

Matthew 25:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability; and straightway took his journey.

Analysis

Unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one—A talanton (τάλαντον) was roughly 75 pounds of silver, worth approximately 6,000 denarii (a denarius being a day's wage). Even one talent represented 16+ years of wages—staggering wealth entrusted to slaves. The unequal distribution refutes egalitarianism: God distributes gifts sovereignly.

To every man according to his several ability—The phrase kata tēn idian dynamin (κατὰ τὴν ἰδίαν δύναμιν) means 'according to his own capacity.' God gives proportionally to what we can handle, making the stewardship test fair. Notice: ability precedes opportunity, suggesting God knows our capacity before testing us.

Historical Context

The talent was both a unit of weight and currency in the Greco-Roman world. In Jesus's day, talents were used for large-scale transactions—royal treasuries, temple taxes, and major commercial ventures. Workers might never handle such sums, making the master's trust extraordinary and the responsibility proportionally severe.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. Do you compare yourself to others' giftedness, or recognize that God distributes 'according to ability'?
2. How does knowing that God measures faithfulness—not results—in proportion to what was given affect your evaluation of success?
3. Are you paralyzed by receiving 'only' one talent when God expects you to use exactly what He gave?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ὃ	μὲν	ἔδωκεν	πέντε	τάλαντα	ὃ	δὲ
And	to another	unto one	he gave	five	talents	to another	and
G2532	G3739	G3303	G1325	G4002	G5007	G3739	G1161
δύο	ὃ	δὲ	ἓν,	ἐκάστῳ	κατὰ	τὴν	ἰδίαν
two	to another	and	one	to every man	according	G3588	to his several
G1417	G3739	G1161	G1520	G1538	G2596		G2398
δύναμιν	καὶ	ἀπεδήμησεν	εὐθέως				
ability	And	took his journey	straightway				
G1411	G2532	G589	G2112				

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 18:24 (Parallel theme): And when he had begun to reckon, one was brought unto him, which owed him ten thousand talents.