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What is a Talent?

Good morning! Thank you for having me. From the first few days I started working here, I have been struck by everyone's kindness!

And I want to give you a little bit of a testimony. I just thank God for drawing me to him at a young age. Despite a sometimes turbulent home, I was always drawn to God, church, good books, and things like that. If my parents weren't taking us to church at the time, they allowed us to go. I think I was around 13 years old when I began to understand what it means to believe in Jesus. And of course, I'm still learning!

Those who know me know I am an avid reader, always reading something, and probably more than one book at a time. Recently, I've been reading quite a lot of Brad H. Young, who writes about the Jewish background of Jesus and Paul. So, I want to share with you something the Lord has laid on my heart, and that also ties in with what I've been reading.

Let's look at Matthew 25:14-30

The theme of this passage is stewardship. Everything we have has been given by God. We see in Psalm 24:1-2 – “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world, and its inhabitants too. Because God is the one who established it upon the seas. God set it firmly on the waters.”

So, we see also in this Matthew passage, that “the good servants trust in the goodness of their master” (Brad H. Young). The 1 talent servant fears. He had a good intention to please the Master, who’s coming back, but his good intentions didn’t result in anything. A better understanding of his Master would have resulted not only in the actual use of his talent, but most likely in a wise use of that talent.

Jesus, in his time on earth, spoke of the last judgment, but He spent much more time speaking on the daily living out of our faith, “active involvement in helping people” (Brad H. Young). This preparation time “should be stressed more.” (Brad H. Young).

The parable teaches us “to recognize God’s gifts” (Brad H. Young), be a responsible caretaker of them, and “serve God faithfully” (Brad H. Young).

Let’s look again at verse 29-“For to everyone who has more will be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.” “This saying is closely related to Jewish

tradition that speaks about the giving of the Law.” (Brad H. Young). This is what I’d like to focus on today.

“The Torah (the law) (parentheses mine) was freely given by God.” (Brad H. Young). In fact, this is celebrated in the feast of weeks, also known as Pentecost. “The one who learns the most from Torah receives more, while the one who neglects the study of the ways of the Lord will lose what he or she has acquired. The more learning, the more life.” (Brad H. Young).

Again, we see in Psalm 24:1 – “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it...” Everything has been given to us by God, “as a sacred trust.” (Brad H. Young). Proverbs 3:9 says, “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first of all your crops.”

How can we honor the Lord with His Word that He’s given to us? According to United Bible Societies, and other organizations, 5.9 billion people have the full Bible in their language. The world population is 8.1 billion. This leaves 2.2 billion people with either no portion of the Bible in their language, or only some of the Bible in their language. This has recently been convicting to me. So, I share this with you: Do we use the abundance, the great gift we’ve been given, of the whole Bible in our

language? Do we read it, that we might receive more? Or do we do nothing with it, losing even what we had?