

Holy Week and God's Plan of Salvation

Tuesday: Jesus Tells Parables (Stories)

On Tuesday, Jesus told several different stories about God rejecting the Jewish leaders, about the end of the world, and about living like a responsible Christian. Some questions to think about while we study these stories:

1. Why did God reject the Jewish leaders?
2. If no one knows when the end of the world will happen, why did Jesus tell us about it?
3. While we wait for Jesus to come back, how should we live?

Story about the Vineyard

In several places in the Bible, God said His people Israel are like a vineyard. Jesus uses that comparison to tell a story here. Read Matthew 21:33-46 (1240).

A “parable” is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. The story looks like it could happen on earth, but the meaning of the story is spiritual. Each person or thing in the story represents something else. What do all these things mean?

Vineyard = God's people. At this time, the people of Israel.

Landowner =

Vineyard workers =

Grapes =

Servants =

Owner's Son =

What is the story about? What did the Jews do to God's prophets for many years? What will they do to God's Son, Jesus?

After the story, Jesus adds another picture about a stone. What do these things mean? How is this like the story about the vineyard?

Stone =

Builders =

What will God do with His kingdom? Will He let the Jews keep it? Who will get God's kingdom? (verse 43)

Jesus said something interesting about a stone (Jesus Himself) in verse 44. This directly talks about salvation. Jesus said anyone who falls on the stone will be broken. Who is that person who is broken? What does it mean to be broken?

If the stone falls on anyone, it will crush him. Who is that person? What does Jesus mean, “it will crush him”?

Story of the Wedding Banquet

Next, Jesus told another story. This one is very much about salvation. This time, Jesus compared going to heaven with going to a wedding feast. Read Matthew 22:1-14 (1241), then write down what these things mean.

Wedding = Jesus and His people together in heaven

King =

King's Son =

Servants =

First group of people invited =

Soldiers =

Second group of people invited =

Wedding clothes =

Outside darkness =

In the first part of the story, what was the attitude of the first group the king invited (vs. 5-6)? What happened to that first group (vs. 7)?

Why did the king invite the second group (vs. 8)? What people were in the second group (vs. 9-10)?

What was the one requirement to come to the wedding? What happened to the one man who didn't have it (vs. 11-13)? Can anyone go to heaven without their wedding clothes?

Jesus said, “Many people are invited, but few are chosen.” What does that mean?

Story about Ten Bridesmaids

Jesus now tells two stories about the end of the world. This first story emphasizes the importance of keeping faith in Jesus and always watching for Him to come again. Read the first story in Matthew 25:1-13 (1246), then write down what each thing means.

- Five wise bridesmaids =
- Five foolish bridesmaids =
- Lamps =
- Oil =
- Groom =
- Wedding hall =

What did the wise bridesmaids have, and the foolish bridesmaids didn't have?
Could the foolish bridesmaids wait very long?

We are waiting for Jesus to come back. How much does faith in Jesus help us wait? How long can we wait if we have little faith? If we have much faith?

Is it possible for someone to believe in Jesus for a while, then fall away and not believe? What will happen to that person when Jesus comes? How long do we need to be faithful to Jesus?

Story about Three Servants

In the second story about the end, Jesus tells us to be busy while we wait. Read Matthew 25:14-30 (1246), then write down what each thing means.

- Master (man who went on a trip) =
- Servants =
- Money =

When the master left on a trip, what did he give the three servants? What did they each do with their gift?

- Servant #1:
- Servant #2:
- Servant #3:

The master came back from his trip and “settled accounts” with his servants. What did the first two servants do with their money? How did the master praise or reward them?

The third servant had done nothing with his money. Why not? What was he afraid of?

The master was angry with the third servant and threw him out. Do you think the master was angry because he didn’t get more money back, or because the servant was evil and lazy?

What are the gifts that God has given us? How does God want us to use His gifts?

God will “settle accounts” with us. What does that mean? What will happen if we ignore and do nothing with the gifts and abilities God gives us?

Does God say we must be successful, our gifts must grow or do much? Read the last sentence of Revelation 2:10 (1544), then choose which statements are correct. There may be more than one right answer.

- A. God says we must double our offerings for Him.
- B. God says we must use our abilities to make church attendance double.
- C. If we invite people to church and no one ever comes, God will punish us.
- D. If we do good and help people and lead many people to believe in Jesus, God will call us “Good and faithful servant.”
- E. If we invite people to church and no one ever comes, God will still call us “Good and faithful servant.”
- F. If we try to use our gifts to serve God, but end up losing everything, God will still be pleased with us.
- G. If we don’t worry about doing anything and just say, “God loves me,” that is good enough.

Remember, our actions and works do not save us or get us into heaven. Our actions show what is in our hearts. The lazy servant cared nothing for his master. That is why he did nothing with the money. When we trust in Jesus Christ, we will have the right attitude and naturally want to use God’s gifts to serve Him!