

The Red-Letter Words of Yeshua ~ Part 114

The Perea Ministry ~ Part 8

In our last post, we followed **Yeshua** as He left **Yerushalayim** to go to **Perea**. In this post, we continue to examine **His Perea Ministry as He Continues to Teach in Parables**.

The Parable of The Dishonest Manager

In the previous parable, the wayward son squanders his inheritance; now, **Yeshua** delivers a parable about the use of resources. The main character is a household manager who appears to win the respect of his master by acting dishonestly. **Yeshua** explains the parable in vv. 10–13. This parable is unique to Luke's Gospel. **Yeshua** no longer addresses the **scribes** (teachers of the law) and **P'rushim**, as in the previous chapter (15:2–3). However, they apparently are still listening to Him (15:14).

¹ Speaking to the talmidim, Yeshua said: "There was a wealthy man who employed a general manager. Charges were brought to him that his manager was squandering his resources. ² So he summoned him and asked him, 'What is this I hear about you? Turn in your accounts, for you can no longer be the manager.'

³ "'What am I to do?' said the manager to himself. 'My boss is firing me, I'm not strong enough to dig ditches, and I'm ashamed to go begging. ⁴ Aha! I know what I'll do—something that will make people welcome me into their homes after I've lost my job here!'

⁵ "So, after making appointments with each of his employer's debtors, he said to the first, 'How much do you owe my boss?'⁶ 'Eight hundred gallons of olive oil,' he replied. 'Take your note back,' he told him. 'Now, quickly! Sit down and write one for four hundred!'⁷ To the next, he said, 'And you, how much do you owe?' 'A thousand bushels of wheat,' he replied. 'Take your note back and write one for eight hundred.'

⁸ "And the employer of this dishonest manager applauded him for acting so shrewdly! For the worldly have more **sekhel** than those, who have received the light—in dealing with their own kind of people!

Sekhel means "common sense, practical intelligence, 'smarts'" in **Hebrew** and **Yiddish**. **Have more sekhel** translates the **Greek** *phronimōteroi eisin*, "are more prudent." **Yeshua** is not praising this corrupt manager's goal of "looking out for Number One," but his cleverness and intelligence in pursuing his mistaken goal. Further, his comment that the worldly are more creative in working toward their aims than those enlightened by trusting **God** are in following the plans **God** has set forth for them seems to be true today and then. A lack of imagination and freedom binds many well-intentioned people and grounding in reality when seeking solutions. ¹

⁹ "Now what I say to you is this: use worldly wealth to make friends for yourselves, so that when it gives out, you may be welcomed into the eternal home.

Yeshua urges his followers not to use the materials of this world in a wicked way but for noble ends so that their friends, **God the Father**, and **Yeshua the Son**, may welcome them into the eternal home, just as the manager can expect his newly purchased "friends" to receive him into their worldly homes.

¹⁰ Someone who is trustworthy in a small matter is also trustworthy in large ones, and someone who is dishonest in a small matter is also dishonest in large ones. ¹¹ So if you haven't been

¹ David H. Stern, Jewish New Testament Commentary.

trustworthy in handling worldly wealth, who is going to trust you with the real thing?¹² And if you haven't been trustworthy with what belongs to someone else, who will give you what ought to belong to you?

What belongs to someone else is likely a reference to everything, ultimately belonging to **God**. **Yeshua** also seems to be emphasizing another point of His parable: His followers should be faithful when given any resources to steward.

*¹³ No servant can be a slave to two masters, for he will either hate the first and love the second or scorn the second and be loyal to the first. You can't be a slave to both God and money."*²

In our next post, **Yeshua Continues to Speak in Parables in Perea**.

² Luke 16:1–13.