

THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW; YOUR KINGDOM COME...ON EARTH

Week 11 – Between Advents; Our Present Day!

April 5, 2022

PLEASE JOT DOWN QUESTIONS YOU HAVE CONCERNING END TIMES AND WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO STUDY IN THE FALL SEMESTER.

Backdrop of Matthew 13 - Based on God's Unconditional Covenants/Promises

Jesus has been offering Himself as King of the kingdom promised to Israel. And Jesus offered the kingdom...the kingdom as described in the OT (Isa. 2:2-3; Isa. 11; Eze. 40-48; Zech. 13 & 14 – cross reference)...the kingdom as promised to Israel (II Sam. 7:16; Psa. 2:9; Psa. 45; Psa. 110; Isa. 9:6; Dan. 9:25-26), He taught of the kingdom... what we know as the Millennial Kingdom, the Messianic Kingdom, the future kingdom.

In Matthew 12, we read of the turning point within Jesus' ministry at His first coming, when the religious leaders rejected Jesus as Messiah, thereby refusing His offer of the Kingdom of God! BUT WE KNOW that Jesus had to suffer and die on the cross (Psa. 16:10; Psa. 22; Isa. 53; Hosea 5:15; Zech. 12:10).

When the religious leadership of Israel refused to accept Jesus as the Messiah and the King of Israel, the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth was POSTPONED! The establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth was NOT cancelled as God had promised the Kingdom to Israel (II Sam. 7:16; Psa. 2:6-9; Isa. 2:2-3; Isa. 9:6-7; Lk. 1:31-32)

The Future Restoration of Israel

Isa. 14:1 - *For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will still choose Israel, and settle them in their own land. The strangers will be joined with them, and they will cling to the house of Jacob.*

Hosea 5:15 - *I will return again to My place (to heaven) **till** they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face;*

In their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.

Matt. 23:37-39 - *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, ... How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more **till** you say, 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'*

Zech. 12:10 - *And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.*

The Kingdom of God is postponed to a future time, a later time, a time when the nation of Israel will accept the King and He will establish His kingdom for 1,000 years on earth (Matt. 24:29 through Matt. 25).

Matt. 13:1-2 - *On the same day* (it appears that it was the Sabbath when Jesus was accused by the Pharisees) *Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea.* ² *And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.*

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The Parable of the Sower

Matt. 13:3-9 - *Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow.* ⁴ *And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.* ⁵ *Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth.* ⁶ *But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.* ⁷ *And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.* ⁸ *But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.* ⁹ *He who has ears to hear, let him hear!* WHAT is Jesus saying? How can we understand these words? AND, WHY is Jesus speaking in parables?

What is a Parable?

The word "parable" means "to throw alongside of." It is a story thrown alongside the truth intended to teach. A parable was/is taught when you have a truth that may be difficult to understand. And so, the teacher lays alongside of it a physical, earthly story which gives understanding to that truth.

The Purpose of Parables

The method of teaching in parables resulted in concealing to some and revealing to some. Jesus withheld further truth about Himself and the kingdom from the nation since they had already rejected the offer of the kingdom.

"He Who has Ears to Hear"

"He who has ears" – everyone has ears. All humanity has ears (unless for some reason some do not). There is a difference between having ears and having "ears to hear." Jesus is calling for people to pay careful attention...to comprehend what He is saying!

Matt. 13:10-13 - *And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"* ¹¹ *He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.* ¹² *For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.* ¹³ *Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.* (Read Isa. 6:9-10)

Matthew 13 – Timeframe

The parables of Matthew 13 speak of the time in between Jesus' first coming and His physical second coming. Where is Jesus today? He is seated at the right hand of God the Father (Psa. 110:1; Acts 2:33-35; Heb. 1:3 – cross reference). Jesus is our great High Priest (Heb. 4:14-16 – cross reference). Jesus is our Advocate (Rev. 12:10).

The time “in between” has been labeled as a “mystery.” Mysteries in scripture speak of truths that were hidden/not revealed in the OT. The Church is a “mystery” (Eph. 3:3, 6; Col. 1:26). The rapture is a “mystery” (I Cor. 15:51-52). The parables in Matt. 13 refer to truth that was NOT revealed in the OT but is revealed in the NT!

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There are many who regard the parables of Matthew 13 as teaching the WIDESPREAD SUCCESS of preaching the Gospel. One view teaches that the Church will Christianize the world that then we can invite Jesus to return!?

Matt. 13 addresses the question “What will occur when the rejected King goes back to heaven and the promised kingdom is postponed **until** Jesus physical second coming?” The seven/eight parables are part of one connected and complete discourse. That being stressed, the teaching of these parables must be consistent and harmonious throughout.

The teaching of the third parable cannot conflict with the teaching of the first two. Let's think big picture of Scripture as we look at the parables which I'm placing under the banner of “Christendom.” Let's remember that the parables in Matt. 13 are NOT speaking about the Millennial Kingdom.

Parable of the Sower

The parable of the sower teaches that the word of God will be preached throughout the course of the mystery age until Jesus returns at His physical Second Coming, following the tribulation - with varying responses based upon how the heart has been prepared (Matt. 13:1-9, 18-23). We need to know that during the Millennial Kingdom the nations will flock to Jerusalem (on top of the mtn. following topographical change [Zech. 14:14ff]) to receive the truth from Jesus. In this period of which Matt. 13 speaks, we're NOT traveling to Jerusalem to learn directly from the King (Isa. 2:3) during which time there will be NO war (Isa. 2:4)

Seed falling by the wayside

Matt. 13:4 - *And as he (the sower) sowed, some seed fell by the wayside (a path; a road; not soil); and the birds came and devoured them.* Some receive the word with hardened hearts/hardened surface and the wicked one quickly snatches away the sown word. The word has no effect because it never penetrates and is quickly taken away.

- Matt. 13:19 – Jesus explained...*When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart (or intended to be sown in the heart). This is he who received seed by the wayside.*

Seed falling on stony places

Matt. 13:5-6 - *Some (seed) fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth (thin covering of soil on rocky ground); and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. ⁶ But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.* Some respond to the word with immediate enthusiasm yet soon wither away.

- Matt. 13:20-21 – Jesus explained - *But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.* This soil represents those who receive the word enthusiastically, but their life is short-lived, because they are not willing to endure tribulation or persecution.

Seed falling among thorns

Matt. 13:7 - *And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.*

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- Matt. 13:22 – Jesus explained - *Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.*

Some respond to the word and grow for a while, but are choked and stopped in their spiritual growth by the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches that choke the word.

Seed falling on good ground

Matt. 13:8 - *But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.* Some respond rightly to the word and bear fruit.

- Matt. 13:23 – Jesus explained - *But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.* Fruit bearing is seen in decreasing proportions. When the Kingdom of God is established on earth by Jesus at His physical second coming - *the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORDs as the waters cover the sea* (Isa. 11:9).

Consider:

- Like the wayside, sometimes we allow the Word no room at all in our lives.
- Like the stony places, we sometimes have flashes of enthusiasm in receiving the Word that quickly burn out.
- Like the soil among thorns, the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches are constantly threatening to choke out God's Word and our fruitfulness.
- Like the good ground, the Word bears fruit in our lives.

The difference in each category is with the soil itself. The same seed is cast by the same sower. You cannot blame the differences in results on the sower or on the seed, but only on the soil.

Parable of the Wheat and the Tares

Matt. 13:24-30 - *Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; ²⁵ but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. ²⁶ But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. ²⁷ So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' ²⁸ He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?' ²⁹ But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them but gather the wheat into my barn.'' This is NOT a description of the Millennial Kingdom.*

NOTE: The parable of the wheat and tares teaches that the enemy will sow tares among the wheat! (In the Mill. Kingdom, Satan is bound!!)

This parable describes corruption among the people of God. The wheat represents the people of God. Some corrupting influence enters. Tares are weeds, probably darnel, a poisonous plant related to wheat, resembling wheat – but indistinguishable from the wheat until the fruit forms.

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And so, it will be difficult to distinguish between the saved and unsaved within professing Christendom throughout the mystery age. The separation between believer and unbeliever will not be made until the physical Second Coming (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43).

- Matt. 13:37-43 – Jesus explained - *He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. ³⁹ The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. ⁴⁰ Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, ⁴² and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!*

Parable of the Mustard Seed

Matt. 13:31-32 - *Another parable He put forth to them, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, ³² which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.'* Some, or even most, regard this as a description of the growth and eventual dominance of the church, the kingdom community. Yet in light of both this parable itself and the context of the parables both

before and after, this should be regarded as another description of *corruption* in the kingdom community, just as the previous parable of the wheat and the tares described

Many, or even most, regard the mustard seed parable as a beautiful picture of the church growing so large that it provides refuge for all of the world. But this mustard seed plant grew unnaturally large, and it harbored birds, which, in the previous parables were emissaries of Satan (Matthew 13:4, 13:19). (Rev. 18:2)

The mustard plant customarily never grows beyond what one would call a bush, and at its normal size would be an unlikely place for bird's nests. The tree-like growth from this mustard seed describes something unnatural. Birds lodging in the branches might refer to elements of corruption which take refuge in the very shadow of Christianity.

The final form of Christendom will reek of apostasy – departure from the inerrant/without error – word of God! I Tim. 4:1-3; II Tim. 3:1-8; Jude; Rev. 2 & 3 – letters to the seven churches – “He who has an ear to hear, let him hear....”

Parable of the Leaven in the Meal

Matt. 13:33 - *The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.*

Many, if not most, regard this as a beautiful picture of the kingdom of God working its way through the whole world. Yet leaven is consistently used as a picture of sin and corruption (Ex. 12:15-20; Ex. 34:25; Lev. 2:11; Lev. 6:17; Lev. 10:12; Matt. 16:6, 12; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1; I Cor. 5:6-7; Gal. 5:7-9). Both the content and the context point towards this being a description of corruption in this interval period.

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The first 4 parables were delivered from the boat on the Sea of Galilee. In the parable of the sower, only one out of the four sowings yields any fruit. There is the mingling of saved and unsaved/wheat and tares – due to the enemy's activity. The great unnatural tree affords shelter to all (much compromise). Leaven corrupts what is thought to be the great/rapid spread of the gospel.

Remaining 4 parables – Jesus is with His disciples – privately.

Matt. 13:34-36 - *All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, ³⁵ that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 'I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.' ³⁶ Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, 'Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.'*

Perhaps the disciples had become despondent as Jesus laid out such an evil picture of the world without Him.

In the next four parables Jesus encourages the disciples by telling them that God is continuing to work. There will be two elect people: the nation of Israel and the Church.

The Treasure Hidden in a Field

Matt. 13:44 - Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

The field is the world. Jesus is the man who gave all that He had to buy the field. That's what we've been understanding. God's treasure and possession throughout the OT is national Israel (Ex. 19:5; Deut. 7:6-8; Deut. 14:2; Deut. 32:8; Psa. 135:4).

The parable of the hidden treasure teaches that although Jesus came to purchase Israel (as well as the world), the nation will remain in unbelief throughout the course of the mystery age and will not come to faith in Jesus until the end of the tribulation.

One Pearl of Great Price

Matt. 13:45-46 - Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Jesus is the merchant. The pearl of great price is the redeemed – both Jews and Gentiles – whom Jesus bought with His life.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like a Dragnet

Matt. 13:47-50 - Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Jesus taught that at the end of the age there will be both the wicked and the just. At that time the angels will come forth and assist the King in the work of judgment, sending some into the furnace of fire for final judgment (Matt. 25:31-46).

7

Parable of the Householder

Matt. 13:51-52 - Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." Did they truly understand? We do not read of Jesus denying their claim.

⁵² Then He said to them, 'Therefore every scribe (teacher) instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.' The disciples are being given the responsibility to teach their understanding to others from the truths in the NT and from the truths in the OT.

Matt. 13:53-58 - Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there. ⁵⁴ When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, 'Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? ⁵⁵ Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? ⁵⁶ And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?' ⁵⁷ So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honor except in his own country and in his own house. ⁵⁸ Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

We close out this most graphic chapter by understanding, I pray, that Jesus made Himself of no reputation. He came in lowliness, in humility. It is this very obscureness, ordinary nature of Jesus' home background, that caused the people to be moved to being offended! They were offended at Jesus!

Jesus came to identify with us!

As the world continues (fallen; under the ruler of this world – the enemy), those who are not redeemed - are so deceived!

Do we desire to be householders who will teach our understanding of God's word, OT and NT, to others?

QUESTIONS

What impacted you? WHY?

With what do you not agree? WHY?

How do you understand the parables? WHY?

On what are you basing your view?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK

Ponder!

Share with others.

Send questions and thoughts re: what you'd like to cover concerning end times.

ENJOY THE SPRING/SUMMER MONTHS!