

27th May – David Loke – The Ten Minas

Anyone watched the royal wedding? Did you see Harry and Meghan get married 2 weeks ago? [Wasn't it lovely? The service was beautiful. The people were thronging, lining the street leading up to the cathedral. People were in a joyous mood. It was a sun soaked day, romance in the air. Even if you were like me, you had to come back to watch snippets of it.

Did you watch the part where, the priest officiating the marriage asked them if anyone have any reason that the marriage should not happen? Awkward silence... right? What is someone stood up and said... well no, it's not time yet. They just can't get married. The marriage has to be postponed till next year!

Imagine the turmoil. The rage. The confusion. The crowds would go wild. What would channel 9 do with there ad free wedding broadcast!?

It's hard to understand how you want to delay such a good thing when can have it right now! But yet, we see Jesus telling this parable in Luke 19 to wait. The kingdom is coming but not yet!.

Let us turn to this parable of the ten minas. The key to understanding it is in NIV verse 11 "he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once." You see the people thought the kingdom was about to come all at once. They thought the Messiah has come and the kingdom is coming very, very soon! Nevertheless, there is going to be a delay. The nobleman in v12 in no doubt is Jesus and he is going away to be made king and then only after that is he going to return.

The kingdom of god is not coming back right away. Jesus is clear of that. Jesus died and gone to heaven but he will most definitely come back again. There is going to be a second coming of Jesus where all will live again and will be judged. Listen. Everyone here and those who are already dead will be judged by God.

2 Corinthians 5:10 (NIV)

10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

But friends, thankfully, there is a delay. We won't be judged just yet. The clock hasn't run out yet. We don't know when he is going to come back but he will.

a) **What instruction did the nobleman give to his servants before he left?** I mean these instructions are very important.

So, Jesus or rather the nobleman leaves not just instructions for his 10 servants, but he leaves them 1 mina each. Now what's a mina? A mina is 3 months pay. Ok so let's say you earn 50,000 bucks a year. And one mina is 3 months pay... how much do you think 1 mina is? Anyone give it a guess. Don't pull a hernia doing it. Right so let's say in today's terms, nobleman gives each servant 12,500 bucks Aussie dollars and they are instructed to put the money to use until the nobleman comes back. Ok so the servants are asked to take stewardship of the money, of the nobleman's money, not the servant's money but the nobleman's money until he comes back.

Notice a few key things. 10 servants are given the job of looking after the money. It's not 12 servants but 10.

12 might have meant the 12 disciples. So those in leadership. No it's not just those in leadership are to be good stewards. It's just normal people. Everybody. Everybody has to be a good steward for God. You know there's a principle that says that 20 percent of the people do 80 percent of the work. It's a rule of thumb. I don't know if it's true for the church. I did a little research about church involvement called the religious landscape study. High involvement means going to church weekly and attending prayer meeting or bible study groups. The Anglican church had high involvement at 26 percent. Assembly of God 50 percent, and Mormon and Jehovah Witness is at 67 and 64 percent respectively. What do you think our church involvement is like? Friends, good stewardship is not just about going to this or that meeting. It's much more. It's about about our whole lives wrapped up in God. To be totally sold out, given our to Jesus.

Do you notice that each of the servants are given the same amount. They all get 1 mina each. What do you think the mina represents in the parable? It can't be just money because clearly everyone is not given the same monetary resources. It's not talent or ability as you see I don't play the piano at church. Emily does. I believe this mina deposit is God's gospel in your life. It's the greatest gift given to us that we need to give an account for. Nothing in all this world can compare with the grace and power of the gospel working in us. But with great power comes great responsibility.

Sometimes I have a day off work and my wife tamara has got to slave away at work. If tamara been slogging the whole day at work, and told me beforehand to have a meal ready for kids tonight and comes back late in the evening, and nothing been cooked, I would be in big trouble! Imagine the scene.

Have u been on the computer all day? Have u been reading Pride and Prejudice the whole day? Imagine the scandal of it all. Husbands, if you are smart, I'll let you in on a little secret. Not that I do it... but imagine the brownie points, if she comes back to the wafting smell of on an apple crumble along with a nicely sautéed stew with a delicious avocado salad? I mean we are talking about congressional medal efforts here. Friends, how much more important we should be good stewards of our time, money and life that God has given us, while our Lord is seemingly absent.

b) When Jesus comes back there will be a judgment.

Now we got 3 sets of judgments here in the parable. Let's look closely at each one.

1) the first category are for those who are busy being productive for the master.

They worked on that mina, perhaps investing it wisely. Perhaps even doing some buying and selling business with it. Whatever it was the first two servants did good.

Let me give you my dramatized version of the parable.

First guy rocks up to the king.

Servant: Here's 10 minas, O King. You gave me one but I lay down 10 minas for you.

King: 10 minas! Good job faithful servant. You know what. I don't have to but because you been faithful with what I have given you, I'm going to give you 10 cities to take charge of!

Wow! Some of the guards or advisors must be like... what!?!?! This guy put \$12500 dollars to work... sure he did a good job getting 10 fold return... but the king is going to give him 10 cities to look after! What u gonna give him Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane.... but are you giving him Waitara too!?!?!

10 cities wow... just for making use of 12,500 bucks.

Then the 2nd servant comes up. He made 5 minas for the king. So the king reward him 5 cities!

That's just too much... how can you give such a disproportionate reward. He did this much but you give him that much reward!? That unbelievable. That's incredible. Sound familiar friends? That's the grace of God. If you think experiencing the grace of God now is already pretty good. Wait till you get to heaven. According to this parable. There will be an accounting of what you done in this life and then a reward for what you have done.

Please remember though that you are saved by trusting Jesus alone. You cannot get to heaven by doing God's work. The parable is hinting at reward for faithfulness in doing God's work.

When you look at creation, how everything is so ordered and how humans were given the task to subdue the earth. To enjoy it, to work it and enjoy the fruits of labour. To harness the resources of the earth to build great things. When we look at nature even in its present corrupted state, we can see the marks of God's glory in it. There is a purpose and function in creation that cries out there is a God and there is purposefulness in nature.

My personal view is I think there is a glorious new heaven and earth that is purposeful and we will have a place to play in it. This parable hints at it. Don't for a moment think we will be there 10000 years just playing the harp and singing endless reruns of 'Amazing grace.' No friends, I suspect there is a glorious, intriguing, incredible future that we can only just see a hint of now. A scratching of the surface only now of the glorious wonder that is coming. The parable suggest that there is some sort of responsibility like being in charge of the cities. Whether it's literal or metaphorical I don't know. But a great purpose award awaits us I suspect. But most importantly, is to consider the disproportionateness nature of the reward and to what the servant did. 5 cities... 10 cities for being faithful in working on 12,500 dollars. How good is that!? How great and gracious is our lord.

II) **Second category of judgment: Didn't do anything**

what then of the next servant when he came up to be judged?

You could imagine it happening like this. This is my dramatized version.

Servant: "Err... here's your mina that you gave me. I got it in my handkerchief... I didn't want to do anything with it."

"I ... I thought you were a hard man, You know like take out what you didn't put in and you just reap other people's work. So I just put it in a handkerchief. Here you go."

King: You didn't do a thing. Not a single thing!? You knew I was a hard man did you? Why didn't u give it to the money changers to work on it for you!? At least I'll get interest on it.

Friends, Don't be that servant before the angry King. Now only did he not do anything with the investment given to him. He insulted the king. He said that he was horrible manager, a disingenuous thieving ungracious king! In fact, the king was extraordinarily gracious.

What are you going to say when you go before the judgment seat of Christ?

It just gets too hard when you got kids/grandchildren. You got to take them everywhere to get ahead. It's very cut throat here in Sydney. I mean, yea if it's Melbourne, it okay. I could have been more faithful. But here in Sydney, one kid has to go to choir on Mondays. Tuesdays you got taekwondo. Wednesday I got to take them to chess club. Thursday, there's Chinese. Friday, well there's tennis. Saturday, there's soccer. And I'm the coach! And Sunday... well u

know we used to go to church and I know bible tells us not to stop meeting together... but on Sunday they have this new exciting thing for the kids. There's horse archery! I couldn't miss that!

Friends, do you think any excuse is going to wash with God? In the parable, what little he has was taken away and given away to the person with 10 cities. The servant ended with nothing.

Listen to 1 cor 3:10-15 niv. It resonates with this parable.

But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. **12** If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, **13** their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. **14** If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. **15** If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

Friends, it's not about squeezing another 5 percent out of you. It's not about wringing another few drops of blood from the stone. This parable is not a guilt trip to get you to give a little bit more at collection. It's not to goad you into contributing at morning tea. It's not even to harangue you to come to my bible study group. It's so much more.

We are thinking too small. We think to work harder, serve better, give harder from an already barren well. But friends, if I could encourage you to remember like in the parable that the investment deposit was given by the master. It has a life and fire of its own. We need to learn to nurture it and build on this sure foundation that has been laid up in us.

I saw cast yourself into the immeasurable, immense ocean that is God. He is the giver and provider of all things. He promised streams of living water that overflow from us. He gives us the finances, energy, resources, ability to do his work to share his gospel, to give his money to his purposes. Out of the overflow of heart we give.

Colossians 1:29 (ESV)

For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

I avail myself by prayer to let Christ work in me to do his work. Remember the parable. It is his mina, his deposit in us that does the work. Let go and let God.

III) **Third category of judgment: Reject God as King.**

Finally, we come to those who hated the king, who didn't want him to be king. They are his enemies. In the parable, they are killed. Bible tells us that those who don't believe in Jesus will be forever separated from God.

We are God's enemies if we don't trust him because of our sin, God's anger is against us. We are his enemies. But thanks to Jesus, who died for our sins so that we can be friends with God again.

I am talking about personally believing in him as personal Lord and Saviour and committing your life to him.

Then you will receive this deposit. It is the fruit of the gospel, the unshakeable, seal of the Holy Spirit that will be given to you if you say 'yes' to him. If he is calling you, if you can feel it. Just say yes to him. Trust him. Then you will understand what it means to God's work from the overflow of God's abounding grace to us. To be a good steward unto God because he works in us to accomplish his purposes. So that, when we meet him in heaven, Jesus will say "Well

done, good and faithful servant.”

let's pray. father, help us lord to not try harder in our own strength but give us your strength and grace so that we can joy and power to do your work. Amen.

do yovive, and go about doing your father's work with all your strength and with all your energy. Amen