

**VIII. THE PARABLES DESCRIBING THE PERIOD OF TIME BETWEEN THE  
KING'S REJECTION AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE KINGDOM  
(Chapter 13:1-52)  
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**A. FIRST, JESUS GAVE A PARABLE OF A SOWER WHICH DESCRIBED A SEED-SOWING PROGRAM DURING THIS PERIOD OF TIME (Matt. 13:1-23).**

1. Notice what an analysis of this parable reveals.
  - a. The sower here is Christ who began the work and then entrusted it to His servants.
  - b. The seed in this parable is the Word of God (Matt. 13:19; Mark 4:14; Lk. 8:11).
  - c. The field that Christ is referring to is the world - "anyone that heareth" (Matt. 13:19). Note 13:38.
  - d. The different kinds of soil where the seed falls are the different kinds of receptions by those who hear the Word of God. Notice the phrase "he that received the seed." (Matt. 13:19,20,22,23).
2. Notice what we can anticipate during the course of this period.
  - a. We can anticipate, first of all, this age to be characterized by a program of seed-sowing which is the Word of God (Mark 4:14).
  - b. The second thing we can anticipate during this time is that it will be marked by opposition from the world (Matt. 13:22); from the flesh (Matt. 13:21); and from the devil (Matt. 13:19; Luke 3:12).
  - c. Thirdly we can expect this age to be characterized by more people hearing the Word and making shallow professions than by those who actually receive it and bear fruit - that is to be saved. Notice only a fourth part falls upon good ground. Since a fourth part is taken away by the devil, this leaves 1/2 on stony ground and among thorns or to be sown among those who make shallow professions and are not saved. From this we can safely conclude that only 1/4 of those who hear and profess to know the Lord actually know Him.
  - d. We can expect this age of seed-sowing then to be characterized by no professions by some (13:19); by shallow professions by others (13:20,22) and by some true professions by others (13:23).
    - (1) Notice some will hear and not understand as in the case of the Jews who rejected Christ (Matt. 13:13,19). This group of hearers will not believe the Word of God. These will make no profession because they are hard-hearted. Their hearts are like hardened packed down soil by the wayside of a field. Because of their hardened

condition the devil will take away the Word so they won't be saved (Luke 8:12). Here we note the opposition by the devil in this present age.

(2) A second kind of person will hear the Word of God and make a profession which will appear genuine but it will not last (13:20,21). It will appear to be in soil in which seed will grow but he will wither away because he has no root in himself (21). This is a picture of the shallow-hearted hearer who has some sort of emotional experience and runs in the strength of the flesh until its weakness is revealed by tribulation and persecution. Here we note the opposition of the flesh to the Word of God in this present age.

(3) A third kind of person who will hear the Word of God will also be a shallow-hearted hearer (13:22). This one will be like seed that fell among thorns. He will make a profession and appear also to be growing so as to produce fruit but before long the things of the world will crowd and choke out any apparent life because he has no spiritual life or strength to grow and produce. Here we note the opposition of the world to the Word of God in this present age.

(4) A fourth kind of hearer will hear the Word of God and make a genuine profession (13:23). He will be like seed that fell in good ground. He will grow and become fruitful which will be the evidence of genuine spiritual life from the incorruptible seed. Notice there are three kinds of fruits produced in a Christian's life. First of all, there is the fruit of converts (Rom. 1:13); secondly, the fruit of Christian character (Ga. 5:22,23); and finally, the fruit of Christian conduct or righteousness (Rom.6:21,22; 15:27,28; Phil. 1:11).

e. Finally, from this parable we can see and anticipate that this age will be characterized by a decreasing response to the sowing of the seed (Matt. 13:23). In other words, there will be a decrease in the number of folks getting saved and a decrease in their fruitfulness.

## **B. SECONDLY, JESUS GAVE A PARABLE OF WHEAT AND TARES WHICH DESCRIBES THE PROBLEM OF UNBELIEVERS DURING THIS PERIOD OF TIME (Matt. 13:24-30).**

1. Notice what an analysis of this parable reveals.

a. The sower in this second parable is the Lord Jesus (13:37).

b. The field again is the world as in the first parable (13:37).

c. The good seed here is different however from that of the sower. In the parable of the sower it was the Word of God, but in this parable the good seed are the children of the Kingdom (38). These are the ones which the Word has produced and are now sown in the world as a testimony and witness. (Note I Peter 1:23).

- d. The tares of this parable are the children of the wicked one (38). These are not just unbelievers but those who belong to the devil. Examples of these are the religious Pharisees of John 8:38-44 who, despite their religion and morals, had rejected the Lord.
  - e. The enemy that sowed the tares is the devil (39).
  - f. The harvest is the end of the age when Christ comes after the Tribulation Period and the reapers are the angels (39). Note Matt. 24:31; 25:31,34.
2. Notice what we can anticipate during the course of this period.
- a. We can expect, first of all, a counterfeit sowing by the devil in this age of those who profess to be children of the Kingdom (25). These will appear right alongside those whom the Word of God has produced.
  - b. We can expect the devil's powers of deception to be so great that it will be difficult to recognize, in many cases, the children of God from the children of the devil. They will be like tares among the wheat. The tares are dandelion or rye grass which grows in wheat fields and the difference is recognized only near harvest time when the grain heads. Not only will the counterfeits profess to be children of the Kingdom, but they themselves will be deceived and think that they are (Matt. 7:21,22,23).
  - c. We can anticipate this age to be characterized by two kinds of seeds being sown which are the true and the false professors which are sown in the field which is the world. So, within Christendom as a whole, there will be a side-by-side development of that which is good with that which is evil (26). This will be the devil's method in this age to deceive and to hinder the seed-sowing program by sowing counterfeits who will in turn deceive others and lead them astray. Note II Tim. 3:1-5,13; Jude 4.
  - d. Because we notice no opposition to the sowing and growth of the tares, we can expect the children of the wicked one to be numerous in this age and therefore those whom they deceive to be many also.
  - e. Finally, we can expect the true children of the Kingdom to be raptured when the church is taken out of this world. But the seed-sowing program will continue through the tribulation period as the gospel of the kingdom is preached and there will be wheat sown. Then, at the Second Coming, Christ will separate the wheat from the tares. The tares will be burned (13:30, 40-42) but the wheat will be gathered into His barn which is the Millennial Kingdom which will be established (13:30,43).

**C. THIRDLY, JESUS GAVE A PARABLE OF A MUSTARD SEED WHICH DESCRIBES THE GROWTH OF CHRISTIANITY DURING THIS PERIOD OF TIME (Matt. 13:31,32).**

1. Notice what an analysis of this parable reveals.
  - a. The sower in this parable is, no doubt, Christ.
  - b. The field, once again, is no doubt referring to the world (Matt. 13:38).
  - c. The mustard seed here has to be the Kingdom of Heaven or the whole sphere of professing Christendom. The liberals interpret the mustard seed to be the gospel, the plant as the Church, and the birds as all the different people gathered into the Church. This is not tenable for several reasons.
    - (1) First, we see the things in this parable are all symbolic of earthly and Satanic corruption rather than spiritual blessing.
    - (2) Secondly, we see the context of all these parables is teaching how the seed-sowing program will be corrupted during this present age.
  - d. The birds represent those who will be antagonistic to the seed-sowing program from within Christendom.
2. Notice what we can anticipate during the course of this period.
  - a. We can anticipate Christianity, as a whole, to be characterized by an enormous but unnatural growth. The sphere of Christian profession will grow to great proportions like a mustard seed which should have become a shrub but became a tree instead. The tree, no doubt, is symbolical of an earthly Kingdom as we have pictured in Nebuchadnezzar's vision (Dan. 4:21,22). The greatness of this Kingdom will be worldly and it will be condemned like the church of Pergamos, whose name means "Married," and who held to the doctrine of Balaam (Rev. 2:14). Balaam wasn't successful in cursing Israel, but he enticed the men of Israel to commit fornication with the daughters of Moab. This is what will be characteristic of the church in our day. We can expect it to commit spiritual fornication and to be "of the world" instead of "in it."
  - b. We can expect Christianity, in its enlarged proportions, to become inwardly corrupt. The birds which devoured the seed in the first parable represented opposition from without, but here we see the opposition will come from within the ranks of Christian profession. This means we can expect Christianity, as a whole, to be corrupted by liberals and modernists who will be nested in it, but they will really be against the seed-sowing program. Notice how this is so descriptive of our day:
    - (1) Organized religion in our day has become a nesting place for those who deny every major doctrine of the Word of God - even the Lord Jesus Himself.
    - (2) Most schools and seminaries have long departed from the fundamentals of the faith and are Amillennial.

- (3) Christianity today has become worldly and socially accepted and those who contend for the fundamentals of the faith or carry out the seed-sowing or soul-winning programs are mocked and ridiculed.
- c. We who are saved can anticipate the Lord's coming to take us out of this corruption (I Thess. 4:13-18), but organized Christianity will continue in its worldly corruption and be gathered under one head and become a one-world church. Then, this great tree of Christendom, with all its worldliness and corruption, will be cut down by our Lord when He comes at the Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation Period. Compare Rev. 13:11-17; 18:2-8; 17:15-17).

**D. FOURTHLY, JESUS GAVE A PARABLE OF SOME LEAVEN WHICH DESCRIBES A SYSTEM OF FALSE RELIGION DURING THIS PERIOD OF TIME (Matt. 13:33-35).**

1. Notice what an analysis of this parable reveals.

- a. The woman here is a system of false religion. This is the symbol used to condemn the false teachers in the Church of Thyatira (Rev. 2:20) and that which describes apostate Christendom in the future (Rev. 17:1-8).
- b. The leaven is evil doctrine or evil practice (Ex. 12:15; Lev. 2:11; 6:17; 10:12; Matt. 16:6-12; Mark 8:15; I Cor. 5:6; Gal. 5:9).

(1) Notice liberal interpretation views the woman as the Church, the leaven as the gospel and the meal as the world. This is not tenable for several reasons:

- (a) First of all, the "law of first mention," as well as everywhere else, refers to leaven as that which is evil.
- (b) Secondly, these parables are picturing opposition to the seed-sowing program. Making the woman the church or the leaven the gospel would be completely out of context here.
- (c) Thirdly, we know that the gospel is not hidden in this age but rather published.

(2) There are 5 different forms of leaven mentioned in the N.T. which prove that leaven is that which corrupts through evil doctrine or practice.

- (a) First we have the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy (Lk. 12:1). They had religion but it was outward and sinful rather than inward and pure.
- (b) Secondly, we have the leaven of the Sadducees (Matt. 16:6-12). These religionists denied the supernatural or the miraculous power of God.
- (c) Then, there is the leaven of the Herodians (Mk. 12:13-17). This was the evil practices of the political crowd who did what gained them favor with men rather than with God.

- (d) Fourthly, we have the leaven of carnal practices among believers within the local church (I Cor. 5:6,7). This was to be purged out to prevent the corruption of others.
  - (e) Finally, we have the leaven of legalism (Gal. 5:9). This was an attempt to mix law with grace which would corrupt the gospel message.
- c. The meal in the parable refers to the doctrines concerning the person of Christ which were typified in the meal offering of the O.T. and eaten by the priests (Lev. 2:1,2,3).
- (1) The three measures of meal were each a third part of an ephah which equaled one ephah and this was the amount offered as a meal offering in the O.T. by Abraham (Gen. 18:6), by Gideon (Judges 6:18,19), and by Hannah (I Sam.1:24). Notice Ezek. 45:24; 46:5,7,11).
  - (2) Hiding the leaven in the meal is a symbol of disobeying what the Word of God says (Lev. 2:11). The law of the offerings forbade leaven which is a type of sin, but it prescribed oil to temper or moisten every meal offering which is typical of the Holy spirit (Ezek. 45:11). What this woman or system of false religion introduced was sinful teachings and practices concerning the doctrines of Christ.

2. Notice what we can anticipate during the course of this period.

- a. We can expect a system of false religion to arise within Christendom which will introduce evil teachings and practices, diverse from the doctrines of Christ, and they will corrupt the teachings of Christendom so that it will become apostate as a whole.
- b. We can expect this corruption to work like leaven or yeast permeating all of Christendom so that eventually it will be doctrinally corrupt concerning its teachings about the Lord Jesus Christ. In our present day, there are those within Christendom, who deny every cardinal doctrine of Christ - His virgin birth, His blood atonement, His bodily resurrection, His pre-tribulational rapture, and His pre-millennial return.
- c. We can expect these evil teachings and practices to be hidden as the leaven was in the meal. Most folks don't know what organized religion today has within its ranks. The liberals and their corruptive teachings are seldom exposed for their denials and departures and when they are, folks continue to support them.
- d. We can expect this system of false religion to become one organized and corrupt whole and then it will be judged during the tribulation period (Rev. 17:16,17).

**E. FIFTHLY, JESUS GAVE A PARABLE OF A BURIED TREASURE WHICH DESCRIBES THE JEWS DURING THIS PERIOD OF TIME (Matt. 13:44).**

1. Notice what an analysis of this parable reveals.
  - a. The man in this parable is, no doubt, the Lord Jesus as in the other parables.
  - b. The field once again refers to the world.
  - c. The treasure which was found and hidden in the field is apparently Israel or that remnant of Jews which are saved. This is the word God that had used in reference to the Jews (Ex. 19:5; Psa. 135:4).
  - d. We notice a different point of view in this parable. Hither-to-fore we have been seeing the human side of things, but here and in the next two parables, we see the divine side. Notice to obtain what is in this parable and the next (45,46) the man "sold all that He had, and bought it."
2. Notice what we can anticipate during the course of this period.
  - a. We can expect the Jews in this age to be like a treasure hid in a field. The price to buy them was laid down when Christ died, but only a remnant is redeemed today and are a part of the Church (Rom. 11:4,5).
  - b. We can expect the Jews as a whole to be blinded until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in which will be after the Rapture (Rom. 11:25).
  - c. We can expect a remnant of the Jews to turn to Christ during the last half of the tribulation period and the nation will be saved at the Second Coming of Christ when the Deliverer comes out of Zion (Rev. 7:3-8; Rom. 11:26-29; Isa. 66:7-9). Notice the Hebrew expression of Matt. 24:31 is referring to the Jews as a nation (Dt. 30:3,4).

**F. SIXTH, JESUS GAVE A PARABLE OF A PEARL WHICH DESCRIBES THE CHURCH DURING THIS PERIOD OF TIME (Matt. 13:45,46).**

1. Notice what an analysis of this parable reveals.
  - a. The merchant man of this parable is none other than the Lord Jesus Himself.
  - b. The pearl of great price here is the Church and the cost of it was the same as that of the Hidden Treasure which represents Israel. It cost the Lord Jesus "all that He had" to redeem those who make up the Church (I Pet. 1:18; Eph. 5:25).
2. Notice what we can anticipate during the course of this period.
  - a. We can expect the church, which was born out of injury like a pearl, to be formed and

to grow as a living organism with believers being added to it and becoming a living part of it. Notice this process in Acts 2:41,47; 5:14; 11:24; Eph. 2:21; Col. 2:19.

- b. We can expect the church to grow until it is taken out of this world. Just like a pearl must be taken out of its place of formation before it can become an object of adornment, so will the church be taken out of this world at the rapture and then be presented to Christ at the marriage of the Lamb, which will take place after the Judgment Seat of Christ (Eph. 5:25,26,27; Rev. 19:7,8).

**G. SEVENTH, JESUS GAVE A PARABLE OF A DRAGNET WHICH DESCRIBES THE JUDGMENT AT THE CLOSE OF THIS PERIOD OF TIME (Matt. 13:47-50).**

1. Notice what an analysis of this parable reveals.

- a. The net here seems to represent once again the whole sphere of Christendom. It encompasses the wicked and the righteous who will be living when this age comes to a close at the end of the Tribulation Period.
- b. The catch of every kind no doubt represents all the different individuals who are a part of Christendom but of which not all are righteous.
- c. The separation of the good from the bad represents the judgment which will come at the end of this age or at the Second Coming of Christ.

2. Notice what we can anticipate during the course of this period.

- a. We can expect the sphere of Christian profession to be characterized by a mixture of true, as well, as false professors and be mingled with all different kinds of individuals some righteous; some wicked.
- b. We can expect a judgment upon the Gentile Nations at the Second Coming of Christ which will separate the wicked from among the righteous. This is detailed in Matt. 25:31-46.
- c. We can anticipate, at that time, those who are unsaved will be cast into hell (Matt. 13:50). Then the wheat, which represents the saved Jews, and good catch, which represents the saved Gentiles, will be gathered together in the Kingdom which the Lord will establish when He comes.
- d. We as Christians, who make up the body of Christ, will be taken out of this net at the rapture (I Thess. 4:13-18) and will not go through the Tribulation Period nor be drawn together as a part of this judgment.



**H. FINALLY, JESUS GAVE A PARABLE OF A HOUSEHOLDER WHICH DESCRIBES THE TREASURES OF TRUTH IN THOSE WHO ARE PROPERLY INSTRUCTED AND UNDERSTAND IT (Matt. 13:51-52).**

1. Notice the question which Jesus asked of His disciples (Matt. 13:51).

He asked them if they understood those parables which He had spoken to them. Then the disciples replied yea Lord. So many times people hear the Word of god preached and taught to them but they don't understand it for one reason or another. Sometimes they're unsaved and have no spiritual discernment (I Cor. 2:14). Sometimes people listen with their ears but don't take things to heart ( James 1:22-25). Then some are so preoccupied with the things of the world that they are not really hearing.

2. Jesus then gave a parable of what a person was like who understood these things concerning the Kingdom of God (Matt. 13:52).

Jesus said they were like a householder who brought old and new things out of His treasury. This is what those properly instructed and understanding the things of the Kingdom of Heaven were like. They hold a storehouse of truth from both the Old Testament and the, now revealed, mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven.

**EXPOSITORY NOTES**

- 13:11** Notice the Lord Jesus identified the parables of the chapter as "mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven." It should be understood what a Bible mystery is. It is not speaking of some truth which believers may not understand, even after searching to find out the meaning, it is simply a truth which was not revealed before hand but is now being revealed.
- 13:11** The parables of this chapter show that there will be a period of time between the sufferings of the King and His glory which will follow (I Pet. 1:10-12). This truth was not revealed to the O.T. prophets but it was revealed to Jesus' disciples and us.
- 13:22** Note that some have contended that the mustard seed is not the smallest seed as Jesus said. It should be understood that the word "least" is a comparative and not a superlative modifier and therefore means "lesser" not least. It should be understood also that Jesus was speaking of seeds native that particular area as well.

## QUESTIONS WE CAN APPLY TO OUR LIVES

1. What method does the devil use to oppose the seed-sowing program of the gospel according to Matt. 13:39? \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. What can we expect Christendom to become according to the parable of the mustard seed (Matt. 13:31,32)?  
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3. What does the parable of the leaven indicate about Christendom (Matt. 13:33) \_\_\_\_\_  
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4. To whom does the "hidden treasure" refer in Matt. 13:44 and who bought it?  
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5. To whom does "the pearl of great price" refer and what does this indicate about the church (Matt. 13:45,46)?  
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6. What does the parable of "the dragnet" indicate about Christendom and when will this time occur (Matt. 13:47-51)? \_\_\_\_\_  
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7. Since the Church will be raptured before the tribulation period and the dragnet refers to judgment at the close of the Tribulation Period to whom do the wheat and tares refer?  
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