



The Kingdom Parables

“Then Jesus said unto them, **Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which brings forth out of his treasure things new and old.**” (Matthew 13:52)



The Golden Rule Of Interpretation

Created By Dr. David L. Cooper

Trying to understand what the Bible is saying can be difficult. Here is a way that has helped many people. It is known as *Dr Cooper's Golden Rule* and is reproduced below. It is the rule that we will follow in this series.

“When the plain sense of scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense; therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning unless the facts of the immediate context, studied in the light of related passages and axiomatic (i.e. self-evident or unquestionable) and fundamental truths indicate clearly otherwise.”

“A. Seek the plain, literal meaning of the scriptures.

“B. Seek the figurative meaning only when the facts demand such an interpretation.

“C. Study every statement of the scriptures in context.

“Then study the facts of the context in the light of related passages and axiomatic (*i.e. self-evident or unquestionable*) fundamental truths.

“No prophecy of scripture is of private (special) interpretation (2 Peter 1:20)

“The sum of thy word is truth (Psalm 119:160)

“1. *The Golden Rule of Interpretation* is one of the most important principles governing us in our interpretation of the Scriptures.

“2. If we follow this rule, we shall never go very far wrong; **but if we fail to follow it, we shall never go right.**”

C. H. Spurgeon agrees,

“I wish never to learn the art of tearing God’s meaning out of His own Words. If there is anything clear and plain, the literal sense and meaning of (the) passage, (it’s) a meaning not to be spirited or spiritualised away. (C. H. Spurgeon Sermon No. 582 on-line source)

(“Cooper’s Golden Rule” source: <http://www.messianicassociation.org/ezine19-dc.hermeneutics.htm>)



The Kingdom PARABLES

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The Kingdom Parables

The Rejection Of Jesus: Setting The Stage

Our Lord's ministry began with a simple message, "*The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*" Jesus sent His disciples out with straightforward instructions that may be fairly summarised as follows

- Go only to the lost sheep of Israel
- Do not go to the Gentiles or the Samaritans
- Preach saying "*The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.*"
- "*Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils ...*" (see Matt 10:5-8)

Jesus Himself preached the same message going only to the Jews and healing those who called upon Him. The Pharisees rejected Jesus as He did not fit their self-created image of their expected Messiah. The Pharisees were highly respected teachers of the Law and Jesus Himself confirmed their knowledge of the Scriptures when He said,

"All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but don't follow their works: for they say, and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers. But all their works they do for to be seen of men..."

(Matthew 23:3-5)

The Blasphemous Claim By The Pharisees

Jesus performed a rather remarkable miracle that attested to His Messianic claims. It was the reaction of the Pharisees to that miracle that brought about the new message contained in the Kingdom Parables. Matthew records this event.

*Then was brought unto Jesus one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw. And all the people were amazed, and said, **Is not this the son of David?*** (Matt 12:22)

This statement was offensive to the Pharisees because the people were calling Him "*the Son of David.*" Those words caused intense feelings in the Pharisees. The crowds considered Jesus to be the Messiah for "*the Son of David*" is a title of the Messiah. The Pharisees responded immediately,

But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow does not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils. (Matt 12:24)

The Pharisees declared a miracle of God to be from Beelzebub, they attributed the miracle to Satan and thus blasphemed the Holy Ghost. This is the unpardonable sin, blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. (See Matt 12:31-32) Jesus immediately refuted that argument declaring that the miracle was of God by saying "*But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you.*" (A full reading of Matthew 12 is highly recommended here as Jesus refutes their claim and reveals Himself as the Messiah.)

This is the moment when Jesus was rejected by the Jewish hierarchy who were the religious leaders of the day. This final rejection by the Pharisees resulted in several things happening.

- The rejection by the Pharisees was seen to be Israel's rejection of the Messiah. It caused the Messianic Kingdom to be no longer "*at hand.*"
- From that point onwards the earlier message that the "*Kingdom of Heaven was at hand*" was no longer preached.

The Messianic Kingdom was **deferred** until His promised return as is revealed in the subsequent messages of Jesus.

We later see Jesus crying out in obvious anguish caused by that rejection,

*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets, and stone them that are sent unto you; how often would I have gathered your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, **You shall not see Me, until the time come when you shall say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.*** (Luke 13: 34-35)

Returning to the Matthew account, we see that things changed **immediately** following the blasphemous rejection by the Pharisees. We read "***That same day*** Jesus went out of the house and sat by the seaside." (Matt 13:1) There He taught a new and different message. Jesus spoke much about the Kingdom, but His message broadened to include the Gentiles and He no longer claimed that the promised glorious Messianic Kingdom was "*at hand*" or imminent. That is the background, and the setting, for the *Kingdom Parables*.

In them Jesus reveals some new truths: the Church, and that Church would contain both Jews and Gentiles. The Kingdom would now be opened to all and to any who will place their trust in Jesus as Saviour.

In summary

- Jesus was officially rejected by the religious leaders who claimed that Jesus was in league with Beelzebub, Satan.
- The Messianic Kingdom offer was withdrawn.
- **That very day** Jesus introduced a new message; the way was opened for the Gentiles.
- The message that the "*Kingdom was at hand*" ceased to be given.

The teachings of the Kingdom parables will reveal some new truths. Jesus said, "*I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.*" (Matt 13:35)

The Kingdom Parables

The Parable Of The Sower

“And He spoke many things unto them in parables, saying...” (Matthew 13:3)

The Bible uses “code words” as we all do every day. Words such as ROM and RAM and megabytes are familiar to most these days. Some Biblical code words are “*sanctification*”, “*justification*”, “*the Lamb of God*”: there are many of them. The *Kingdom Parables* use certain terms also and their only acceptable definition is to be found in the Bible. We must look to the Bible alone to gain an understanding of the message that God is giving to us in these parables.

The Kingdom Parables form a body of teaching that is laid out step-by-step for the listeners: and that means to us in the 21st century. They are to be understood as a progressive revelation each containing another aspect of the Kingdom. Each parable depends upon the other and should not be understood in isolation. Each parable has a primary message, it is teaching a main point and that is how it is to be understood.

Jesus was giving us a “*package*” of teaching about this newly revealed and, until then, a “*mysterious*” Kingdom. Jesus the King was rejected and now something new was to come. Jesus called that something the “*time of the gentiles*,” (Luke 21:24) and it is our era in history. The time between His first and second coming is also commonly called “*The Church Age*.” Jesus is teaching us just how the Church Age will pan out over that time frame and that is our time frame, in a word it’s “*NOW*.”

“*Behold a sower went forth to sow*” are very well known words and with them the first of the Kingdom parables begin. Hear the familiar words, “*And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.*” (Matt 13: 3-9)

Most believers are familiar with this Parable and know the application that Jesus gave to it. The “*seed*,” which is the message or “*word*” from God, is received well by some, and rejected by others for Jesus taught that Satan

“catches away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. He that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that hears the word, and with joy receives it; Yet has he no root in himself, but endures for a while: but when tribulation or persecution arises

because of the word, he is offended” and falls away. (Matthew 13: 19-21)

This is easily observable: people apparently coming to faith and then falling away. Jesus said, *“But he that receives the seed into the good ground is he that hears the word, and understands it; which also bears fruit, and brings forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.* (Matthew 13:23)

This too is very observable in the life of the Church and is obvious to all who consider these parables.

However this parable does contain a hidden message. The Disciples were surprised by the parables and questioned Jesus about them. Their expectation of the coming Messiah was built upon the messages they had heard in the Synagogues, and those messages came from their Rabbi’s who had a very faulty view of the coming Messiah.

It is much like the Church of today who, broadly speaking, have no real understanding of the end time events. This is because many of these Churches have declared that Israel has been “*cast out*” by God. This false belief causes a blindness much like the blindness that the Pharisees suffered. Much of the Church today reject Israel, reject the literal understanding of the Scriptures, do not believe that the Lord will reign on the earth and, the result is, that the word of God is “*spiritualised*” giving meanings to many “*truths*” that were never intended by the Lord. The signs of the times were totally missed by the Pharisees in the time of Jesus, and these days they are missed by the equally blinded modern Church.

Here was Jesus speaking about His own Kingdom but He had an audience that did not understand Him, so He opened their minds by means of these parables. The first new “*truth*” that Jesus revealed was that the Kingdom was open to the Gentiles. When Jesus first sent His disciples He gave them very specific instructions. “**Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.**” (Matt 10:5-6) Jesus was rejected by the leaders of the Jews, they rejected Him and His Kingdom, and now a new message was proclaimed beginning with this parable.

In these parables Jesus revealed to His disciples that “*The field is the world*” (Matt 13:38). The Sower sows, and the field he now sows in is the entire world. This was the new message, the Gospel is now opened to the Gentiles and so something new is added, and the Church age begins.

The Kingdom Parables

The Tares And The Wheat

“Another parable He put forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.” (Matthew 13:24-25)

The “seed” in the *Sower Parable* is the Word of God. The *Tares Parable* also has a seed, but it is NOT the same seed as defined in the *Sower Parable*. Rather the “good seed” in the *Tares Parable* is a person, a believer. “*The good seed are the children of the kingdom.*” The Lord sows His believers wherever He will, but the parable also says that Satan also sows his seed, the unbeliever. Jesus declares Satan’s seed to be “*tares.*”

It is obviously true that both believers and unbelievers dwell within the Church, but Jesus here **is not** speaking about the Church for **the field is the world** as we see below. The disciples came to Jesus and asked, “*Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field*” (Matt 13:36) Jesus made five defining points (Matt 13: 37-39) when answering His disciples ...

- “*He that sows the good seed is the Son of Man;*
- “***the field is the world;***
- “***the good seed are the children of the kingdom;***
- “***but the tares are the children of the wicked one.***
- “*The enemy that sowed them is the devil;*”

The Kingdom parables offer an explanation of the Lord’s Kingdom as it is now within the real world as we know it. This is not the Kingdom that “*will come*”, it does not refer to the *Millennial Kingdom*, or the *Eternal Kingdom*. It means the Kingdom of God that exists now, the Holy Spirit indwelling all believers. Today the believers (*the good wheat*) are scattered wherever the Lord puts them in our world, and they are found amongst all races. At the same time Satan is sowing his “*tares,*” the unbelievers, in the world and amongst all races. Satan also sows within the Church. Wherever the good seed bears fruit (*the “wheat”*), Satan also sows his “*tares.*”

The “*tares*” may well claim to be believers and are sometimes hard to identify. Satan is a master deceiver and many “*tares*” are impossible to identify. Some of the “*tares*” may even think that they are “*wheat*”, but “*the Lord knows those that are His.*” (2 Tim 2:19) How many preachers have brought the Gospel into disrepute? How many scandals have erupted from people in the Church who are said to be “*Christians*”? Perhaps they were “*tares*” in disguise.

In the parable the farm workers asked “*Should we go and dig out the tares?*” and the answer was “*No, let them both grow together for in digging them out you may injure the wheat also.*” (Matt 13:39) It is not our task to try and identify the “*tares*”, nor is it our job to purge them out. This is because our

understanding is so very limited and we also are sinners. Being sinners, if we attempted to root out all that offends, our purges would inevitably end up focussing on our imagined “*rivals*”, those people who annoy us. Many “*annoying people*” have been eradicated by mob rule. That is the sad history of the human race, and the Church has not been immune either. The Lord tells us in this parable that He will send His angels and they will do it right. Jesus here solemnly warns us that we must not seek to root out these *tares* because we may injure immature and innocent believers in the process.

As sinful as we certainly are, Jesus said of the true believers “*You are the salt of the earth... You are the light of the world*” (Matt 5:13-14) and so the believers are those who bring the “*light*” of the Gospel to the world. They are also the preserving force, the “*salt of the earth.*” When the Lord would destroy Sodom for its wickedness Abraham dared to ask the Lord “*Oh let not the Lord be angry, if just ten (righteous) shall be found there. And the Lord said, I will not destroy it for ten's sake.*” (Genesis 18:32) The evil world today is preserved from judgment by the believing Church, and there are millions of us, not just ten

This “*light and salt*”, the “*good wheat,*” is also observably in other ways for who is it that stands against the evils of society? Who is it that speaks up against the wickedness so often promoted by our political leaders? It is mostly the believers. The Bible clearly teaches that immediately the believers vanish in the Rapture the world just goes into decay. Why? Because “*the light and salt*” are gone.

The Lord today will not measure out His wrath on an unbelieving world because of the believers. The holy promise remains true, “*For God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (1 Thess 5:9) Once all the believers are taken by the Lord in the Rapture then all the “*salt and light*” is gone from the earth and the Lord pours out His wrath on unbelieving mankind, but He also raises up new witnesses.

Meanwhile the evil “*tares*” and the “*good wheat*” grow together in the field (defined by Jesus Himself as “*the world*”) awaiting that Great Day when the Lord will, in righteousness and true justice, sort it all out.

The Kingdom Parables

The Mustard Seed and The Leaven

“31. Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field ... 33. Another parable He spoke unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” (Matt 13: 31, 33)

The Mustard Seed

The Mustard Seed parable is not explained by the Lord of Glory, but we all know that tiny seeds do grow into much bigger plants, and even into gigantic trees. Thus this parable illustrates that the tiny seed grows into a great Institution such as the world Church we see today. The Lord says that when the seed “becomes a tree” then “the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.”
(Matthew 13:32)

Who are the birds? The parable of the sower defines the “birds” as those who “came and devoured” the good seed “that fell by the wayside.” (Matt 13:4) Jesus further defined those birds as Satan for, when He explained the parable He said “then comes the wicked one, and catches away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.” (Matt 13:19) Where do we find the birds in the Mustard Seed parable? The Lord tells us that “the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches” of the tree. (Matt 13:32) This parable is teaching that when the tree becomes large Satan will be somewhere within it. This is very observable in the Church today as shown elsewhere in this series. (<https://www.thesinglepagedpapers.com/the-laodicean-church>)

The Leaven Hidden In The Meal

“Another parable Jesus told them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.” (Matt 13:33) Many teach that this parable relates to the ministry of the of the Church. They claim that evangelism will finally result in the world being won for the Lord. Here are two examples of that teaching. “The leaven represents the kingdom of heaven in its influence. ... The influence of the church will become very wide and extensive.”⁽¹⁾ Another says, “The effect of the kingdom of God will be comprehensive. Just as yeast works until the dough has completely risen, the ultimate benefit of the kingdom of God will be worldwide.”⁽²⁾ (1) (Sources: <https://www.study-light.org/commentaries/bcc/matthew-13.html>) (2) <https://www.gotquestions.org/parable-leaven.html>)

Are those explanation realistic? **Firstly:** let us look at the leaven. In Scripture leaven is almost always a symbol for evil. There are many warnings in the Scriptures against leaven. Jesus spoke of leaven when He warned His disciples to “beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?” and He explained that the leaven was the false “doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.”
(Matthew 16:11-12)

The Israelites were only to offer unleavened bread in sacrifices. “You shall **not** offer the blood of my sacrifice **with leavened bread.**” (Ex 23:18) St Paul warns of leaven saying “Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, as you are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.” (1 Cor 5:6-8) Here Paul describes leaven as “wickedness.”

Secondly: here we are two thousand years after the cross, and the establishment of the Church, and there are more unbelievers in the world than ever before. Does anyone truly believe that the Church will finally win the world to Christ?

Thirdly: the explanation that the world will be finally won for Christ through the Church is **contradicted by the Lord Himself.** In the *Tares Parable* Jesus taught, “As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; **so shall it be in the end of this world.** The Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 13 : 40-42)

The world will never be won for the Lord by the alleged “leavening” actions of the Church.

Jesus Himself confirmed this a second time saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, **but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.**”
(Matthew 13: 47-50)

The Church has taken unto itself many Old Testament promises but these Old Testament promises were made to Israel. Many in the Church today promote the idea that Israel has been replaced by the Church. Consequently they have taken the promises that God gave to Israel and falsely applied them to the Church. In exactly the same way they have redefined the *Kingdom Parables* to fit into their man-made doctrines. This fact will be more clearly revealed in the following *Kingdom Parables* of this series.

The Kingdom Parables

The Treasure Hidden In The Field

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hides it, and for joy thereof goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field.” (Matthew 13: 44)

This parable has tortured the minds of many commentators. Many say that the Treasure is salvation and the “man who finds it sells all that he has to buy it.” Anyone who understands the Gospel will have serious trouble with that explanation.

Nowhere do we find a sinner “buying” anything for the forgiveness of sin. Salvation is not for sale, nor is Christ “hidden in a field” somewhere. No one who truly finds the Lord “hides” Him again and no one “sells all that he has and buys the field.” Quite the opposite is true for we are supposed “to forsake the world,” and not buy or accumulate it.

- What do we have to sell in order to be saved?
- What do we have to buy in order to be saved?

This explanation fails on all points because it is so obviously false.

Always in the Scriptures the “code words” are explained. The code words in this case are

- “treasure”,
- “the field,”
- “sells all that he has”,
- “buys the field.”

Who or what is the “treasure”? We go to the Scriptures and what do we find? “For the Lord has chosen Jacob unto Himself, **and Israel for His peculiar treasure.**” (Ps 135:4) Israel is God’s “peculiar treasure” and we are told in this parable that it is hidden “in the field.”

What is the field? We have already seen in these parables that the field is the world. How is God’s “treasure” hidden in the field. We have all heard the expression “the lost tribes of Israel.” These tribes may be “lost” to mankind, but they are not at all “lost” by God for He knows where every one of His Chosen People are at all times. Jesus taught about this aspect of our loving God when He said that “not one sparrow falls to the ground with the Heavenly Father knowing” about it. (Matt 10:29) The Bible also teaches that even “the very hairs of our heads are numbered.” (Matt 10:30) God has said that Israel is His “peculiar treasure.” If He knows about every sparrow, and every hair on our heads, then He certainly knows where His “peculiar treasure” is.

How did God “sell all that He had?” to “buy that field?” On the cross He bore the sins of the entire world and that certainly includes the sins of His “peculiar treasure.” Jesus, in telling the parable, said “and for joy thereof goes and sells all that He has, and buys that field.”

This parable speaks of God redeeming Israel and, when it happens, it will fulfil many Old Testament prophecies such as, “Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: ... For thus says the Lord, You have sold yourselves for nought; and you shall be redeemed without money.” (Isaiah 52: 1,3)

Listen to these holy promises from God that are addressed only to Israel and not to anyone else.

*“For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake **I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof goes forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burns.** And the Gentiles shall see your (Israel’s) righteousness, and all kings your glory: and you shall be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. **You (Israel) shall also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.** You shall no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall your land any more be termed Desolate: but you shall be called Hephzibah, (it means “my delight is in her”) and your land Beulah: for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married. For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you: **and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.** I have set watchmen upon your walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: you that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, And give Him no rest, till He establish, **and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.** (Isaiah 62: 1-7)*

God delights in His chosen people, Israel, and thus Christ bought the field (the world) in which they are still scattered, and that purchase brings Him “joy.” Some may be hidden from our view now, but He will yet redeem them.

It is sad to observe that fine Christian people become blinded when they approach the Scriptures with a mind-set that says Israel is replaced by the Church? That mind-set blinds them to the truth as we see here. Here is the strangest thing: many who have this mind-set are very Godly people, they are truly our brothers and sisters in Christ, but their mind-set blinds them to rather obvious Truths that may be understood by comparing Scripture with Scripture. It **is** true that Scripture unlocks Scripture. Being “blinded” to these truths must result in a total misunderstanding of the Scriptures as far as Israel and the end times are concerned. It is both sad and tragic!

The Kingdom Parables

The “Pearl Of Great Price”

And “The Net Cast Into The Sea”

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it. Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind.” (Matthew 13: 45-47)

A common explanation of the pearl parable is: “It is designed to represent the gospel as of more value than all other things, and to impress on us the duty of sacrificing all that we possess in order to obtain it.” (My emphasis. *Barnes Notes On The Bible*, <https://biblehub.com/commentaries/matthew/13-45.htm>)

To test this explanation let’s see how one man came to faith.

“And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on Him, saying, If You be Christ, save Yourself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Do you not fear God, seeing you are in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this Man has done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when You come into your kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto you, Today you shall be with Me in paradise.” (Luke 23:39-43)

What did that thief “sacrifice” to obtain salvation? Nothing, he just called upon the Lord and was assured by the Saviour that “Today you shall be with Me in paradise.”

Paul and Silas were in prison. The jailor thought that they had escaped and was about to kill himself. Paul assured the jailor that no one had escaped. The jailor released them and asked “Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.” (Acts 16:30-31) **That is salvation.** We have no duty to “sacrifice all that we possess in order to obtain it” as the commentator above claims.

Most of these parables have suffered much in the explanations of them. We have just discussed that the “treasure hidden in the field” is **Israel**. The Lord Jesus Christ then immediately speaks of His other treasure, “the Pearl of Great Price.” What is the Pearl? The “pearl of great price” is the **Church**, it is **not** salvation.

As Jesus said, these parables are teaching new truths. A pearl is formed slowly as, little-by-little, the pearl covers the *irritant* within the shell by layering a substance called *nacre* over it, thus creating the pearl. The pearl is formed slowly, layer upon layer, and finally becomes one complete body, a beautiful glowing pearl. In the same way the Lord adds to His Church, layer-by-layer over the centuries, finally forming a completely unified body. “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: **for you**

are all one in Christ Jesus.” (Gal 3:28) That body is the saved Church made up of believers of all ages and will continue “until He comes” in the Rapture. That Church is redeemed by the precious blood of Christ for “He sold all that He had” and redeemed the “Pearl of great price,” the Church.

The parable of the fishing net reveals another truth for the Kingdom parables link together forming a body of truth. The Church of our Lord is described in the “net parable” as the “good” fish. They are **within** the “net” but so are the “bad” fish for the net “gathers every kind.” A fishing net being dragged along catches everything that enters it. Therefore it catches a mixed bag of both good and bad. All the fish caught are still within the sea, but they are now also contained within the net.

This is totally observable within the Church for there will always be a mixture of believers and unbelievers, of good things and bad. People are attracted to the Church, for many reasons. Some for friendship, some are religious in nature and love religious rituals, some are lonely, some come for “political” reasons such as to help them in their job, or even to get elected, some want to be seen as “pillars in society”, and others come because they are truly “of God.” The life of the Church (the net) attracts all types, the saved and unsaved.

The net is dragged ashore and the sorting begins. Jesus closing the parable said, “when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.” The judgment day **will** come. That Day is explained...

“So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” (Matt 13: 48-50)

According to the Lord Jesus Himself the idea that the world will be converted by the Church is defeated three times, **1.** by the *Sower Parable*, **2.** the *Tares Parable* and **3.** the parable of the *Fishing Net* as they all end in judgment of the wicked who are cast out. The idea that the Gospel will spread throughout the world by some sort of “spiritual osmosis” is also defeated by the *Leaven parable* for “leaven” is shown to be evil. In these Kingdom Parables Jesus tells us how it really is, so why don’t we believe Him?

The Kingdom Parables

“Have You Understood These Things?”

“Jesus said unto them, Have you understood all these things? They say unto Him, Yes, Lord.” (Matthew 13: 51)

When He had completed the telling of these Kingdom Parables Jesus asked His disciples “Have you understood these things?” The quick response was “Yes Lord.” Whether the disciples truly understood them at that moment is not known. What is certain is that the Lord had placed new thoughts within the hearts and minds of the disciples and those thoughts would produce new understandings. Those new understandings would eventually produce good fruit.

In these parables the Lord was revealing history in advance, for these parables are truly prophetic. The only real history is that which describes God’s dealings with mankind. Other history may well be interesting to us, but it has no eternal worth.

The Sower And The Tares Parables

These two parables complement each other. The “Sower” Parable teaches that the preaching of the Word will continue throughout the ages of mankind. We all know that this has happened for even you have heard the Gospel, and it will continue.

The “Tares” Parable is similar in style, but different in application. It reveals that there will be a false sowing and that Satan is the mastermind behind that false sowing. Satan will sow his deceptive people within the Church, and also within the world. Even the most simple examination of history shows that this is also true.

“The Kingdom Of Heaven Is Like To A Grain Of Mustard Seed”

The “Mustard Seed” Parable shows that the Church would grow to be a huge enterprise. However the Mustard Tree has “the birds of the air lodging in its branches.” (Matt 13: 32) Jesus declared these birds to be symbolic of “the wicked one” (Matt 13:9), and where do we find them? Lodging in the tree which represents the Church when it is grown.

Sadly, much of the Church today has “left its first love” (Rev 2:4) and the “birds” representing evil are indeed lodging within its branches. This teaching also complements the “Tares” parable for the “tares” are also shown to be within the Church.

“The Kingdom Of Heaven Is Like Unto Leaven”

The “hidden leaven” parable reveals the tragic fact that the Church will be corrupted by false doctrine. Perhaps the most pernicious today of those falsities is that “the Church replaces Israel.” This doctrine creates an anti-Israel feeling within many Churches, and does no end of harm to the plans of

the Lord who loved and died for Israel, the “treasure hidden in the field.”

“The Kingdom Of Heaven Is Like Unto Treasure Hid In A Field”

The “treasure hidden in the field” parable is totally prophetic and announces the forthcoming tragic history of the scattered Jewish people. There are sayings in many languages that describe the Jewish people with terms like “the wandering Jew.” (The famous pic below is called “The Wandering Jew”) The wandering Jew is just another way of saying that the Jews are “hidden in the field” for, in these parables, the “field” is the world. The Jewish people have been persecuted and hounded out of many countries for millennia, but they remain God’s “peculiar treasure” and He will yet restore them.



“The Kingdom Of Heaven Is Like Unto A Merchant Man, Seeking Goodly Pearls”

The “pearl of great price” is the Church and the parable reveals how the Lord gave up all that He had for His bride, the Church. In combination the “treasure hidden in the field” and “the pearl of great price” parables reveal what is precious to the Lord God: Israel and the Church, for He gave His all to redeem them both.

The Lord Warns Of The Judgment To Come

Three of these parables end with a fearsome warning of a judgment to come. We ignore that at our peril. They are the “Sower,” the “Tares” and the “Fishing Net.” The teaching here is very clear. The Lord declares that there are only two classes of people, the saved and the lost. The teaching about the lost is very strong in these parables for they shall be “cast into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 13:50)

The Kingdom Parables

“Things New And Things Old”

“Then He said unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which brings forth out of his treasure things new and old. And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed thence.” (Matthew 13: 52-53)

The Lord described these parables as revealing “things new and old.” So what is “new” and what is “old?” The Sower and the Tares parables reveal something “new” and that is that the Gospel was opened to the world at large, the Gentiles. Originally Jesus gave very definite instructions to His disciples saying “Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matthew 10:5-6) Now these parables presented a new task. Jesus explained that “the field is the world.” (Matt 13:37-38)

Another “new” revelation was the Church, “the pearl of great price.” A new era had come for, “Jesus said unto them, Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” (Mark 16:15) and so the way of salvation was opened to the Gentiles resulting in the creation of the Church. Through the shortly-to-be-formed Church, the Lord would expand the Gospel. That is **NOT** to say that the Church replaces Israel, **for it does not**. These parables reveal a different role for Israel and also reveal that Israel will be ultimately redeemed both individually and nationally. The idea that the Church replaces Israel is very harmful to the cause of God. That viewpoint is subtle and has a gradual and harmful effect on the life of the Church. It leads to the failure to understand the prophetic Word of God and is a deception of Satan. In some cases it leads to antisemitism as shown elsewhere in this series.

Instead of being replaced the “treasure hidden” parable introduces a new truth and that is that the role of Israel in the plan of God becomes diminished at this point. Israel is not rejected and the story revealed in this “treasure” parable is a proof of that. Israel **remains** chosen by God, for the “hidden treasure” **is** Israel. Jesus here is revealing just how “special” Israel is. That “specialness” is emphasised by Jesus when He said “when a man had found it, for joy thereof goes and sells all that he had, and buys that field.” (Matt 13: 44) That is exactly what the Lord did.

However Israel is also an “old” truth in that Israel was chosen by God long ago in the **unconditional covenant promise** to Abraham. Here it is: “Now the Lord had said unto Abram, leave your country, and your kindred, and from your father’s house, unto a land that I will show you: And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great; and you shall be a

blessing: And I will bless them that bless you, and curse him that curses you: and in you shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him;... and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; ... And the Lord appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto your seed will I give this land...”

(Genesis 12: 1-7 selected)

The “new” revelation was that Israel was soon to be dispersed amongst the Nations of the world due to their rejection of their Messiah. That is, they would soon be “hidden in the field” by the scattering of the Jews after the Roman attacks of AD 70. Earlier the Jewish people were similarly scattered by the Chaldeans and others. Not all the Jews returned from Babylon and their descendants, even today, remain unknown and scattered from that time. There are millions of Jews in our world today who have become assimilated into their various societies, but the Lord knows who and where they are “hidden in the field.”

The Lord, knowing what would happen to His chosen ones, cried out in deep anguish...

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets, and stone them that are sent unto you; how often would I have gathered your children together, as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, you shall not see Me, until the time come when you shall say, Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.” (Luke 13:34-35)

And so Israel became the “treasure hidden in the field” but one day, as Jesus prophesied, they will truly welcome Jesus as their Messiah and will boldly proclaim “Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord.” (Matthew 23:39)

The history Jesus outlined in these Kingdom Parables stretches from the beginnings of the Church, and extends right through the Church age. The “treasure hidden in the field” will yet be redeemed by the Lord prior to His Second Coming, as is explained elsewhere in this series.

Finally the history revealed here by Jesus culminates at the Second Coming of our Lord and Saviour. At that time the judgment will overtake all the unbelievers. This is revealed in the Sower Parable, the Tares Parable and the Fishing Net Parable when all unbelievers will be cast out and there will be “wailing and gnashing of teeth.”

The Kingdom Parables

How And Why The Kingdom Parables Are Often Misunderstood

These Papers believe that the *Kingdom Parables* are often misunderstood by well meaning Christian people. Here is an example to illustrate. In the Old Testament we read promises such as “*the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*” (Isaiah 11:9) This is a holy promise from our faithful God and is totally reliable. A Christian reading this is encouraged, and realises that one day the entire globe will be “*full of the knowledge of the Lord.*” They are deeply inspired by such a promise, and then they may read the *Leaven Parable*.

They may well interpret that parable in the light of the promise that “*the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*” The *Leaven Parable* teaches that “*The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.*” (Matt 13:33) The parallels seem obvious: the leaven has an overwhelming affect on everything it touches, and they relate it to the Gospel that changes hearts. They may well conclude that the *Leaven Parable* is talking about the fulfilment of that wonderful promise that “*the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.*” It is not hard to see that such a misunderstanding may happen, but it is a totally false conclusion.

God has indeed stated that “*the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea,*” so let’s look at that promise. When is that to happen?, how will it happen?, and Who will do it? **We must look at the context of that promise.** It comes from Isaiah 11 and there we see that there are many other wonders proclaimed too. Looking at them you will see that they present a body of Truth promising all sorts of blessings when the knowledge of the Lord will be worldwide. The whole passage provides the context and we must not isolate one promise from all the others. Here it is ...
*And the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling (yearling) together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the adder’s den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; **for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.**”
(Isaiah 11:6-9)*

They are amazing promises for they are talking about events that no one has ever seen. They are so fantastic that some commentators just explain them away, or dismiss them altogether by ignoring them. **But the context of this prophecy** begins at verse one with the remarkable claim that, “*There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a **Branch** shall grow out of his roots.*” (Isaiah 11:1)

The word *Branch* is capitalised so who is “*the Branch*”? He is the Servant of the Lord for we read in Zechariah 3:8, “*I will bring forth **My servant the Branch.***” Then we see that “*the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.*” (Is 11:2) We are then advised that He is to judge. “*He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears: But with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.*” The Scriptures then give unmistakable evidence that “*The Branch*” is our Lord Jesus Christ for “*He shall smite the earth: with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked.*” (All references above come from Isaiah 11:1-4)

The timing for this can only be at the Lord’s Second Coming. It is clear that “*The Branch from the stem of Jesse*” will bring judgment and only Jesus Himself does that. Thus we see, by comparing Scripture with Scripture, that before “*the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*” **the Lord must return** for it is He alone who has the right to judge.

This is an illustration only for I don’t know anyone who has ever linked the Leaven Parable with the “worldwide knowledge of the Lord” passage from Isaiah. Our purpose here is to illustrate that things must be examined in their context. This example shows that what may seem to be a reasonable explanation fails when examined closely.

Another essential component is that the Scriptures come to us via the Jewish people. They are Jewish in origin and we gentiles our outsiders “*grafted in*” to the natural tree which is Israel. Paul argues this strongly in Romans 11. If we come to the Scriptures convinced that God has cast Israel out, then we deny the claims of Paul who asks, “*Has God cast away his people?*” He strongly answers “**God forbid...God has not cast away His people which He foreknew.**” (Rom 11:1-2) The Jews remain the “*chosen people.*” To twist that plainly spoken truth to fit our mind-set will, and has, blinded many to the ongoing works of the Lord.