusting in our own righteousness, our own beauty, thinking even God will find us irresistible. Be not deceived, beloved, God has no problem recognizing the spirit of adultery in either the natural or spiritual realm.

**B. DESPISED OTHERS**

"... God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican."

LUKE 18:11

The Pharisee despised others by putting them lower than himself. He selected their worst traits and glibly denied the existence of these qualities in his own heart. He may have been innocent in the natural, but he stood guilty of spiritual adultery. Was he just to compare his righteousness with the wickedness of others? What caused him to require a greater measure of spirituality from the publican than he himself possessed? James says,

"But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors. For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."

JAMES 2:9,10

How often do we, as Christians, come before the Lord with wrong attitude toward others? Blinded by the spirit of pride, the spirit of spiritual adultery, we see all the outward sins of our brothers and sisters while ignoring the same spiritual sins in our own hearts. Beloved, it takes God's pearls of humility to rule over the wrong attitudes in our prayer life, the thing in us that thinks we are better or more spiritual than someone else.

**C. PRAYED WITH HIMSELF**

"The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself..."

LUKE 18:11

Prayer means to beseech God, to supplicate, to worship. The Pharisee climbed the mountain for the purpose of praying to God, but when he reached the temple, he prayed with himself. God's Word says that He knows the proud afar off (Psalm 138:6). Although the Pharisee stood near physically, God saw him afar off. The Pharisee was so entangled with the spirit of spiritual adultery, spiritual pride, and so in love with himself that he never realized that he was alone. Pride brought him to such degradation that he was oblivious and insensible to everything except himself. Nothing, including the loss of God's presence, broke through the wall of pride. Left with only self, he prayed with himself. What a miserable companion! Although he went through a ceremony, God never heard his proud prayer.

#### **D. BOASTED**

"I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess."

LUKE 18:12

Notice how he boasted. Never once did he say, "Lord I thank you for sparing me, for giving me life and strength, for blessing me to come into your house." He never said, "Lord, I thank you for salvation." He never recognized God as his Father, either naturally, as the Creator, or spiritually, as his personal Saviour. To the contrary, the Pharisee did nothing but boast and exalt himself. Apparently he hoped to convince God of his importance. "I'm not like other men. I'm something special, I'm different. I'm not like that publican."

People spend thousands of dollars to buy an original creation from Paris or the first automobile off the assembly line. Why? Because man still prides himself on being different. How foolish of the Pharisee to try to persuade anyone, least of all God, that he was different, that he was more holy than another. We all have the same father, Adam the first, who received his corrupted will from fallen Lucifer. We all inherited the same seeds of corruption from Adam, and apart from God's mercy, we are capable of any sin known to man. If we have any righteousness, any goodness, it comes directly from God. How, then, can any stand before the Lord and say, "I'm special?"

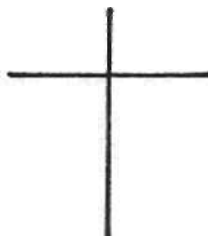
#### **III. THE PUBLICAN**

"And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner."

LUKE 18:13

**D. PLEADED FOR MERCY**

**B. DOWNCAST EYES**



**C. SMOTE BREAST**

**A. STOOD AFAR OFF**

**A. STOOD AFAR OFF**

How differently the publican approached God. None of the proud arrogance of the Pharisee tainted his prayer. The Jews considered a proselyte undeserving to come into the same court with them. Thus, by standing afar off in the court of the Gentiles, the publican made a visible demonstration that in his heart he accepted and agreed with the Jew's opinion of his unworthiness. In no way did he try to justify or elevate himself from the despised place. He made no claims of being worthy to stand in God's presence. Beloved, the Pharisee stood near and boasted great things of himself, yet his prayer went unheard. It is not WHERE we stand, but HOW we stand that draws the eyes of God. The same verse which says that the LORD knows the proud afar off also tells us that He had respect unto the lowly (Psalm 138:6). When the Lord looked down and saw the publican standing in the low place in his heart as well as literally, He began to take heed to him; He began to have respect for him.

**B. DOWNCAST EYES**

Downcast eyes symbolize humility. The Apostle Paul wrote,

"I will therefore that we pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety..."

I TIMOTHY 2: 8,9

In the Greek the word shamefacedness means downcast eyes, modesty toward man, awe or reverence toward God. The publican did not come in comparing himself with others as the Pharisee did, or flirting with God, as it were. He spent no time rolling his eyes trying to get God's attention. Instead, he stood humbly, reverently, with heart and eyes bowed before Him.

Beloved, our eyes are important. What we look upon is important. Many

years ago God taught me how to get broken before the Lord. I would put my face literally on the floor and with the eyes of my soul, I would imagine that I was at Calvary's Cross on Golgotha's hill. By faith, the eye of my spirit, I put my face on the dirt right below Jesus' feet. While kneeling there, I tried to feel those drops of blood as they fell from His feet. As I humbled myself in this manner, looking by faith at Jesus on Calvary's Cross, it would be only moments before tears of intercession and travail began to flow. Flirty, adulterous eyes of pride are never privileged to gaze upon such a sight.

#### **C. SMOTE HIMSELF**

The publican smote his breast as a demonstration that he was breaking his heart before God. Some historians say that this man was in agonizing tears and sobs. he was grief stricken before the Lord.

How wonderful it is when we learn how to break our hearts before Jesus. According to Isaiah 64:6, our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. We are spiritual paupers. We can never be good enough to merit His mercy, or can we ever pay for our transgression against God's Word and His holiness. Even if we suffered throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity, the debt of sin would remain. Yet all too frequently, we proudly approach God, trying to tell Him how good we have been instead of just breaking our hearts before Him.

King David learned the secret of a broken heart. After his sin with Bathsheba, he cried,

"Oh Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt-offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, to God, thou wilt not despise."

PSALM 51:15-17

Beloved, we, as King David and the publican, can offer Jesus a heart that is broken and repentant over our sins. Although this offering seems small and insignificant, it brings pleasure to the heart of God.

#### **D. PLEADED FOR MERCY**

All the proud words of the Pharisee went unheard, but the publican's cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," moved the heart of God. His Word tells us.

"The LORD taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in

those that hope in his mercy."

PSALM 147:11

God looked with pleasure upon the publican as he stood crying for mercy with bowed eyes and a broken heart. So many times we come before the Lord asking for mercy, for life, but we do not want our vessel, our heart broken. If we come humbly before God with a broken and contrite heart, weeping and trusting in His nature of mercy, beloved, God will hear and answer. The secret to answered prayer lies in the attitude in which we approach God.

#### IV. GOD'S VERDICT

"I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

LUKE 18:14

Through Jesus Christ, God gave His verdict for each man. Jesus said the Pharisee's prayer was rejected. What difference does our proud opinion of ourselves make? What good does our boasting and bragging accomplish if we are unheard, rejected, and abased by God? The publican, on the other hand, went away justified because God heard and accepted his cry of mercy.

"Surely," the carnal mind reasons, "God knew the Pharisee's prayer would go unanswered. Why, then, did He let him waste his time climbing the mountain and going through the motions of prayer if he intended to ignore his offering?" From the very beginning, God's mercy extended to both men. He gave each the same opportunity to go to the temple, each the same privilege of prayer. In fact, the Pharisee had some advantages which were denied to the publican. Each man made his own choice of how he approached God. The Pharisee had equal opportunity to humble his heart before the Lord. God's mercy gave him a chance to repent of his pride and break his heart before the Lord. God cannot forgive us of sins until we confess them and ask for His forgiveness.

So in one way the Pharisee held the key to his own justification. He, nevertheless, personally chose to cling to his pride. It is a great mystery to know the wickedness of people's hearts and still give them a change to do right. The ability to do this comes only through the merciful nature of God.

In this last parable on ruling over the wrong spirit in our prayer life, we saw the similarity between the Pharisee and the publican. Under the second point, the stature of the Pharisee, we saw how he stood near, despised others, prayed with himself and boasted. The publican's

approach, the third point, differed completely. He stood afar off with downcast eyes. He smote his breast and pleaded for mercy. The last major point showed God's verdict for each man. He rejected the prayer of the Pharisee and accepted the publican's prayer.

Beloved, may we learn from this approach the valuable lesson of ruling over our wrong attitudes in prayer. How we approach God makes the difference in whether we actually pray or simply go through a ceremony with ourselves.

This completes our study of the Twelve Gates of the New Jerusalem. The Bride of Jesus Christ will have twelve pearls of humility truth ruling over the doors of her heart. During her earthly journey she learned to rule over:-

1. The Word of God
2. Evil.
3. Shame.
4. Rebellion.
5. Possessions.
6. Unmercifulness.
7. Murmuring
8. Rejection.
9. Unfaithfulness.
10. Anxiety.
11. Unjust Judgment
12. Prayerlessness.

Beloved, if we want to shine with the pearls of His humility in eternity, we must pray for God to begin laying all twelve degrees of humility truth in our hearts now.