

**(i) Scripture.**

He proceeded to tell a parable, because He was near to Jerusalem, and because they supposed that the kingdom of God was to appear immediately.

He said therefore, "A nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and then return.

Calling ten of his servants, he gave them ten minas, and said to them, 'Engage in business until I come' ...

When he returned, having received the kingdom, he ordered these servants to whom he had given the money to be called to him, that he might know what they had gained by doing business.

The first came before him, saying, 'Lord, your mina has made ten minas more'.

And he said to him, 'Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities'".

Luke 19. 11-17 (*English Standard Version*)

**(ii) Food for thought.**

***'The first came before him, saying, "Lord, your pound ('mina') has made ten pounds ('minas') more". And he said to him, "Well done, good servant! Because you have been faithful in a very little, you shall have authority over ten cities"' (Luke 19. 16-17).***

Two quotations:

1. *'It's not how much or how little you have that makes you great or small, but how much or how little you accomplish with what you have'.*

(S. R. Hirsch, quoted in the 'Washtenaw Jewish News', Volume XXVI, Number 9, page 7.)

2. 'The profit obtained by the servant was certainly very impressive, but his reward—authority over ten cities in the nobleman's kingdom—was even more staggering, and out of all proportion even to what he had achieved with the relatively insignificant sum which had been entrusted to him. And yet, although, in one sense (that of its scale) the reward was entirely disproportional to the service rendered, in another sense (that of its number), it was directly proportional to what this service had achieved. For *the extent of the responsibility bestowed as a reward was directly proportional to the servant's proven faithfulness and industry.*

'The application to the believer is obvious. "The parable clearly teaches that when the Lord returns to reign, His people shall reign with Him", at which time, *"the faithful will be rewarded ... and the reward will be in terms of further responsibility and increased work ... of joining with Messiah in His unimaginably vast new enterprises"*.

'That is, whosoever has faithfully and diligently made the most of the opportunities given by Him to serve His cause in this present life will be given opportunities to serve Him in His kingdom on a far greater and grander scale than anything which can now be imagined. As one commentator expressed it, *"The recompense, a city for a pound, just hints at the magnificent possibilities of the heaven-life"*.

(An extract from notes on 'The Parable of the Pounds: Part 2', published in Volume 66, Issue 2 of 'The Precious Seed International magazine'. The full notes, together with those on 'The Parable of the Pounds: Part 1', can be accessed at ...

<https://www.preciousseed.org/articles/the-parable-of-the-pounds-part-2/> and at ...  
<https://www.preciousseed.org/articles/the-parable-of-the-pounds1-part-1/> respectively.)

***The Lord Jesus and the word of God.***

'Walking with God in an intimacy which not even an Enoch could know, Christ gave heed in all things to the word of God. It was precious to Him, and governed His life. To Him no commandment was grievous, but each was fraught with perfect love.

'Before the high priest, He stood in silence while false witnesses spoke maliciously of Him. In this was fulfilled the saying: 'As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opens not His mouth' (Isa. 53. 7).

'When the high priest adjured Him by the living God that He tell them whether He were the Son of God, He replied instantly: 'Thou hast said' (Matt. 26. 62-64). The word of God had said that to hear the voice of adjuration and not to utter that which was seen or known was sin (Lev. 5. 1 R.V.). Hence the sinless Christ opened His mouth and bore witness to His own Person.

'Thus, *in silence and in speech, He was alike the perfect One who glorified the word of the Lord*'.

(H. C. Hewlett, 'The Glories of our Lord', page 57.)

### **Grace.**

'Grace in the saints is as water in the vessel; grace in Christ is as water in the spring'.

(Thomas Watson, 'A Body of Divinity', page 164.)

### **'The great dragon was cast out ... the accuser of our brethren is cast down' (Rev. 12. 9-10).**

'How could he be the accuser of the brethren if he be not in heaven? He went with the sons of God about Job, for we find Satan was amongst them (Job 1. 6; 2. 1). You could not have him accuser of the brethren, if he were not there. He tempts them down here, but accuses them there'.

(J. N. Darby, 'Substance of a Reading on Ephesians', Collected Writings, Volume 27, page 99.)

### **'Good Cheer for Believers'; words spoken by the Lord Jesus.**

(i) 'Forgiven sins': "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins are forgiven" (Matt. 9. 2). The past annihilated by the Christ of Calvary.

(ii) 'Faith Honoured': "Daughter, be of good cheer; thy faith hath made thee whole" (Matt. 9. 2, R.V.). Life and health come by contact with the living Christ.

(iii) 'Fears Banished': "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid" (Matt. 14. 27).

"The word of His grace all fears doth efface;  
Not one can live in the light of His face".

(iv) 'Foes Overcome': "In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16. 33). The world with its god and Godless course need not daunt us, for Christ gives us deliverance.

(v) 'Future predicted': "The Lord stood by him and said, 'Be of good cheer ... thou must bear witness also in Rome'" (Acts 23. 11)'.

(Adapted from F. E. Marsh, 'One Thousand New Bible Readings', page 189, number 402.)

### **Who needs enemies with friends like Job's?**

'James Gunn helpfully writes, "Eliphaz was a philosopher; Bildad a theologian; and Zophar a moralist. Eliphaz was a man of reason; Bildad the man of tradition; and Zophar the man of ethics". Eliphaz spoke first (he may have been the eldest), and appears as the sage of knowledge. Bildad...appears as the seer of religion. Zophar, who speaks last and says least, is the scolder of low morality" ('Studies in the Book of Job', Gospel Folio Press).

'Although these three vary widely in viewpoint, they all begin with the same bottom line—Job is suffering because of his sins:

(i) 'Eliphaz asks with bite, "Remember now, whoever perished being innocent?" (Job 4. 7) ...

(ii) 'Bildad inquires: "Does God subvert judgment? Or does the Almighty pervert justice?" (Job 8. 3). His false assumption was that God is good to us because we are good. If He is not good to us, it follows that we are not good ...

(iii) 'And Zophar? You can hardly believe what he says: "Know therefore that God exacts from you less than your iniquity deserves" (Job 11. 6). Imagine! All he'd been through, and Zophar thought he got off lightly!

'As we plod through these oceans of words, looking for spoonsful of truth, we may conclude, "With friends like these, who needs enemies?"'

(J. B. Nicholson Jr, 'Three Voices in the Dark', Taste and See, Uplook Ministries, 28 July 2025.)

### **Jesus the Pioneer.**

'Jesus is the great Pioneer (the *ἀρχηγός*) who blazes the trail for others to follow in His footsteps into the presence of God. The New Testament calls him the Pioneer of three things:

(i) 'He is the Pioneer of faith (Heb. 12. 2). In Him, faith became incarnate; in Him, trust reached its zenith and its peak beyond which it cannot go ... He is the pioneer who opened the way of faith for others to follow.

(ii) 'He is the Pioneer of salvation (Heb. 2. 10). Salvation is the state of the man who is at peace with God, and who is therefore safe in this or in any other life. Jesus is the Pioneer who showed men the way to peace and friendship with God.

(iii) 'He is the Pioneer of life (Acts 3. 15). He came that we might have life and that we might have it more abundantly (John 10. 10), and he came to bring life and immortality to light (1 Tim. 1. 10). He is the Pioneer who came to open the way to real life in this world, and to make men certain of the life that is beyond'.

(W. Barclay, 'Jesus as They Saw Him', pages 344-345).

***Two things 'rent' in the Gospel according to Mark.***

*A rent heaven* at the beginning (Mark 1. 10) declared the full acceptance by God of our Lord's person;  
*a rent veil* at the end (Mark 15. 38) declared the full acceptance by God of His work.

***The healing miracles of Jesus.***

'Jesus heals many people, but He doesn't heal everyone.

'Some people He heals show evidence of their faith before the healing, and some after.

'Some are healed by a touch, whereas others have to take steps to receive healing.

'Some show appreciation for their healing, while others do not.

'For some, Jesus heals them and also says their sins are forgiven, as we see in Mark 2 with the paralytic man.

*'What is consistent in each healing miracle recorded is the healer.* Jesus heals to show His power over sickness, suffering, and death'.

(Adapted from S. Peoples, 'Accessible Church: A Gospel-Centred Vision for Including People with Disabilities and Their Families', Crossway, 2025.)

***'Wonderful things'*** (adapted from the 'Monday Musings' of 11 January 2021).

It was 26 November 1922. A group of men gathered around the entrance to the (as yet) unopened tomb of the boy king, Tutankhamun, in the Valley of the Kings in Egypt. One of those men was the British archaeologist, Howard Carter, and another was his wealthy patron, Lord Caernarvon. The moment had come.

'With Caernarvon and other observers looking on, Carter drilled a small hole in the top corner of the doorway and placed a candle inside. The candle flickered and Carter peered in. As his eyes grew accustomed to the darkness beyond, he heard Caernarvon asking: "Can you see anything?" "Yes", Carter replied. "Wonderful things. *Wonderful things!*"' (Source: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/history/magazine/2018/03-04/findingkingtutstomb/>.)

For our part, you and I know well of '*wonderful things*'—not seen by an archaeologist but performed by divine persons:

(i) 'O Lord, you are my God. I will exalt you, I will praise your name, for *you have done wonderful things*' (Isa. 25. 1).

(ii) 'When the chief priests and scribes saw the *wonderful things that He did*, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant' (Matt. 21. 15).

***'Horses, crowns and robes': One greater than either Haman or Mordecai.***

'Haman said to the king, "For the man whom the king delights to honour, let (i) royal *robes* be brought, which the king has worn, and (ii) the *horse* that the king has ridden, and on whose head (iii) a royal *crown* is set' (Esther 6. 8).

'I saw heaven opened, and behold, (ii) a white *horse*. The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True ... (iii) on His head are many *crowns* ... (i) He is clothed in a *robe*' (Rev. 19. 11-13).

**(iii) Go on, smile.**

**Things needed?**

1. One morning a local highway maintenance crew reached their job site and realized they had forgotten all their shovels.

The crew's foreman phoned the office and explained their problem to his supervisor.

The supervisor listened, thought for a moment and replied, 'There's no need for any of you to worry. We'll send some replacement shovels as soon as we can.

*Just lean on each other until they arrive'.*

**2. A true story!**

Greg Livingstone was a pioneer missionary to unreached Muslim peoples. He founded 'Frontiers', a large mission agency specializing in church planting among Muslim nations and was called home, at the age of 85, just over three weeks ago, on 19 July 2025.

Mr Livingstone tells his story in 'You've Got Libya: A Life Serving the Muslim World' (2014). He records how, when a young man studying at Wheaton College, he went to Honduras 'to find out what being a missionary actually entailed'. As part of this assignment, he went 'to help a recently widowed missionary, Charlotte Marcy'.

'Once I arrived at Honduras', he says, 'Charlotte showed me my room in a small house in the village of Guinope. Before closing the door, she said, "If there is anything you need, just let us know, *and we'll tell you how to get along without it*".

(Source: Greg Livingstone, 'You've Got Libya: A Life Serving the Muslim World', pages 86-87.)