

THE MANIFESTATION OF THE KINGDOM (2)

Scripture Reading: Luke 19:11-27; Matt. 24:44-51; Luke 12:42-48; Matt. 19:28; 20:21-23; 2 Tim. 2:12a; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; 12:5; 20:4-6

As we have said previously, the Gospel of Matthew reveals three aspects of the kingdom of the heavens. In Matthew 5, 6, and 7 we see the reality of the kingdom. There the kingdom is revealed in a real, pure, and genuine manner. Those who are in the reality of the kingdom are poor in spirit, pure in heart, have the surpassing righteousness, do the will of God, and have become like little children. How pure and genuine the kingdom is in this portion!

The second section, however, in Matthew 13 has three terrible things: the tares, the great tree grown out of proportion, and the leaven added to the fine flour. There is a great contrast between these two sections. They are so different that it may seem these are two different kingdoms. But actually this is one kingdom with two aspects. The first aspect is **the reality of the kingdom**, and the second aspect is **the outward appearance of the kingdom**.

The last section of Matthew concerns **the manifestation of the kingdom** when the Lord Jesus will come back to the earth. [When the Lord Jesus comes back, He will bring the kingdom with Him, and that will be the manifestation of the kingdom.](#) The two parables in Matthew 25 are very significant. They show us that, at the manifestation of the kingdom, some of the saints will enter into the joy of the Lord, and others will not. In the parable of the ten virgins, the five prudent virgins will enter into the wedding feast, but the five foolish virgins will be shut out and sent to buy oil. This indicates that the five prudent virgins are living in the reality of the kingdom, but the five foolish ones are not. Then in the parable of the talents, the five-talented servant and the two-talented servant were able to enter into the joy of the Lord, but the one-talented servant was not. The servant with one talent missed the joy and also was put into darkness where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth. Please do not ask me where this darkness will be and what kind of darkness this will be. I cannot tell you. But I do know that we have such a word out of the Lord's mouth and such a word written in the Holy Scriptures. If you appreciate John 3:16, you must also appreciate Matthew 25:28-30. You cannot simply pick up some words of the Lord according to your own taste. This is what many Christians do. They pick up verses that fit their own concept. They like to quote John 3:16, but they rarely quote Matthew 25:28-30. We do need this gospel of the kingdom. John 3:16 is good for the matter of life, but today many Christians need to hear the gospel of the

kingdom. This is our great commission, not to preach baptism by immersion but to preach the gospel of the kingdom.

Some Christians today do not like to receive the book of Matthew, saying it relates only to the dispensation of the Jews. They say that Matthew is not written for Christians and Gentiles but for the Jews. However, if Matthew is not for us, then the Lord Jesus in chapter 1 is also not for us. Jesus, Jehovah the Savior, and Emmanuel, God with us, are not for us. It is not logical to say that the Lord Jesus in this book is only for the Jewish believers. In fact, in the church there is no Jew and no Greek (Col. 3:11). If we relegate this book to others, eventually we lose the Gospel of Matthew. It is really foolish to relegate the Gospel of Matthew to others and not to ourselves. If we love John 3:16, we must also love Matthew 25:28-30. If you hang a plaque of John 3:16 upon your wall, then surely you should also hang up a plaque of Matthew 25:28-30.

Do not argue in a doctrinal way concerning this matter. In your experience, do you have five talents, or two talents, or one talent? If you are in the third category having one talent, are you a faithful servant or not? You must realize that when the Lord Jesus returns, He will reckon with you. [What will your condition be when the Lord comes to settle the account?](#)

Because some say that Matthew is only for the Jews and not for us, we come now to the Gospel of Luke. In principle, what is mentioned in Luke is almost exactly the same. In Luke 19, while the religious people were expecting the kingdom of God to appear, the Lord Jesus spoke a parable to show them that it would not appear as they thought. Even in the Lord's word we can see the two aspects of the kingdom: [on the one hand, the kingdom of God was among them, and on the other hand, the kingdom of God was coming](#). Beginning in Luke 19:11, the Lord indicated that the kingdom was far away. A certain nobleman went to a distant country to receive the kingdom. [The distant country in this parable signifies the heavens where God the Father dwells](#). The Lord Jesus as the nobleman went to the distant country to receive the kingdom. This indicated to the Pharisees that the kingdom was not appearing but was far away. While the nobleman was gone into the distant country, he distributed his capital to his slaves so that they could do business for him. [The principles in this parable are exactly the same as those in Matthew 25](#). The first and the second slaves received praise from the nobleman and were given authority over ten cities and five cities respectively as a reward. This corresponds to Paul's word that we shall reign with Him (2 Tim. 2:12). To rule over the cities means to reign as a king.

The same concept is continued in the last book of the Bible, Revelation, where [the overcomers will be given the authority to rule over the nations](#) (2:26-27). They rule not only over the cities but also over the nations. Revelation 3:21 indicates [that the](#)

overcomers will sit upon the throne with the Lord Jesus and reign with Him. Finally, Revelation 20:4-6 tells us that the overcomers reigned with Christ as kings for a thousand years.

I am very concerned that we are all still under the influence of the traditional Christian teachings concerning these verses. It is difficult for us to realize the significance of these serious verses because we have been saturated with other kinds of teachings. Because of this, when we come to these verses, it is difficult for us to be impressed and to absorb them in a proper way. May the Lord have mercy upon us that our concepts could be purged and that our mind could be pure and easily impressed with the pure Word of God.

You must realize that Luke 19 and Matthew 24 and 25 are the word of God. First of all the Lord calls the slave a **wicked slave** (Luke 19:22). An unsaved person cannot be a slave of the Lord. Nor can an unsaved person receive anything as a gift from the Lord. But here the slave received one mina from the Lord. Because that wicked slave did not use the portion that the Lord had given him, the Lord took away that portion and gave it to the one who had ten portions. **This does not mean the slave lost his salvation, but it means he suffered a loss. What the Lord had given him was taken back.**

Let us also consider Matthew 24. Verses 47 through 51 read, “Truly I say to you that he will set him over all his possessions. But if that evil slave says in his heart, My master delays, and begins to beat his fellow slaves and eats and drinks with the drunken, the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know, and will cut him asunder and appoint his portion with the hypocrites. In that place there will be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.” The Word says that the master will cut him asunder. To cut asunder does not mean to kill. If he were killed, there would be no weeping and gnashing of teeth. To cut asunder is an ancient expression signifying a serious punishment. The slave is still alive because after he is cut asunder, he is able to weep and gnash his teeth. What are the weeping and the gnashing of teeth? I do not know, but I am certain that it will not be pleasant. I am also certain that I do not want to be there. **I am not here waiting upon the Lord to come back just to partake of the weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

Some dispensational teachers may say that this portion in Matthew is only for the Jewish people. Let us then read Luke 12, which not only mentions the same thing in principle but even in a more serious way. Verses 46 and 47 say that the master of that slave “will cut him asunder, and will appoint his portion with the unbelievers. And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not prepare or do according to his will, will receive many lashes.” **The fact that the slave knew his master’s will proves it refers to a saved person.** How could any unsaved person know the Lord’s will?

Surely this is a saved one. That slave who knows his Lord's will but who does not prepare or do according to His will, will receive many lashes. What are the lashes? I have no idea, but **surely it will be a kind of punishment and will not be pleasant**. Do you like to be beaten? You may say that this is only a parable; this is not a real beating. But either way it is not something that will cause you to be happy and joyful.

The Lord went on to say that the slave who knew not and yet committed things worthy of stripes will receive few lashes. "But to everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required from him; and to whom much has been committed, they will ask of him all the more" (v. 48). On the one hand, it is the mercy of God to be clear concerning these matters, but on the other hand, it eventually becomes a great responsibility. You need to pray over the pure word of God in these verses and consider where you are. Are you certain that you are any better than this evil slave? You may say that you cannot bear this kind of responsibility. But the Lord Jesus never asked you to bear it. Rather, the Lord's attitude is that He demands, and He also supplies. **The only problem is that we would not take His supply. His grace is sufficient. Whenever we are weak, we are powerful. We should rather boast in our weaknesses, because at that time we can enjoy Christ as our sufficient grace (2 Cor. 12:9-10).** There are no excuses. Do not say that you cannot make it. If you do, the Lord Jesus will ask whether or not He was in you. He will ask you why you did not enjoy Him and apply Him to your situation and need. At that time, what will you say? All you can say is, "Lord, I didn't want to apply You." Then the Lord Jesus will say, "You are an evil, wicked slave." These are not my words. These are the words of the Lord Jesus concerning the manifestation of the kingdom.

When the Lord Jesus returns and the kingdom is manifested, He will exercise His judgment over all the Christians. He will not judge the worldly people first but His own people. According to the parable of the ten virgins, if we are the foolish ones, we will miss the enjoyment of the wedding feast. The Lord has made this very clear. Moreover, according to the parable of the talents, we will not only miss something, but we will suffer something. It is not just a matter of missing something, but it is also a matter of suffering some punishment. Do not say that as long as you are saved, it is sufficient. As far as the eternal security of your salvation is concerned, it surely is sufficient. But before eternity there will be the time of the millennial kingdom. At the beginning of the millennial kingdom, the Lord will exercise His judgment over all of us, His believers, to decide whether or not we should be allowed to go into the wedding feast and into the reigning of the kingdom, into His joy. Also, He will decide whether or not we should suffer some punishment. This is not a small thing. **If we are living in the reality of the kingdom today, when the Lord Jesus comes back, He will invite us into the manifestation of the kingdom, and we will receive the**

reward. If not, we will miss the reward of the wedding feast, and we will suffer some punishment.

Matthew 19 tells us something further concerning the reigning and ruling aspect of the kingdom. It tells us that when the Lord Jesus will reign during the millennium, His apostles such as Peter, James, and John will also reign with Him. Matthew 5, 6, and 7 do not cover the reigning aspect. They only cover the reality of the kingdom life. In like manner, Matthew 13 does not cover the reigning and the ruling in the kingdom. Rather, it covers the appearance of the kingdom, including a great tree, the tares, and the leaven. But in Matthew 19:28 there is something further; that is, when the Lord Jesus comes to be the King, His apostles will be co-kings. This will not be merely the reality of the kingdom but the manifestation of the kingdom. From this we can see that there are three aspects of the kingdom—**the reality, the appearance, and the manifestation of the kingdom**. Matthew 20 also indicates the same thing. It indicates that during the time when the Lord reigns in His kingdom, some will sit with Him and reign with Him. This is not the reality or the appearance of the kingdom but the manifestation of the kingdom. In the manifestation of the kingdom, some will reign with Him. This is confirmed by 2 Timothy 2:12, which says that we shall reign with Him.

Now we come to the last book of the New Testament, Revelation. Here we see the harvest. **The seed of the kingdom was sown in Matthew, and the harvest is in the book of Revelation.** In Matthew there is the seed of being co-kings with Christ, and in Revelation there is the harvest of being co-kings with Christ. **All those faithful ones, the martyrs, will be raised up, resurrected, and will be co-kings with Christ ruling over the earth for a thousand years (20:4-6).** This is surely not the appearance or the reality of the kingdom but the manifestation of the kingdom.

We all need to receive **the gospel of the kingdom**. We received **the gospel of life and the gospel of grace**, but we also must receive the gospel of the kingdom. One day the kingdom will be manifested. Whether we will be included or shut out of that manifestation is not a small thing. We all need to repent and consecrate ourselves to deal with this matter of the kingdom.

(The Kingdom, Chapter 37)