

1Tim 24-03-24a

Good morning, it is Sunday morning here at Grace & Truth Bible Church. This is traditionally known as Palm Sunday. You know, my personal appellation for this day is Face Palm Sunday, or instead of the triumphal entry, it is the tragic entry.

This is that day. There's a curious offset this year because this is one of the years where the Jews have inserted an extra month, so Passover is still a couple of weeks away. Normally, Resurrection Sunday and Passover coincide, and the Passion Week leads right up in the days of the month Nisan.

But in terms of Christian observance, this is Palm Sunday, and we're going to look at what the Lord Jesus was saying and doing in the run-up to this upcoming week, a very fulsome time. And some things, as many times as we have looked at this, there are always more things to discover and to try to understand and put into application in our lives. So we're going to see something we have not seen before, at least I haven't seen it before.

But let's ask God's blessing on our fellowship and study, and then we'll begin. Father, how grateful we are for the privilege of coming into Your presence, being Your children. We have access to Your throne through the Lord Jesus Christ, our high priest, our Savior, the one who sits even now at Your right hand and represents us and intercedes for us.

We're grateful for the privileges we enjoy in this age as members of the body of Christ. We thank You for the fellowship that we enjoy, the gifts that You've given to each one of us, and the blessings that we receive as we spend time together in fellowship. We pray that as we fellowship this morning together in Your Word, that the Holy Spirit will bless it to our hearts, bless it to our spiritual nourishment, help us to be strengthened and encouraged and motivated to live what remains to us of this life in a way that pleases You and glorifies the Lord Jesus.

We ask it in His name. Amen. So this time is recorded in all four Gospels, specifically what is traditionally known as the Palm Sunday event, the big parade, the Lord Jesus riding a donkey into Jerusalem, to the sound of hosannas, coats and palm branches being thrown in the path.

And we're going to look this morning at the preceding time as Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem to accomplish this particular circumstance, this particular approach and entrance into Jerusalem. So if you'll turn with me to Luke chapter 19. Luke chapter 19.

This relates directly to two aspects of our recent studies. One is the kingdom of God. What is the nature of the kingdom of God? What is the timing of its implementation? To what extent do we view Jesus as King? This past week I was once again surveying the mainstream of post-modern Christianity and over and over again heard people extolling

King Jesus and our role as kingdom workers and kingdom people who are bringing about various aspects of the kingdom.

And there certainly is a kingdom and the Lord Jesus certainly is its King. But it's important for us to understand exactly how we relate to that. And misunderstanding it is something Jesus is going to address directly in our passage.

So beginning in Luke chapter 19, Jesus is on His way to Jerusalem and He's passing through Jericho. And this, by the way, is the same occasion in the other gospels where you have the healing of blind Bartimaeus and his companion. Remember the passage into and out from Jericho and Jesus makes a way stop there.

And in Jericho, entering and passing through Jericho, and you have the story of Zacchaeus. We're not going to dwell on it except to note that people who saw Jesus invited to Zacchaeus' house, accepting that invitation, going to the house and sharing a meal with Him, and staying at His house. In verse 7, people saw it and complained saying, He's gone to be a guest with a man who is a sinner.

Being a tax collector by definition, you are a sinner because you're implementing a confiscatory system. You're a part of institutional problems. And so Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, Look, Lord, I give half my goods to the poor.

And if I've taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold. Look at what Jesus says in verse 9. We were looking at the concept of sonship this past Wednesday. Whose son are you? Whose son are we? Is it physical descendancy or is it resemblance, likeness and image? What does Jesus say? Today, salvation has come to this house because He also is a son of Abraham.

Now, what does that mean? It aren't all the Israelites sons of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the tribes and so on. Why does Jesus say this? Zacchaeus, the tax collector, salvation has come to this house because he is a son of Abraham. Does he get salvation automatically because of his lineal descendancy through some tribe? Why has salvation come to Zacchaeus's house? First and foremost, Jesus is salvation in person and he has come to the house.

But secondly, Jesus says he's a son of Abraham. Paul goes to great lengths talking about the son of the bondwoman and the son of the free woman. Abraham was the father of both Ishmael and Isaac.

But we are all sons of Abraham, Paul says, by faith. To be a son of Abraham. Did you know you are a son of Abraham, even though you're most likely not Jewish? You're a son of Abraham.

And by son, of course, that comprehends women, men, old, young. We are all sons of Abraham by faith. Zacchaeus has proved out his sonship.

He's a lineal physical descendant, but now he is a son indeed. And we'll continue our sonship study this coming Wednesday. But I just wanted to point out that Jesus only speaks twice at Zacchaeus.

First time, he says, Zacchaeus, make haste and come down out of the sycamore tree, because I'm going to your house. And secondly, he says, salvation has come. He's a son of Abraham.

For the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. A lot of implications there. Jesus is sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

On this particular mission, at this particular time, he's not looking for goats. He's not looking for Gentiles. He is sent to the lost sheep.

The sheep belong to the owner already, but they have strayed from the fold. Jesus is calling Israel, the people of God, back to their covenant obligations and back to recognition that God is now prepared to fulfill his Old Testament promises, kingdom promises, land promises, freedom promises, prosperity promises. The kingdom of God has come near.

Repent. The kingdom is at hand and Jesus is the king of that kingdom. But there's an issue of timing, which is what we're going to see this morning.

After this, Jesus spoke a parable. Look at this parable beginning in verse 11. As they heard these things, evidently this is either at Zacchaeus' house or very shortly after, because as they heard Jesus talking about the faith of Zacchaeus, he spoke another parable.

Why? This is so important. Context is everything. He was nearing Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.

What is about to happen on this Sunday? Four days before the crucifixion. What's about to happen? He is going to go into Jerusalem and be hailed as the son of David, Hosanna, and so on. Welcoming in a royal procession.

Behold, your king comes lowly riding on the foal of a donkey. The Old Testament prophecy. That's about to happen.

So what would you conclude if you were in and around Jerusalem and suddenly you see everybody yelling and there's palm branches and clothing and Hosanna, here's the son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord and so on. What would you think? Well, this Jesus, he's been saying the kingdom is near and here he comes.

He's going to come into Jerusalem. This is the capital city that his father David established. It's kingdom time, right? But what does Jesus preview, preload, front load

before he ever gets onto the donkey? He tells this parable because he's near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.

All of the king and kingdom stuff is true, but what is the timing? What is the timing? So a certain nobleman went into a far country. This is going to be the parable of the minas. I think in the King James, it's the parable of the pounds.

It has been compared to a similar parable in Matthew 25, which is the parable of the talents. The difference between a mina and a talent is pretty substantial. A talent is about 55 pounds of precious metal.

So when Jesus talks about the nobleman who's going to go on a trip and he gives five talents to the first of his servants, five times 55 is what? 275 pounds of silver, let's say. 275, I don't know how many ounces that is. I think silver is going for \$24, \$25 an ounce right now, but that is a huge trust.

A mina, on the other hand, is worth about 200 denarii. A denarius was a day's wage, so figure two-thirds of what somebody would make in a year. So let's say you're kind of on the, with inflation, I hardly know what a fair wage estimate is now, but suppose it's \$50,000 or \$40,000, somewhere in there for an annual wage.

So I'm going to say 36 as an annual wage so that I can get two-thirds of it and say that this is roughly \$25,000, \$25,000 or \$30,000 is a mina. So here's what he does. A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

This is not an element that's in the parable of the talents. This kingdom aspect with all of the associated elements is unique here. He's going to a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

Now this happened both with Herod the Great, who had to go to Caesar, and Caesar had to formally declare that he would be the king of Judea and then return. This is the Herod that was prevalent in the days when Jesus was born. He's going to die just within a few years of Jesus' birth.

And then Archelaus, the son of Herod the Great, who is the current Herod king of Judea. Archelaus had to travel to Rome to receive the kingdom and then to return. Well, you could imagine there were people in Judea.

This is very fresh in their minds. They're not interested in Archelaus ruling over them. And they will send after him and say, we don't want this guy.

Pick somebody else. We don't like him. So this is like current events.

This is topical. When Jesus brings this up, they say, oh right, we've seen this happen. So he's going to a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

Notice the element here, among other things, to receive a kingdom means that there is an over king. There is an emperor above this king. There is somebody with even more authority, the authority to grant him a kingdom.

So in spiritual terms, if Jesus is the one going away to receive a kingdom and return, who is the one granting to him that kingdom? It's God the Father. That's who's in view by way of parallel. So as he is going, he is going to be gone a while.

And so he calls 10 of his servants and he says, I'm going to give you a trust. And I want you to exercise this trust while I'm gone. Now, nothing about these minas, as in the parable of the talents, nothing is associated with or related to the kingdom.

He doesn't say, I want you to do something with these minas so that we can have a better kingdom when I get back. This is something that he already has. And he's talking to these servants personally, because they're in his immediate periphery.

It's going to be different when he comes back. We'll see it. So he calls these servants to himself and delivers to them 10 minas.

10 servants, 10 minas. This isn't three servants with five, three, and one. This is 10 guys with 10 minas, one each, right? And a much smaller amount than a talent.

So delivered them 10 minas and said, do business until I come. This business is the normal nobleman's activities. They don't have to ask questions.

What kind of business do you want us to do? What he has been doing from the beginning. This is not kingdom business. It's just business.

I'm giving you a trust. I want you to invest it. I want you to parlay it.

I want you to leverage it. I want you to do something with it. So the principle here is while the nobleman is gone, he has entrusted some of his resources to his servants and he wants them to use it.

He doesn't say keep it. He doesn't say preserve it. He says, do business, make something happen with these minas.

This is the key, by the way, make something happen. That's the command. Make something happen until I come, 14.

But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him saying, we will not have this man to reign over us. So this is a different aspect of the departure. He is going away to receive the kingdom and these people say, we want nothing to do with this guy.

So it was that when he returned in verse 15, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him. Do

you see the difference? He summoned his servants the first time personally. Now he is the king.

So he's got minions. He's got factotai. He's got lackeys who will go get these servants because he's the king.

He's got a retinue. He's got pages and a cabin and all of that. He's got a whole army of servants now.

And he says, go find the servants that I entrusted these minas to. So he commanded these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him that he might know how much every man had gained by trading. What was their mission? Gain by trading, do business, invest what I'm giving you and multiply it.

So then came forth the first saying, master, your mina has earned 10 minas. This is a great return. Wouldn't you like to be able to put \$1,000 in the bank and wait a while and come back and there's 11,000, this mina has earned 10 minas.

So he's got a total of 11, right? There's a math element here that I was slow to catch as an English major, but your mina has earned 10 minas. So he's got a total of 11. So the nobleman now king says to him, well done, good servant, because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over 10 cities.

He turned what I gave you into 10 minas. Now you're going to be the governor of 10 cities. The second came saying, master, your mina has earned five minas.

He says to him, likewise, you be over five cities. Then another came saying, now remember there's 10 servants, but we're only going to get to see three of them. We don't know what the other seven did with their minas.

We can only assume that they were judged on the same basis. The point of the parable is the outcome. So another came master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief.

It's put away in a handkerchief for, I feared you because you are an austere man. This word in Greek is actually where the word austere comes from. It's austeros, austeros.

And only in this passage where the man says it and the nobleman repeats it, the only place in the New Testament it occurs. In the parable of the talents, the guy that buried the talent in the ground, you can understand why he didn't wrap it in a handkerchief, 55 pounds. You'd have to have a really big handkerchief to wrap that up and stick it in your pocket.

So in the parable of the talents, he buries it in the ground. He digs it up and brings this big pig of silver or whatever it is back to him. But here he wrapped it in a handkerchief.

And I know that you are an austere man. The parallel in Matthew, the talents, when he says you are a hard man, that's sclerosis, like arteriosclerosis. You're a hard man.

Here he's austere. Both of them mean harsh, unyielding, a little bit forbidding in terms of being a master or an overseer. You collect what you did not deposit and you reap what you did not sow.

So the nobleman says, out of your own mouth, I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew, and I would put new in quotes, look at the behavior of this master in the preceding dealings. He is generous with the servants who were faithful.

He doesn't just confiscate the earnings and say, all right, go back and get back to work. He is rewarding to them. He doesn't seem like a hard man, but this guy says you're harsh.

And there is an attitude that says, well, here's an obligation or here's an opportunity, but I'm afraid I will do poorly. So I'm just not even going to attempt it. I would rather do nothing than do it and only do a little bit and suffer by comparison.

So I'm just not going to do it at all. What was the command? What was the expectation? Do business. What have you earned by trading? It isn't just hold onto this.

The master could have kept it in his own treasury. He was supposed to do something with it and he failed. His excuse is, I judged you to be harsh.

Now, who is judging whom here? Who's the master and who's the servant? Who is the one who has the authority to judge performance? Servants don't judge the master, but that's what this guy is doing. So this is his second mistake. The first is he disobeyed and didn't do business with his mina.

Secondly, as his excuse, he's saying, it's your fault. It's your fault. I didn't do anything with this mina.

You're a hard man. And I say, I think you reap where you didn't sow. And you collect what you didn't deposit.

So the king says, let's suppose that what you say is true. It really isn't. But this was your truth.

Your truth is, I'm a hard man and I'm unfair. I take what doesn't belong to me. I benefit from work that I didn't do.

So if that's the assumption, if you knew I was an austere man collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow, why then did you not put my money in the bank that at my coming, I might have collected it with interest? There wouldn't be the same return at the bank. You know, you typically then as now get a fairly small return on

deposit, but it's better than nothing. Anything is better than nothing.

This is the lesson of the master's evaluation. Even if you had put it on deposit with the bank, you didn't have to do any work at all. You would have no risk of losing it.

And there would be something. This, remember Jesus saying, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, I was working on a devotional and it said the fellowship of the faith or something. So I was looking at how do you get a picture of faith? And I was thinking, well, how did Jesus picture faith? Well, you can move mountains.

I saw a picture of somebody had used Photoshop and made the top come off a mountain and it was floating in space and heading for the ocean or whatever. And then there was another of just a fingertip with one tiny mustard seed in the middle. And Jesus said, faith as a grain of mustard seed, that's enough.

I'll take it. You can move mountains. You can uproot trees and throw them into the sea with faith as a grain of a mustard seed.

Anything is better than nothing. This guy decided, well, the master's too harsh. I don't know what else his thinking was, but that's what he told the nobleman.

He said, well, you know, you're a hard man. And so I just did nothing. So he hands it back.

He says, here is your mina. And so why did you not put it in interest that I might have collected it? And he said to those who stood by, remember now the king has come and he's got these other the same servants that summoned the mina investors. He said to those who stood by, take the mina from him and give it to him who has 10 minas.

People with an eye for detail say, doesn't the guy actually have 11 minas? But the one who has 10 minas worth of profit, it's more easy to identify him than to start fresh. We know he's earned 10 minas. He's associated with people that quibble and say, oh, we know this was borrowed from Matthew because the number 10 comes from the five turned into 10.

It's just nonsense. You have to get into the ancient near Eastern mind. And the guy that has 10 is the 10 above and beyond what everybody's got one mina.

This guy's got 10 more. So take the mina from him and give it to him who has 10. But they said to him, master, he's got 10 minas.

Why does he need another one? And the master replies, I say to you, to everyone who has more will be given. And from him who does not have even what he has will be taken away from him. There's no mention of taking anything away from the servants that were given these minas.

This guy is a king. The fellow that turned one mina into 10, he's now the ruler over 10 cities. So let's say a mina is \$30,000.

And so he's got \$330,000 that he has made. But being the governor over 10 cities, that amount is relatively small compared to what he is now going to oversee and be custodian of. He's going to have a governor's mansion.

He's going to have a province with these 10 major cities in it. And you watch most people that go into government. For some reason, they tend to get wealthy.

But he's going to be starting and he'll be able to undertake this opportunity with this \$330,000 worth of minas that he's got. The master doesn't say, hand it over. He says, go rule these cities.

But the guy that still has the one mina, he says, take that away from him. Give it to the other guy. And you remember the additional fate in the other parable.

I say to you, to everyone who has, more will be given from him who does not have. Even what he has will be taken away from him. I added a word or two there for clarity.

Now look at verse 27, though. Remember we had those that said, we don't want this guy to be ruler over us. It's a side element to this story.

Bring here those enemies of mine who did not want me to reign over them and slay them before me, slay them before me. Now you want to talk about being harsh. This isn't reaping where you didn't sow or collecting where you didn't invest.

This is removing those who are antagonistic and subversive and rebellious and refuse to recognize the authority granted to the king by the over king, the emperor. There's a double message here, both in the realm of the current day, when, which Jesus spoke these words, because you've got a Roman emperor appointed Judean king and Jesus pictures a king dealing with those who are in active opposition. These people aren't just grouching.

They're not just complaining. They're not just chafing. They sent a delegation to try to get this guy overturned and the king comes back and eliminates them to the extent that this is a picture of God, the father sending the Lord Jesus Christ to be king.

This is the Lord Jesus eliminating those who do not accept him as Lord and Messiah. And it is harsh, but the lake of fire is hard to get around. The sheep and goats judgment, the goats who are not sheep are sent into eternal fire.

The fire prepared for the devil and his angels, the devil and his angels think, well, but they're sentient and Lucifer, the most beautiful thing God ever created because of his rebellion and refusal to accept and function under the authority of God is going to be

eliminated in the lake of fire. As are all of those who follow his example. Yes, it's harsh, but it's a biblical truth.

And again, what is the timing of this? What is the occasion? Jesus is nearing Jerusalem and he's going to be hailed as the son of David. This is the quote unquote triumphal entry. Behold, your king comes riding on the foal of a donkey.

It's the prophecy of the Old Testament. So what is going on here? If the people are accepting him, why is he saying this parable? Well, we're going to pause here and take our break. And when we come back, we will continue in Luke 19 and see exactly why this parable is given.

But for us to remember that the kingdom that the Lord Jesus has gone to receive is the kingdom of Israel. He is the son of David. It is the millennial kingdom.

But when he returns and he has additional servants that he didn't have when he left, who are those servants? Well, in the sphere of things, that would be those of us who are qualified to walk with Christ in white and to sit with him on his throne and to be his servants as he administers that kingdom. This is aimed at the Jews. He has just called Zacchaeus a son of Abraham.

The kingdom that they are expecting is the kingdom of Israel. They're not expecting Jesus to go to Rome and take over the Roman Empire. They're expecting him to supplant Archelaus.

They're expecting him to take over the promised kingdom, which is the promised land and the area of the 12 tribes. So this is the expectation, and it is not a specific expectation for the church. We are the body of Christ.

We are with him, and we're not in and of that kingdom. We are in and of him. So there's a lot going on here.

But the bottom line is when we are entrusted with an opportunity, with resources, the stewardship of our time and our talents and our resources to use those in the master's service, you can think of this talent. And I think foremost in Jesus' mind may have been with this servant. This is what the Jews did with the law.

This is what the Pharisees did with the law. The law was supposed to be a foundation to teach what kind of heart people should have. The Pharisees were experts in the law, but they didn't want to go beyond the law.

They didn't want to understand the greater principles of the law, which is to do justice and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. They kept that mina, and I'm going to hand you back the law just like we received it at Sinai. We haven't done anything with it.

We haven't leveraged it into change of heart. We haven't become kingdom people qualified to dwell in a kingdom where righteousness is at home, where people function from the heart with love for their neighbor and with charity toward the stranger and the sojourner and the widow and the orphan in your midst. That is prescribed in the law, but it has to come from the heart, not from a legalistic obedience.

They didn't go beyond the mina. And when the king returns, they just say, here's the law. We've got a pristine copy of it right here.

We put vowel points in it. We've got a Masoretic text. But where is Israel in terms of developing the heart of faith? What does the Lord require of you, O man? Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly.

To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams. All the Levitical sacrifices in the law to develop that heart of love for God and love for one another was the task. Well, they didn't leverage the law into that.

And they're just ready to hand back the mina, uninvested, unexploited, used for nothing but preservation. And that is condemned. You are supposed to do business.

You are supposed to trade and multiply with this great resource. And they didn't do it. And the legalistic Judaism of the day is going to be judged and is going to be eliminated.

So that is a lesson for us. We look at Israel. And as goes the nation of Israel, the individual believer, we have a responsibility to look at what God has given us and be good stewards of it and seek to multiply the love that God has given us and shed abroad in our hearts toward one another, toward our neighbors, and toward those who are outside.

Well, we're going to continue in Luke 19. This parable is given on the eve of coming to Jerusalem and having Palm Sunday, which is today. So we'll see more when we come back from the break.