

POLEMICAL PARABLES IN MATTHEW 24–25

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The focus of this study is the block of three major parables in Matt 24:45–25:30: the good and the evil servant (24:45–51), the ten maidens (25:1–13), and the talents (25:14–30). The issue under debate is the hermeneutical framework in which Matthew placed these parables. Should they be read as primarily advice for Christians within Matthew's church (as most redaction critics contend)? Or should they be considered primarily as part of Matthew's polemic against the so-called "synagogue across the street" (as I maintain)? The keyword is "primarily," since I do not want to contend that a text can have only one meaning or context, nor do I want to be trapped into an "either-or" situation. But from the perspective of redaction criticism which was more important to Matthew: to provide advice for dealing with a problem within the Christian community, or to help the Christian community to understand better its place within Judaism after 70 C.E.? I argue that the latter was more important.

In one of the earliest applications of redaction criticism to Matthew's Gospel, Günther Bornkamm answered our question quite forcefully: "In these parables the thought of judgment is solely directed to the Church."¹ This tradition of interpretation has been the dominant approach over the years. In his elegant and illuminating study of the parables in their Gospel contexts, John R. Donahue states: "The final discourse then functions in Matthew, much more than in Mark, as teaching and exhortation *to the community* as it lives between the resurrection and the return of Jesus."² As he treats each of the

three parables, Donahue shows first how the parable of the two servants (24:45–51) was “directed to inner church concerns,”³ then how the parable of the ten maidens (25:1–13) teaches that “the parousia will be a time that discloses and separates the good and the bad in the community,”⁴ and finally how the parable of the talents (25:14–30) is set against the background of Matthew’s idea that the church is “a mixed body where the good and the bad will grow together.”⁵

This “inner-church” reading of the three major parables in Matthew 24–25 is not inevitable. Of course it is a possible reading and bears much fruit for the Christian preacher. But did Matthew really intend his community to take these parables as advice for dealing with problems within the church? I propose another reading of the parables, one that places them in the conflict with other Jews in the late first century. This reading takes them as “polemical parables,” that is, intended to criticize groups outside the Christian community and thus to confirm the identity and resolve of those within the community.

The major reason for taking Matt 24:44–25:30 as “polemical parables” is both their historical and literary context in Matthew’s Gospel. After explaining that context on both historical and literary levels, this article sketches a “polemical” reading of each parable in turn. The basic point is that these three parables, like almost everything else in Matthew’s Gospel, are best read as part of a crisis facing all Jews in the late first century as they tried to reconstitute Judaism after the Jerusalem Temple had been destroyed and political control over the land had ended.

Historical Context

By 70 C.E. Jerusalem had fallen to the Romans and its Temple had been destroyed under the leadership of Titus, the son of emperor Vespasian and a future Roman emperor himself. These events presented all Jews, especially those in Palestine and neighboring areas, with a crisis: How could Judaism continue? We know three responses to this crisis: the apocalyptic, the early rabbinic, and the Jewish Christian (represented by Matthew’s Gospel).

The apocalyptic response is expressed in 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch,⁶ two apocalypses written in the late first or early second century C.E. Though set in the sixth century B.C.E., 4 Ezra surely describes Jerusalem after 70 C.E. when it says: “Our sanctuary has been laid waste, our altar thrown down, our temple destroyed” (10:21). The question is, “Why has Israel been given over to the Gentiles as a reproach?” (4:23).

The answer to the question is found in the idea of two ages or two worlds (7:50), and the conviction that this age "is hastening swiftly to its end" (4:26). In the meantime faithful Jews are to wait patiently for the age/world to come and to take the Torah as the only sure guide for the present (14:22). Taking a similar approach both to the problem and its solution, 2 Baruch sums up the apocalyptic strategy for dealing with the present as follows: "Zion has been taken away from us, and we have nothing now apart from the Mighty One and his Law" (85:3).

The early rabbinic movement is also best viewed as a response to the events of 70 C.E. The challenge facing the founders of the rabbinic movement was to fashion a form of Judaism that remained faithful to Jewish tradition while dealing with the changed religious and political realities. Without temple or political power, the early rabbis stressed careful study of the Torah and developed interpretations of Scripture and custom to guide Jewish life. Their chief center was Yavneh (also called Jamnia) near the Mediterranean coast, though there may well have been other centers in Judea and neighboring areas.

The early rabbinic movement seems to have been a coalition of currents in pre 70 C.E. Judaism: priestly, legal, scribal, and Pharisaic.⁷ This movement stands behind the "scribes and Pharisees" of Matthew's Gospel. The priests brought to the movement a lively concern for ritual purity and an interest in matters pertaining to temple worship. The scribes contributed knowledge of the Torah and skill in interpreting and adapting it. The chief interests of the Pharisees before 70 C.E. were eating food in ritual purity, tithing, and giving agricultural offerings to the priests, obeying biblical rules and taboos about raising crops, keeping Sabbaths and other festivals, and observing marriage laws and rules about sexual relations.

Josephus and the Gospels add to the picture of the Pharisees the following elements: the importance of meals in common, proselytism, seeking popular respect and influence, insistence on prayer, searching for perfection through observance of the Torah, and stress on tradition. In contrast to the Sadducees, the Pharisees insisted on free will, resurrection of the dead, and judgment issuing in rewards and punishments. They sought to turn Israel into "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation." Rather than mourning over the loss of the Jerusalem Temple as the apocalyptists did, the "scribes and Pharisees" of the early rabbinic movement constructed a form of Judaism that could be practiced without temple or political power over the land.

Jewish Christians like Matthew shared the broad outline of apocalyptic theology with 4 Ezra and 2 Baruch, but departed from it at two

important points. Whereas for the Jewish apocalyptists the coming figure was the "messiah" or "my son the messiah" (see 4 Ezra 7:28; 12:31-34; 13:21-45), Matthew and other Jewish Christians looked for the Son of Man whom they identified as Jesus of Nazareth. According to the apocalyptists the sure guide for the present is the Torah, but for Jewish Christians it was the teaching and example of Jesus, whether this was understood as an interpretation of the Torah or a supplement to it.

The Matthean texts about the "scribes and Pharisees" (especially chapter 23) represent a Jewish-Christian perspective on the early rabbinic movement. The scribes and Pharisees are criticized for cultivating honorific titles (23:7-10), for seeking to attract new adherents to their movement (23:15), for their casuistry regarding oaths (23:16-22), and for their attention to tithes on agricultural products (23:23-24) and to ritual purity at meals (23:25-26) as well as to the sources of uncleanness (23:27-28). Though granted some authority (23:3), the scribes and Pharisees are bitterly criticized as "blind guides." They appear to control "their synagogues" (4:23; 9:35; 10:17; 12:9; 13:54), which are condemned as the "synagogues of the hypocrites" (6:2, 5; 23:6, 34). Christian missionaries seem to have been flogged at such synagogues (10:17; 23:34) and run out of town by their leaders (10:23; 23:34). It is against this background of rivalry among Jewish groups (one of which was the Matthean community) that we need to understand Matthew's theological program, since it was intended to preserve and continue the heritage of Judaism after A.D. 70.⁸

On the basis of allusions to Matthew's Gospel in the letters of Ignatius and possible references to the destruction of Jerusalem in Matthew's Gospel (see 21:41; 22:7; 27:25) and the Evangelist's use of Mark, it has become customary to place the date of the Gospel's composition around 85 or 90 C.E. The Evangelist (and his community) seems to have been Jewish in background and interests. He shows special interest in the Hebrew Scriptures as a witness to Jesus' person and activity. He presents Jesus' ethical teaching as halakah, that is, advice on how to live and behave properly. He assumes that the Jewish Sabbath is still observed by Christians (see 12:1-14; 24:20) and takes a generally conservative (by Christian standards) attitude to the Torah and other Jewish institutions. His principal theological themes (kingdom of heaven, righteousness) and christological titles (Son of David, Son of Man, Son of God) have rich Jewish backgrounds.

Almost all interpreters locate the composition of Matthew's Gospel in Palestine or Syria. Two factors must be kept in mind: The place

must have had a large Jewish population to accommodate both the Matthean community and its Jewish opponents. Since the Gospel as we have it was composed in Greek for a Greek-speaking community, it must have been a place where Greek was understood and used. These two criteria are met by several cities in Syria: Antioch, Damascus, and Edessa. A good case can also be made for Caesarea Maritima or one of the cities in Galilee, or Phoenicia (Tyre, Sidon), or Transjordan (Pella or one of the other cities of the Decapolis).

The historical context suggests that Matthew wrote from “within Judaism,” that is, as one of several voices responding to the crisis facing all Jews in the late first century. Judaism and Christianity were not yet perceived as different or rival religions, though the groundwork had been laid for the eventual parting of the ways. Thus there was a continuity between the situation of the earthly Jesus around 30 and that of Matthew around 90. Just as Jesus taught “within Israel,” so Matthew teaches “within Israel.” Where they divide people into two groups, one should not immediately assume a division within the community of Jesus’ disciples or the church. The division is more likely within Israel. There are, of course, points at which the Matthean Jesus does address the needs of the Christian community (as especially in chapter 18). But as an interpretative principle it seems better to assume, unless there is evidence to the contrary, that the Matthean Jesus deals with the problems of all Israel (of which the Jewish-Christian churches are part). So even before analyzing the texts, it appears more reasonable to take the three parables in Matt 24:45–25:30 to refer to groups within Israel rather than to groups within the church.

Literary Context

The immediate context of the three parables is the eschatological discourse of Jesus in Matthew 24–25. The beginning of Jesus’ apocalyptic discourse (24:1–8) follows Mark 13:1–8 closely, whereas the second part (24:9–14) adapts Mark 13:9–13 by leaving room for problems to develop (see 24:10–12) and thus stretching out the timetable. In treating the “abomination of desolation” and the “great tribulation,” the false prophets, and the coming of the Son of Man in 24:15–31, Matthew follows Mark 13:14–27 apart from adding a few supplements along the way. In 24:32–36 Matthew mainly reproduces Mark 13:28–32. But then he develops the theme of constant vigilance found in Mark 13:33–37 by short parables taken from Q: as in the days of Noah (24:37–39 = Luke 17:26–27), the two men in the field and the two

women at the mill (24:40–41 = Luke 17:34–35), and the householder and the thief (24:43–44 = Luke 12:39–40). All these materials are intended to reinforce Jesus' warning in 24:44: "Watch therefore because you do not know in what day your Lord is coming." The events described are cosmic. The disciples who are being addressed (see 24:1, 3–4) should be prepared for them. But the unprepared are not necessarily from within the circle of the disciples. Rather the implication is that Jesus' disciples will heed his warnings while other Jews will not.

The three fairly long parables—the good and the evil servant (24:45–51), the ten maidens (25:1–13), and the talents (25:14–30)—provide reinforcement for the warning to be on watch. I read Matt 25:31–46 not as a parable but as a judgment scene in which the Son of Man judges the Gentiles (*panta ta ethnē*, 25:32) according to their acts of kindness toward his disciples (the "least" or "little ones," 25:40, 45), who may be missionaries or simple believers.⁹ If this reading is correct, then those who are judged in Matt 24:45–25:30 would seem most naturally to be from within Israel. Thus the cosmic nature of the events described in Matt 24:1–44 and the idea of the judgment of the Gentiles in 25:31–46 suggest that the proper framework for reading the three parables in 24:45–25:30 is "within Israel," that is, the parables contrast two Jewish groups—the Matthean Christians and their Jewish rivals.

As part of Jesus' eschatological discourse in chapters 24–25, the three parables are set between Jesus' woes against the scribes and Pharisees (chap 23) and the passion narrative (chaps 26–28). There is a longstanding debate whether Matthew 23 should be taken as part of the eschatological discourse (the equivalent of the beatitudes in the Sermon on Mount), or as a separate piece that concludes the Jerusalem controversies beginning in chap 21. In either case the atmosphere that leads up to the eschatological discourse is one of conflict between Jesus (with his disciples) and his Jewish rivals.¹⁰ One would expect that parables contrasting the readiness of two groups as those in Matt 24:45–25:30 do would concern the same conflict.

The eschatological discourse prepares for the passion narrative in Matthew 26–28. Though Matthew follows Mark 14–16 quite closely, one of his major concerns is to heighten the role of the Jewish leadership in bringing about Jesus' suffering and death. Even when Jesus' tomb is found empty (28:1–10), the chief priests and the Pharisees (see 27:62–66; 28:11–15) remain the implacable enemies of Jesus and his followers. The three parables of conflict in Matt 24:45–25:30 prepare for and give a framework to the events of the passion account.

The conflict between the Matthean Christians and their rivals within Judaism underlies other parables in the Gospel. The triad of parables in Matt 21:28–22:14—the two sons (21:28–32), the wicked tenants (21:33–45), and the marriage feast (22:1–14)—are correctly treated by Donahue¹¹ under the heading “Matthew’s Debate with ‘the Synagogue Across the Street.’” He finds in these three parables evidence for “the strained relationship between Matthew’s community and Judaism.”¹² Similarly one can read the parables in Matthew 13 as concerned with the mixed reception of the gospel, that is, why some Jews rejected the gospel and how those who accepted it should look upon those who did not.¹³

That the parables in Matt 24:45–25:30 should be taken as part of Matthew’s polemic against the “synagogue across the street” is indicated by the literary context: the narrative context of the Gospel as a whole, the immediate context of the eschatological discourse, the “woes” against the scribes and Pharisees (chapter 23) and the passion narrative, and other parables in the Gospel. Now we move to the texts themselves.

Reading the Parables

THE TWO SERVANTS (24:45–51)

The first large parable answers the question about the identity of the “faithful and wise servant” (24:45). It is possible and indeed advisable to read the version of the parable in Luke 12:42–46 as concerning a single steward/servant. And here as elsewhere Luke seems to preserve the Q version more carefully than Matthew does. The Matthean version, however, concerns two servants—one who proves faithful (24:46–47), and another who misbehaves toward his fellow servants and is punished for his misconduct (24:48–51).

The return of the “master” (*kyrios*) is a surprise. No one knows when he is coming. If the master finds the servant doing what he was charged to do—presiding over the distribution of food in the household—the master will declare the reliable servant “happy” or “blessed” and increase his responsibilities by placing him over the administration of the entire household. In the case of the first servant (24:46–47) Matthew tells the same tale as Luke 12:43–44, presumably because both Evangelists are simply following Q.

Whereas Luke 12:45–46 (and Q) continues to talk about the same servant, there seems to be a second servant in Matthew’s version.¹⁴ By adding the qualifier *kakos* (“that evil servant”) in 24:48, Matthew has

differentiated the second servant from the first. As in Luke 12:45 the delay of the master provides the second servant with an excuse to abuse the other servants and to behave badly. In the context of Matthew 24–25 the servant's reflection ("my master is delayed") refers to the delay of the parousia of the Son of Man, who is identified as Jesus.

Two important editorial changes suggest a polemical interpretation of the Q parable on Matthew's part. Instead of Luke 12:45 ("servants and maidservants") Matthew in 24:49 includes a reminder that the evil servant is a fellow servant (*syndoulos*) of those whom he abuses: "he begins to beat his fellow servants." The second change occurs near the end, in 24:51: "he will cut him in pieces, and will put him with the hypocrites." The gruesomeness of the scene (dismemberment followed by stacking up the corpses)¹⁵ ought not to distract from Matthew's clever substitution of *hypokritai* for *apistoi*. Whereas Luke 12:46 reads "the faithless" (*apistoi*), Matthew used the term "hypocrites," one of his favorite words, one that in chapter 23 he applied to the scribes and Pharisees five times (23:15, 23, 25, 27, 29).

Matthew also strengthens the eschatological setting of the parable. The phrase in 24:50 "on the day on which he does not expect him," which was already part of the Q version (see Luke 12:46), ties the parable to the warning that introduced it: "Be prepared because the Son of Man is coming at a time you do not expect" (24:44). The final warning about "weeping and gnashing of teeth" (24:51) refers to the final condemnation and the sadness associated with it elsewhere in Matthew's Gospel (see 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13).

The parable of the two servants recommends watchfulness as the community awaits the coming of the Son of Man. Matthew has adapted the Q version by developing a second "evil" servant who abuses his fellow servants and who in the final judgment will be classed with the "hypocrites." Given the historical setting of the Matthean community and the application of "hypocrites" elsewhere in the Gospel to the Jewish rivals of the Matthean community, one can assume that Matthew was more concerned with what he perceived to be the misconduct of his Jewish rivals than with misbehavior within the church.

THE TEN MAIDENS (25:1–13)

The second parable in the series has no parallels in Mark or Luke. Whether it was composed by Matthew or based on pre-Matthean

tradition¹⁶ is not important for our reading, since the concern here is what Matthew sought to communicate with this text. The message is the same as that of the preceding parable: In the face of the bridegroom's delay (see 25:5), one should be watchful because "you do not know the day or the hour" (see 25:13). Though in the Hebrew Bible the image of "bridegroom" is used to speak of God (see Isa 54:5; Jer 31:32; Hos 2:16; etc.), in the Matthean context the bridegroom is surely Jesus the Son of Man (see Matt 9:15; John 3:29; 2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:21-33; Rev 21:2, 9; 22:17).¹⁷ The parable is presented in 25:1 as telling us what the kingdom of heaven will be like.

The unusual or peculiar characters in the parable are the ten maidens. They all go forth from the groom's house to meet the wedding party in its return from the bride's house. The groom had apparently gone there to sign the marriage contract with the bride's father and then to bring the bride to his own house. Some of the maidens take along extra oil for their lamps, but others do not (25:3-4). Because the groom is delayed (25:5), all of them go to sleep. On being awakened by the announcement that the groom is coming (25:6), the foolish maidens realize that they do not have enough oil and depart to buy some (25:7-10a). While they are away, the groom arrives and subsequently leaves with the wedding party to the marriage feast. The foolish maidens find themselves locked out of the banquet (25:11-12). The moral of the story is: "Watch therefore, because you do not know the day or the hour" (25:13).

There is a longstanding scholarly debate concerning the genre of the story of the ten maidens: Is the parable an allegory (in which every character and feature stands for a spiritual reality) or rather a parable with allegorical features? The bridegroom is certainly the Son of Man, and the wedding feast is the banquet of God's kingdom. The ten maidens surely stand for two groups of people.

But what groups? The usual approach today is that the text should be "read as an allegory of the delay of the parousia in Matthew's community."¹⁸ In this line of interpretation the point of the parable is to provide positive and negative models about Christian behavior in the face of the Son of Man's delayed coming.

An approach more in keeping with the concrete situation of the Matthean community identifies the "wise" maidens with the Matthean Christians and the "foolish" maidens with their rivals within Judaism. If we identify Matthew's opponents as representatives of early rabbinic or "formative" Judaism, Matthew may well have been criticizing their lack of interest in apocalyptic in general and

Jesus as the Son of Man in particular. Perhaps as a reaction against the fanaticism that issued in the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 C.E., those Jews whose movement later developed into rabbinism for the most part avoided apocalyptic speculations. They probably viewed the continuing Christian interest in apocalypticism as unhealthy and dangerous. Christians like Matthew viewed their opponents' disinterest in and antipathy toward apocalypticism as foolish and shortsighted. Such "fools" do not exhibit the constant watchfulness demanded by the coming (even if delayed) Son of Man. The parable of the ten maidens contrasts the Matthean community (with its ideal of constant watchfulness in light of the uncertain coming of the Son of Man) and their Jewish opponents (with their suspicions about apocalypticism and the Son of Man's coming).

THE TALENTS (25:14-30)

There are obvious parallels between the parable of the talents in Matt 25:14-30 and the parable of the pounds in Luke 19:11-27,¹⁹ though their precise relation remains a matter of debate. The focus of our attention here is the Matthean version in its Matthean context.

The Matthean parable of the talents comes third in a series of three parables about the master of the house being absent for a time and returning unexpectedly to demand an accounting. In his absence the "master" entrusted large sums of money to three servants, calibrating the amount according to the ability of each servant (25:15). Whereas the first two servants doubled the master's money, the third servant buried his one talent. According to Jeremias,²⁰ burying money was regarded as the best security against theft. But burial only served to preserve what had been deposited. It added nothing at all to it. Then "after a long time" (25:19) the master returned and settled accounts. Those two servants who acted positively and responsibly (25:21, 23) are summoned to enter into their master's joy, while the one who failed to act is condemned to the darkness outside (25:30).

In the history of interpretation the Greek word for a large sum of money *talanton* came to be understood in the sense of "natural or God-given ability" and the parable became the starting point for exhortations to use one's talents to their maximum capacity. But the Gospel parable has an eschatological dimension. It is about entering God's kingdom ("the joy of your master," 25:21, 23) and the coming of the Son of Man as judge (25:19). The concluding threat about "weeping

and gnashing of teeth" (25:30) confirms the connection with the last judgment (see Matt 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51).

The Matthean parable is usually taken as an exhortation directed to Christians to work diligently in the present and to avoid laziness and fear in the face of the coming of the Son of Man. That there were problems along these lines is indicated by the Pauline letters to the Thessalonians (see 1 Thess 4:11; 5:14; 2 Thess 3:6–13). Those who trace the parable back to Jesus usually find him addressing and criticizing a group within Judaism or the whole Jewish people. But in view of Matthew's own setting, why could not the situation within Judaism (but after 70 C.E.) have been the background for the Matthean version of the parable also?

In our reading of the parables of the two servants (24:45–51) and the ten maidens we found criticisms of Matthew's Jewish rivals for their failure to preserve the proper apocalyptic spirit of watchfulness. The early rabbinic movement, in the collection of the wisdom of the Fathers (*m. 'Abot* 1:1), advised building a "hedge" or "fence" around the Torah as a way of preserving the Jewish patrimony. The portrait of the third servant—the one who seeks to preserve his talent by burying it—may have been Matthew's symbol for his early rabbinic rivals: They bury away the treasures of Judaism by their protective attitude toward their religious heritage.²¹

At the same time the parable would serve as an apology or defense of the Matthean community's program of missionary activity (see 28:19–20). It would contrast the enterprising and successful Jewish-Christian missionaries (the first two servants) with the fearful and/or lazy early rabbinic movement (the third servant). All this, of course, is said from the Jewish-Christian perspective and (as is the case with all apologetics) was intended primarily for the encouragement of the Matthean community. The parable of the talents helped Matthean Christians to locate themselves and their opponents as they faced the common crisis of reconstructing Judaism after the destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple.

NOTES

1. Bornkamm, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963; 2nd, rev. ed.; London: SCM, 1982) 23.
2. *The Gospel in Parable: Metaphor, Narrative, and Theology in the Synoptic Gospels* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988) 97.

3. Donahue 99.
4. Donahue 104.
5. Donahue 109.
6. For introductions and annotated translations, see J. H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983) 1.517–59 (4 Ezra); 615–52 (2 Baruch).
7. See J. Neusner, *Judaism. The Evidence of the Mishnah* (rev. ed.; Atlanta: Scholars, 1988); A. J. Saldarini, *Pharisees, Scribes and Sadducees in Palestinian Society* (Wilmington, DE: Glazier, 1988).
8. See my article, "A Dangerous Text: Matthew and Judaism," *Canadian Catholic Review* 7 (1989) 135–42.
9. L. Cope, "Matthew XXV 31–46. 'The Sheep and the Goats' Reinterpreted," *NovT* 11 (1969) 32–44.
10. There may be a secondary warning for Christians in these "woes." See Donahue 86.
11. Donahue 85–96.
12. Donahue 86.
13. See my forthcoming article "The Mixed Reception of the Gospel: Interpreting the Parables in Matt 13:1–52," in the *Festschrift* for John Strugnell.
14. J. Jeremias, in *The Parables of Jesus* rev. ed. (New York: Scribner's, 1963) 55, claimed that the parable speaks of one rather than two servants.
15. Perhaps "he will cut him in pieces" should be taken as a metaphor to describe separation or excommunication from the community.
16. For full treatment of these issues, see A. Puig i Tarrech, *La parabole des dix vierges (Mt 25,1–13)* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1984).
17. A Feuillet, "Les epousailles messianiques et les références au Cantique des cantiques dans les évangiles synoptiques," *Revue Thomiste* 84 (1984) 399–424.
18. Donahue 103.
19. A. Puig i Tarrech, "La parabole des talents (Mt 25,14–30) ou des mines (Lc 19,11–28)," *Revista Catalana Teologia* 10 (1985) 269–317.
20. *Parables of Jesus* 61.
21. See now C. Dietzfelbinger, "Das Gleichnis von den anvertrauten Geldern," *Berliner Theologische Zeitschrift* 6 (1989) 222–33.