

THE SERVANTS BEFORE THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

BIBLE TEXT : Luke 12:35-57

LESSON 45 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "For we must all appear before the Judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body" (II Corinthians 5:10).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Luke 12:35-57

³⁵ Let your loins be girded about, and *your* lights burning;

³⁶ And ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately.

³⁷ Blessed *are* those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching: verily I say unto you, that he shall gird himself, and make them to sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them.

³⁸ And if he shall come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and find *them* so, blessed are those servants.

³⁹ And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through.

⁴⁰ Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.

⁴¹ Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?

⁴² And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his* lord shall make ruler over his household, to give *them* *their* portion of meat in due season?

⁴³ Blessed *is* that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

⁴⁴ Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I The Servants' Readiness for Their Lord's Return

1. He exhorts them to an alert spirit with loins girded and lights burning, Luke 12:35, 36;

Matthew 25:6-7

⁶ And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.

⁷ Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps..

2. Blessed are the watchful when their **Lord appears at an unknown** hour, Luke 12:37, 38;

John 14:2

² In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

John 14:3

³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also.

3. They must continually be watchful, not knowing what hour their Lord may come, Luke 12:39, 40;

Mark 13:37

³⁷ And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

Song of Songs 5:2

² I sleep, but my heart waketh: *it is* the voice of my beloved that knocketh, *saying*, Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, *and* my locks with the drops of the night.

II Judgment Pronounced According to Service Rendered

1. Peter asks whether Jesus spoke only to them or to all, Luke 12:41, 42;

Mark 13:37

³⁷ And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

2. The faithful and wise servant is to be made steward over all the house, Luke 12:43, 44;

2 Timothy 2:12

¹² If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him*, he also will deny us:

3. The servant who said in his heart, "My lord delayeth his coming," is cut asunder, Luke 12:45, 46;

Revelation 21:8

⁸ But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

3. To whom much is given, of him shall much be required, Luke 12:47, 48;

Matthew 21:28-31

²⁸ But what think ye? A *certain* man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard.

²⁹ He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went.

³⁰ And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I *go*, sir: and went not.

³¹ Whether of them twain did the will of *his* father? They say 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.

⁴⁵ But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;

⁴⁶ The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers.

⁴⁷ And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*.

⁴⁸ But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few *stripes*. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.

⁴⁹ I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

⁵⁰ But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

⁵¹ Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

⁵² For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

⁵³ The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

⁵⁴ And he said also to the people, When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is.

III Divisions and Not Peace in Families

1. He came to send fire on the earth, which fire was already kindled, Luke 12:49

2. The baptism of which Jesus speaks was to be the sufferings through which He must go to purchase redemption, Luke 12:50;

Luke 22:44

⁴⁴ And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Matthew 26:38-39

³⁸ Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me.

³⁹ And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt.

4. He came not to bring peace on earth, but divisions, Luke 12:51;

Matthew 10:34

³⁴ Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.

John 7:12

¹² And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

John 7:43

⁴³ So there was a division among the people because of him.

5. A man's foes shall be they of his own household, Luke 12:52, 53;

Matthew 10:35-36

³⁵ For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

³⁶ And a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

Matthew 10:21-22

²¹ And the brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child: and the children shall rise up against their parents, and cause them to be put to death.

²² And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved.

IV The Spiritual Signs of the Times

1. Men are mentally keen to discern the signs which predict the weather, Luke 12:54, 55;

Matthew 24:32

³² Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh:

Matthew 24:33

³³ So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, *even* at the doors.

2. But they are spiritually dull to discern the signs of the times, Luke 12:56, 57;

Matthew 16:1-4

¹ The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.

² He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, *It will be fair weather*: for the sky is red.

³ And in the morning, *It will be foul weather* to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?

⁴ A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.

NOTES:

In another portion of the Word we read, "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

⁵⁵ And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass.

⁵⁶ Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?

⁵⁷ Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" (I Peter 4:17, 18).

It is obvious from these verses, as well as from many other passages of Scripture, that not only shall the ungodly and the sinner appear before God in judgment, but the righteous also. The Apostle Paul was speaking of the righteous when he said, "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).

The righteous, however, is not to be called to an account of his sins. They have been sent on before. But he will be called to an account in respect to the kind of service he has rendered for his Master. And this is what Jesus was teaching, as recorded in Luke, where He likens His disciples to servants.

His own, every one, shall appear before His judgment seat and the service of each shall be subjected to a thorough examination - not only what he has done, but how he has done it. For he is serving an "austere man," Who wants to know whether the work is being done with an eye single to His glory; and whether it is rendered grudgingly or joyfully. "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 17:10). The Apostle John in exile saw the glorified Christ in the midst of the candlesticks, and the candlesticks were the churches. Nothing escapes His all-seeing eye.

Those servants whose loins were girded and whose lights were burning, and who were waiting for their lord's return, opened the door immediately when he knocked. And of them Jesus said, "Blessed are those servants, whom the lord when he cometh shall find watching." An acceptable service must be rendered with watchfulness and prayer, that we may be ready at any moment for our Lord's return. For had the goodman of the house known in what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. So is the coming of the Lord -- like a thief in the night. And no thief announces his coming. "Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not."

Again Jesus speaks of the servant who said, not verbally, but only in his heart, "My lord delayeth his coming." And he began to beat the men-servants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and be drunken. And many become intoxicated just with the cares and pleasures of this life and the deceitfulness of riches. Well, this servant, when his lord came, was cut asunder and his portion was with the unbelievers.

Jesus also said, "Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." The "much" which He has given His disciples in this present world is all the heavenly treasure bestowed upon them through the Gospel -- the priceless experiences of justification, sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and the perfecting work which follows, making them ready for that heavenly Kingdom. Are these things given that we may just fold our hands and enjoy the blessings rained upon us? They are not. God gives these things, not only that we ourselves may be prepared for Heaven, but that we may be used of Him, during our earthly pilgrimage, to help others get ready. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, in particular, is the enduement of power for service. And we are going to be called to an account before the judgment seat of Christ for the use we have made of the talents bestowed upon us.

At this point Jesus brought up another thought for us to consider: "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I

tell you, Nay; but rather division." To some this may seem entirely inconsistent with Jesus' mission to the world, announced by that angelic host at His birth, "On earth peace, good will toward men." But it is not. He indeed came to bring peace, but no man will ever obtain one little of that peace until he makes an unconditional surrender to the Prince of Peace. And that means a complete separation from the world, the flesh, and the devil. But there are multitudes who will not pay that price. And anyone who purposes at all costs to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ need not be at all surprised when he meets with opposition. He may come in conflict with his employer or lose his job. He may meet with the opposition of his closest friends and lose them. And it may even come closer to home than that, and cause division in his own house, with father, mother, brothers, and sisters, and his own wife, too, set against him. This is the "fire" of which Jesus spoke as already kindled. He is sure to meet with the opposition of those who refuse to pay the price. And when it comes close to his heart, the question may arise, Will he pay the price? Somewhere along the line we will all have that question to answer.

Another point, which Jesus brings up has to do with the signs of His coming. The Jews of His day were very keen to observe the signs which predicted the weather. But the innumerable signs that pointed to their Messiah Who was walking among them, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf - they were too dumb to see these signs, too stupid to know that the Kingdom of Heaven was at hand. The Prophet Isaiah spoke the truth concerning this people: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

And today signs upon every hand are proclaiming loudly that that same Messiah is coming again, and coming soon. Yet the people of today are as unconcerned as were the Israelites of old. These signs are also proclaiming the doom of this world. The Gospel is the only solution, and without it the world is going down -- and so is every man who refuses to obey it.

"But ye, brethren," wrote the Apostle Paul, "are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness." Then let us as servants of the Lord Jesus Christ walk in the light as He is in the light. Jesus is coming soon!

QUESTIONS

1. For what are the saints to be judged?
2. Who renders the judgment?
3. When does the judgment of the saints take place?
4. What are the "talents" for which the saints are held accountable?
5. To what kind of saints are the rewards given?
6. Where are these rewards distributed?
7. Who do the "servants" and the "lord" in Luke 12 typify?
8. For what kind of works only are the saints rewarded?
9. What happens to the servant who fails of his examination at the judgment?
10. When and where will the judgment of the sinners take place?