

## Reflection Matthew 25: 14-30

This is a complex parable, and there are several traps. There is also a language issue: we slip unconsciously into reading the word 'talent' as meaning skill rather than a sum of money. Better, while not strictly accurate in terms of conversion to read 'five million pounds', 'two million pounds', and one 'million pounds', entrusted to the slaves. He was a very wealthy man.

We might want to use it to laud the great entrepreneurial spirit of western capitalism – with a very large sum of money, I have used my skill to double my capital; with a more modest sum, likewise. Or we might feel it induces guilt, that we are expected to grow and develop all those things we've been entrusted with, and often we find ourselves more like the slave who hides the money.

A couple of reflections to balance this out, and read more deeply. Firstly, this is not a parable of the Kingdom and it does not begin 'The Kingdom of heaven is like ...' It is more akin to a continuation of the previous story of wise and foolish bridesmaids, and the concept of waiting. The bridegroom is delayed, what do we do? The master goes away and does not return for a long time. Secondly, and linked, the word for time in our parable is the Greek 'chronos' or regular everyday time; the wheeler-dealing is characteristic of this time, the fear of the slave is of this time. Jesus' time is different, normally 'kairos', which breaks in to regular time. So perhaps we are being encouraged to let go of the stuff of regular time, and prepare ourselves while we wait for Jesus' time, Kingdom time.

*Fr David*

### Codes for the Zoom worship at 10.30

These are codes for Sundays from 4th October to the end of November:

**Meeting ID:** 865 5823 0026

**Passcode:** 504187

**Telephone numbers:** 0203 051 2874, 0203 481 5237, 0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

### NEXT SUNDAY 22.11 20 Christ The King

**SERVICES** 10.30 by Zoom

#### READINGS

OT Ezekiel 34: 11-16, 20-24

NT Ephesians 1: 15-23

Gospel Matthew 25. 31-46



#### CONTACT US

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# St Thomas, Exeter

**Sunday 15th November 2020**

**Second Sunday before Advent**

**10.30 by Zoom (phone-in available)**

A message from the **Bishop of Exeter:**

"As this second lockdown comes into force, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York are inviting Christians and all people of good will to share in 28 days of prayer for the nation. Can I encourage you to circulate information about this to your parishioners and contacts as soon as possible? The Archbishops invite all of us, wherever we are, to pray daily for a specific area of national concern. This will culminate in a collective moment of prayer at 6pm each evening.

A simple seven-day cycle of prayer has been designed, with a specific focus of prayer for each day. This includes the NHS and frontline workers, the bereaved, and those struggling with physical and mental ill-health, for children and young people, and for local businesses coping with economic impact of lockdown."

The simple prayer booklet is enclosed with the post mailing for those who receive it.

*Fr David*



## Collect

Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son was revealed to destroy the works of the devil and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life: grant that we, having this hope, may purify ourselves even as he is pure; that when he shall appear in power and great glory we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

## Zephaniah 1: 7, 12-18

Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is at hand; the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good, nor will he do harm.' Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them. The great day of the LORD is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the LORD is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the LORD, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the LORD's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth.

## 1 Thessalonians 5: 1-11

Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, 'There is peace and securi-

ty', then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

## Matthew 25: 14-30

'For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents.<sup>8</sup> But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, "Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master." And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, "Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents." His master said to him, "Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of

your master." Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, "Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." But his master replied, "You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

## Post Communion

Gracious Lord, in this holy sacrament you give substance to our hope: bring us at the last to that fullness of life for which we long; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen**

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## NOTICES

**Community Larder** The Community Larder will be collecting on **Tuesdays only** from 10am-12noon, and is allowed to continue operating during the period of lockdown. The collecting point will now be back in the hall. Please continue to be generous.

## Knit and Natter - November 2020

With many thanks to Vanessa, we shall be meeting for the next few weeks via Zoom, on Thursday mornings from 11.15am to 11.55am. Please ring Jenny on 01392 498725 for the access numbers. Meanwhile, keep busy with knitting, sewing, card-making and cooking, to help us through this quiet month.

Ian Totterdell has completed the **Hospiscare Marathon in a Month**. Thanks to those who have given already; with gift aid the total is now just over £400, which is amazing! Ian is still accepting donations in person or through a just giving page. Details below: [www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ian-Totterdell1](http://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/ian-Totterdell1)