Matthew 13 Commentary

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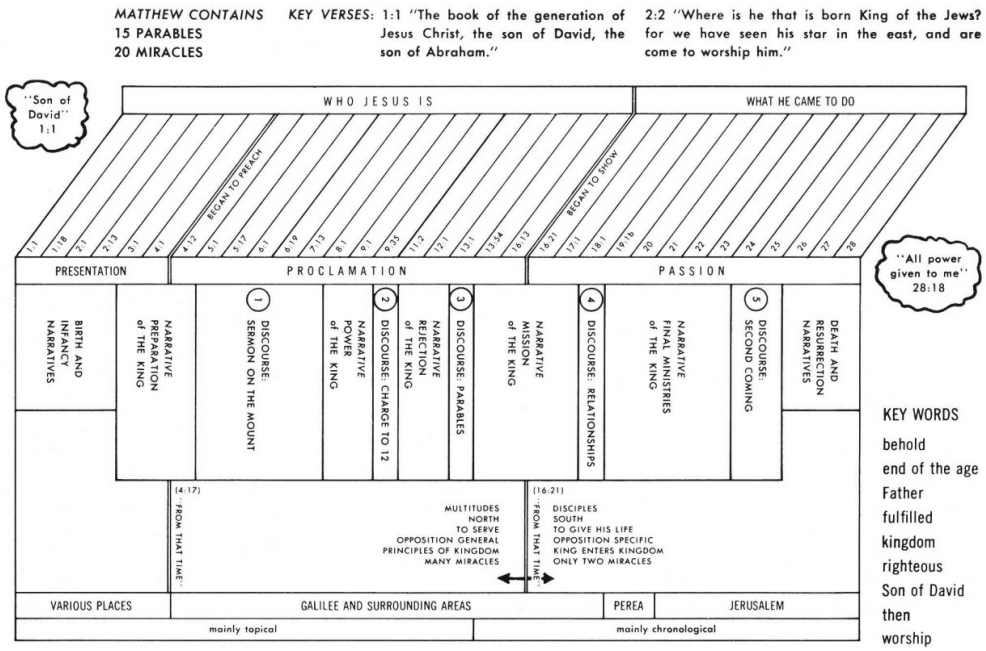
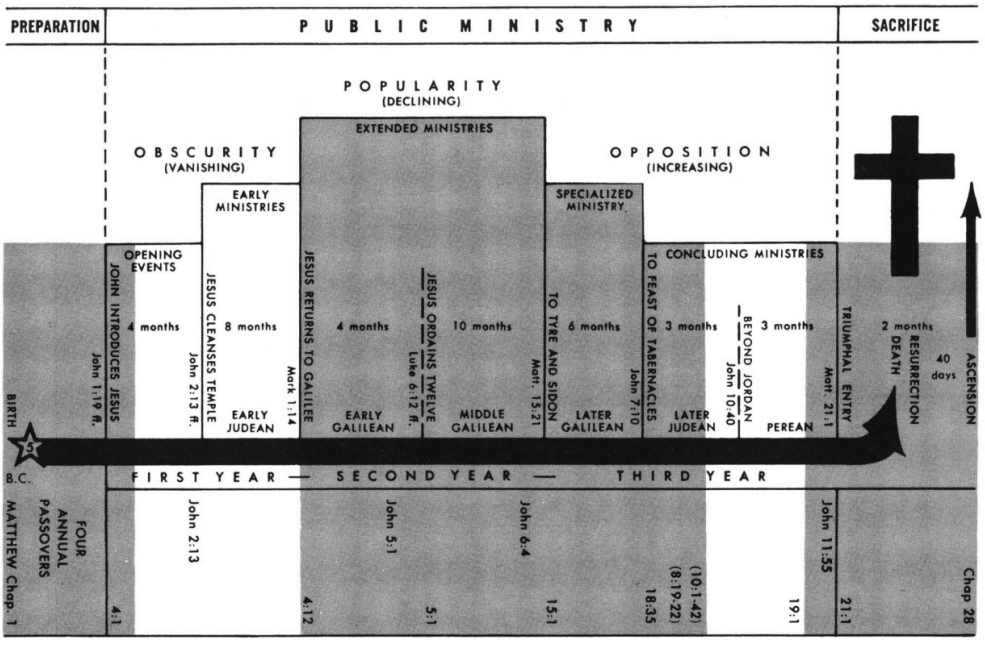


Click chart to enlarge
Charts from Jensen's Survey of the NT - used by permission
Another Chart from Swindoll

THE LIFE OF JESUS AS COVERED BY MATTHEW (shaded area)



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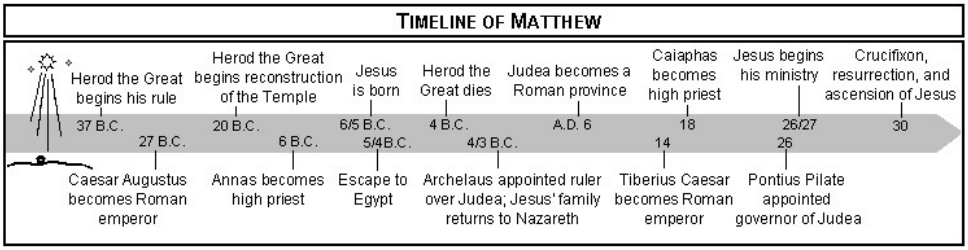

Source: Ryrie Study Bible

Matthew 13:1 That day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea.

NET Matthew 13:1 On that day after Jesus went out of the house, he sat by the lake.

GNT Matthew 13:1 ν τ μ ρ κε ν ξελθ ν ησο ς τ ς ο κ ας κ θητο παρ τ ν θ λασσαν·

NLT Matthew 13:1 Later that same day Jesus left the house and sat beside the lake.

KJV Matthew 13:1 The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.

ESV Matthew 13:1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea.

NIV Matthew 13:1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake.

ASV Matthew 13:1 On that day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.

CSB Matthew 13:1 On that day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea.

NKJ Matthew 13:1 On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea.

NRS Matthew 13:1 That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat beside the sea.

YLT Matthew 13:1 And in that day Jesus, having gone forth from the house, was sitting by the sea,

NAB Matthew 13:1 On that day, Jesus went out of the house and sat down by the sea.

NJB Matthew 13:1 That same day, Jesus left the house and sat by the lakeside,

GWN Matthew 13:1 That same day Jesus left the house and sat down by the Sea of Galilee.

BBE Matthew 13:1 On that day Jesus went out of the house and was seated by the seaside.

- **was sitting** - Mk 2:13, Mk 4:1
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Outline of Matthew 13

- Parable of the Soils/Sower - Mt 13:1-9
- Purpose of the Parables - Mt 13:10-17
- Parable of the Soils/Sower Explained - Mt 13:18-23
- Parable of the Weeds Among the Wheat - Mt 13:24–30
- Parables of Mustard Seed and Leaven - Mt 13:31-33
- Use of Parables - Mt 13:34–35
- Parables of Hidden Treasure and of the Pearl - Mt 13:44
- Parable of the Dragnet - Mt 13:47–50
- Treasures New and Old - Mt 13:51–52
- Rejection of Jesus at Nazareth - Mt 13:53–58

THE SERMON BY THE SEA

Let's set the context of Jesus' ministry as best we can given that chronology is not always easy to follow in the synoptic Gospels. Notice the diagram above depicting the **PUBLIC MINISTRY** of Jesus, where the **SHADED AREAS** refer to the sections discussed in the Gospel of Matthew. Note that references to Matthew are recorded along the lower border of the diagram, where you see Matthew 4:1, 5:1, 15:1. So we are between Mt 5:1 and Mt 15:1. Now that you have a general orientation, what do you observe

about Jesus **POPULARITY** and **OPPOSITION**? Clearly the former is **DECLINING** and the latter is on **INCREASING**! And so this marks a pivotal turning point in the ministry of Jesus. From here on, the opposition will steadily increase until it ends up nailing His hands and feet to an old rugged Cross. And as we will see in this chapter, this turning point is also marked by a change in the mode of Jesus' teaching, so that now He begins to speak in parables.

That day - **Robertson** observes that "this group of parables is placed by Matthew on the same day as the blasphemous accusation and the visit of the mother of Jesus. It is called “the Busy Day,” not because it was the only one, but simply that so much is told of this day that it serves as a specimen of many others filled to the full with stress and strain.' (Word Pictures) **Broadus** agrees that "The Parable of the Sower, and apparently all those in ch. 13, were delivered on the same day (v. 1) with the discourse occasioned by the blasphemy against the Spirit."

Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea- **He went out of** (presumably) Peter's **house** in Capernaum and **was sitting by the sea** of Galilee.

Matthew 13:2 And large crowds gathered to Him, so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach.

NET Matthew 13:2 And such a large crowd gathered around him that he got into a boat to sit while the whole crowd stood on the shore.

GNT Matthew 13:2 κα συν χθησαν πρ ς α τ ν χλοι πολλο , στε α τ ν ε ς πλο ον μβ ντα καθ σθαι, κα π ς χλος π τ ν α γιαλ ν ε στ κει.

NLT Matthew 13:2 A large crowd soon gathered around him, so he got into a boat. Then he sat there and taught as the people stood on the shore.

KJV Matthew 13:2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

ESV Matthew 13:2 And great crowds gathered about him, so that he got into a boat and sat down. And the whole crowd stood on the beach.

NIV Matthew 13:2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore.

ASV Matthew 13:2 And there were gathered unto him great multitudes, so that he entered into a boat, and sat; and all the multitude stood on the beach.

CSB Matthew 13:2 Such large crowds gathered around Him that He got into a boat and sat down, while the whole crowd stood on the shore.

NKJ Matthew 13:2 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.

NRS Matthew 13:2 Such great crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat there, while the whole crowd stood on the beach.

YLT Matthew 13:2 and gathered together unto him were many multitudes, so that he having gone into the boat did sit down, and all the multitude on the beach did stand,

NAB Matthew 13:2 Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd stood along the shore.

NJB Matthew 13:2 but such large crowds gathered round him that he got into a boat and sat there. The people all stood on the shore,

GWN Matthew 13:2 The crowd that gathered around him was so large that he got into a boat. He sat in the boat while the entire crowd stood on the shore.

BBE Matthew 13:2 And great numbers of people came together to him, so that he got into a boat; and the people took up their position by the sea.

- **large crowds** - Mt 4:25 15:30 Ge 49:10 Lu 8:4-8
- **so** - Mk 4:1 Lu 5:3

- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages

> Mark 4:1-2+ “He began to teach again by the sea. And such a very large crowd gathered to Him that He got into a boat in the sea and sat down; and the whole crowd was by the sea on the land. 2 And He was teaching them many things in parables, and was saying to them in His teaching
>
> Luke 8:4+ When a large crowd was coming together, and those from the various cities were journeying to Him, He spoke by way of a parable:

And large crowds gathered to Him - Even though the antagonism of the religious leaders was significantly increasing, Jesus was at the height of His popularity and thus able to gather **large crowds**. As we shall see these size of the crowds belied the size of their heart response to His message and His person. Very few were receptive to His message that He had come not to conquer Rome, but to suffer and die and conquer a far great enemy, Sin!

So - Term of conclusion. The crowd forced Him to set up His "podium" in a boat near the shore.

He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach- In many places along the seashore, the hills would rise around the shore and in effect produce a natural amphitheater. In any event, there is no doubt that despite "standing room only" every one was able to hear Jesus' words. It reminds me of the stories of John Whitefield in the days of the first Great Awakening in America where it was not uncommon for him to speak to crowds as large as 20,000 (or even greater) without electronic voice amplification! We do not know how large the crowd was but it is reasonable to speculate that it was many thousands.

Matthew 13:3 And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, “Behold, the sower went out to sow;

> GNT Matthew 13:3 κα λ λησεν α το ς πολλ ν παραβολα ς λ γων, δο ξ λθεν σπε ρων το σπε ρειν.
>
> NLT Matthew 13:3 He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one:"Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds.
>
> KJV Matthew 13:3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;
>
> ESV Matthew 13:3 And he told them many things in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow.
>
> NIV Matthew 13:3 Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed.
>
> ASV Matthew 13:3 And he spake to them many things in parables, saying, Behold, the sower went forth to sow;
>
> CSB Matthew 13:3 Then He told them many things in parables, saying: "Consider the sower who went out to sow.
>
> NKJ Matthew 13:3 Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow.
>
> NRS Matthew 13:3 And he told them many things in parables, saying: "Listen! A sower went out to sow.
>
> YLT Matthew 13:3 and he spake to them many things in similes, saying: 'Lo, the sower went forth to sow,
>
> NAB Matthew 13:3 And he spoke to them at length in parables, saying: "A sower went out to sow.
>
> NJB Matthew 13:3 and he told them many things in parables. He said, 'Listen, a sower went out to sow.
>
> GWN Matthew 13:3 Then he used stories as illustrations to tell them many things. He said, "Listen! A farmer went to plant seed.
>
> BBE Matthew 13:3 And he gave them teaching in the form of a story, saying, A man went out to put seed in the earth;

- **in parables** - Mt 13:10-13,34,35,53 22:1 24:32 Jud 9:8-20 2Sa 12:1-7 Ps 49:4 78:2 Isa 5:1-7 Eze 17:2 20:49 24:3-14 Mic 2:4 Hab 2:6 Mk 3:23 Mk 4:2,13,33 12:1,12 Lu 8:10 12:41 15:3-7 Joh 16:25
- **a sower** - Mk 4:2-9 Lu 8:5-8
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

> Mark 4:3-4+ “Listen to this! Behold, the sower went out to sow; as he was sowing, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate it up.
>
> Luke 8:5+ ““The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up.

Van Gogh's "The Sower"

And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying (Mk 4:2-3+, Lk 8:4-5+) - This is the first mention of the term parable in Matthew's Gospel. This mode of teaching with **parables** marks a significant change in the way He would teach the audiences from now on. From this point on, most of His teaching (**many things**) would be in the form of **parables**.

> **Parables** (symbols) (3850)(**parabole** from **para** = beside, near + **ballo** = throw, cast; English "parable") is literally a throwing beside or placing of one thing by the side of another (juxtaposition as of ships in battle in classic Greek). The metaphorical meaning is to place or lay something besides something else for the purpose of comparison. A spiritual or moral truth would often be expressed by laying it alongside, so to speak, a physical example that could be more easily understood. A common, observable object or practice was used to illustrate a subjective truth or principle. In simple terms something which was well known was verbally "laid alongside" something which was not known in order to explain it. In short the known truth explained the unknown truth. A parable is a way to make abstract truth more concrete, interesting and easier to remember and apply. Here in Mark 4, Matthew 13 and Luke 8 we see that the parable takes on a different function, in essence hiding the truth from those who do not have ears (hearts) to hear the truth. To His disciples Jesus disclosed the hidden meaning, because their hearts were open to His truth. But to all others the unexplained parable became in effect an impossible riddle whose meaning could not be guessed. (See Daniel Akin's summary points on parables).
>
> A **parable** is a story that seeks to drive home a point by illustrating it using a familiar situation of common life. A **parable** is a teaching device in which a principle is concealed and a truth revealed, giving the hearer first sight then insight! It is like a mirror and a window, where we see through to truth about God, but like a mirror it forces us to look at ourselves. Paul made a similar statement writing that "But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised.." (1 Cor 2:14+)
>
> **Adrian Rogers** - The word parable and our word parallel are related words. A parable is a story that is laid parallel down alongside a great truth. I suppose the greatest illustration, or the greatest definition or description, of a parable is just simply this: A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning. That is, Jesus told a very common story; but there was more to the story than met the ear, and you had to be paying attention.
>
> **Warren Wiersbe** - A parable starts off as a **picture** that is familiar to the listeners. But as you carefully consider the picture, it becomes a **mirror** in which you see yourself, and many people do not like to see themselves. This explains why some of our Lord’s listeners became angry when they heard His parables, and even tried to kill Him. But if we see ourselves as needy sinners and ask for help, then the **mirror** becomes a **window** through which we see God and His grace. To understand a parable and benefit from it demands honesty and humility on our part, and many of our Lord’s hearers lacked both. (Bible Exposition Commentary)

While many call this the "**Parable of the Sower**," it is more accurately titled "**Parable of the Soils,**" for there is only one sower with one seed but there are four soils. The sower and the seed remain "constant," while the quality of the soil varies and is the final determining factor of whether the seed will produce fruit. The corollary is that the skill of the sower or the quality of the seed are not the primary determinants of whether or not the seed will germinate and bear fruit.

Sowing Seed - Broadcasting it by Hand
(Note the man of far right casting a semi-circle of seed - click to enlarge)

Here is a link to a simple but well done 3 minute animated video of Jesus' Parable of the Sower/Soils, but does not include Jesus' explanation.

Behold, the sower went out to sow - Mark 4:2 adds that Jesus also gave a command **Listen** which in the present imperative means "Keep on listening to what I am saying." **Daniel Akin** comments on the EARS, writing "Just as James 3:1-12+ teaches us

there is a spiritual connection between the heart and the tongue, Mark 4 (AND MATTHEW 13) teaches us there also is a spiritual connection between the heart and the ear." So after getting the crowd's attention, He presents them a picture with which all would have been familiar in the agriculturally oriented land of Israel. And for the first section up to Matthew 13:8, they would have no difficulty understanding what He was saying. But then He says "He who has ears, let him hear" (Mt 13:9), indicating that only those whose hearts had not become hardened to the many truths He had already spoken would be able to understand the deeper spiritual meaning behind His simple,straightforward presentation of a sower sowing seeds resulting in four different responses from the soil. This is the essence of a parable, which is a teaching device in which a principle is concealed and a truth is revealed, first giving the hearer sight (Mt 13:1-8) and then giving them insight (His disciples in Mt 13:10-23). The parable in essence had two levels of meaning, on one hand being like a mirror that forces us to look at ourselves and on the other hand serving as a window to allow one to see God and His truth. Jesus gave the "key" that unlocks all of His parabolic teachings declaring ""He who has ears, let him hear" (Mt 13:9), referring not to one's physical hearing with ears but one's spiritual hearing with the heart, so to speak. This description reminds us of the words of James " Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls." (James 1:21+) Receptions of **the Word implanted** is a description of one who has **ears to hear**. A parable is a saying or story that seeks to drive home a point that the speaker wishes to emphasize by illustrating it from a familiar situation of common life.

> **Behold** (2400)(**idou**) is the second person singular aorist middle imperative of eidon which means to see, perceive, look at. In the NT **idou** is used as a demonstrative particle that draws attention to what follows. **Idou** in the **middle voice** means "you yourself look, see, perceive!" The **aorist imperative** is a command emphasizing "Do it now! Don't delay!"**Spurgeon** reminds us that "**Behold** is a word of wonder; it is intended to excite admiration. Wherever you see it hung out in Scripture, it is like an ancient sign-board, signifying that there are rich wares within, or like the hands which solid readers have observed in the margin of the older Puritanic books, drawing attention to something particularly worthy of observation." I would add, **behold** is like a divine highlighter, a divine underlining of an especially striking or important text. It says in effect "Listen up, all ye who would be wise in the ways of Jehovah!"
>
> **The sower...to sow** ("the sower" - ho speiron)(4687)(**speiro** from **spao** = draw out, pull) literally means to scatter (seed) and is the antithesis of reaping or gathering. **Speiro** is used here in a figurative sense to describe the sowing of the **seed** of the Word of God, the Gospel (= "**the word of the kingdom**" - Mt 13:19+, cp = "**the word**" - Mk 4:14 15, 16, 18+), "the ideas and precepts that have been implanted like seed in their hearts, ie, received in their hearts (Mk 4:18)." (Thayer). Two uses of **speiro** in Septuagint metaphorically speak of a sowing evil (Hos 8:7) or sowing righteousness, the point being that like a boomerang, they will return a "harvest" of rotten or righteous fruit.
>
> > Hos 8:7 For they (CONTEXT = NORTHERN KINGDOM) **sow** the wind and they reap the whirlwind. The standing grain has no heads; It yields no grain. Should it yield, strangers would swallow it up.
> >
> > Hos 10:12 **Sow** with a view to righteousness, reap in accordance with kindness; Break up your fallow ground, For (EXPLAINS HOW TO "SOW" RIGHTEOUSNESS!) it is time to seek the LORD until He comes to rain righteousness on you. 13 You have plowed wickedness, you have reaped injustice, You have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your way, in your numerous warriors."
> >
> > > Note the phrase "Break up your fallow ground!" Hard hearts are not hopeless but can be plowed up! Did the Lord have to plow up some things in your life to get your attention before you got saved? That was certainly true in my case (My Testimony of God's Grace) Let's pray this for our friends who have hard hearts.And for our own hearts when they go through calloused times.

Steven Cole has some interesting general observations on "the familiar parable of the sower, we see that even Jesus saw people respond superficially to His message. The parable serves both as an encouragement to His followers and a warning to His hearers. The encouragement to His followers is that when we see people respond superficially to the gospel and later fall away, we should not be discouraged in that even Jesus had the same response. The problem was certainly not in His preaching, but in the audience's hearing. The warning to those who hear the parable, of course, is to take it to heart so that we avoid a superficial faith. Whatever the current state of our hearts, we can appeal to God to grant us a new heart so that we will hold fast to Him and bear fruit with perseverance. Clearly, Jesus was not teaching some sort of fatalism, that the kinds of soils are fixed forever. By God's grace, a person can change." (Luke 8:4-15 - Superficial and Genuine Believers)

Related Resources: Parables

- Parables, How to Interpret
- What is a parable?

- Why did Jesus teach in parables?
- How many parables are in the Bible?

Table of All the Parables of Jesus ESV Study Bible			
Parable	**Matthew**	**Mark**	**Luke**
The Purpose of the Parables	Mt 13:10–17	Mk 4:10–12	Lk 8:9–10
The Sower	Mt 13:1–9, 18–23	Mk 4:1–9, 13–20	Lk 8:4–8, 11–15
The Weeds	Mt 13:24–30, 36–43	Mk 4:26–29	
The Mustard Seed	Mt 13:31–32	Mk 4:30-32	Lk 13:18–19
The Leaven	Mt 13:33		Lk 13:20–21
The Hidden Treasure	Mt 13:44		
The Pearl of Great Value	Mt 13:45–46		
The Net	Mt 13:47–50		
The Lost Sheep	Mt 18:10–14		Lk 15:3–7
The Unforgiving Servant	Mt 18:23–35		
The Two Sons	Mt 21:28–32		
The Tenants	Mt 21:33–44	Mk 12:1–11	Lk 20:9-18
The Wedding Feast	Mt 22:1–14		Lk 14:16–24
The Ten Virgins	Mt 25:1–13		
The Talents	Mt 25:14–30		Lk 19:11–27
The Good Samaritan			Lk 10:29–37
The Rich Fool			Lk 12:16–21
The Barren Fig Tree			Lk 13:6–9
The Wedding Feast			Lk 14:7-11
The Lost Coin			Lk 15:8–10
The Prodigal Son			Lk 15:11–32
The Dishonest Manager			Lk 16:1–9
The Rich Man and Lazarus			Lk 16:19–31
The Persistent Widow			Lk 18:1–8
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector			Lk 18:9–14

Matthew 13:4 and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.

NET Matthew 13:4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them.

GNT Matthew 13:4 κα ν τ σπε ρειν α τ ν μ ν πεσεν παρ τ ν δ ν, κα λθ ντα τ πετειν κατ φαγεν α τ .

NLT Matthew 13:4 As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them.

KJV Matthew 13:4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:

ESV Matthew 13:4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured them.

NIV Matthew 13:4 As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up.

ASV Matthew 13:4 and as he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the birds came and devoured them:

CSB Matthew 13:4 As he was sowing, some seeds fell along the path, and the birds came and ate them up.

NKJ Matthew 13:4 "And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.

NRS Matthew 13:4 And as he sowed, some seeds fell on the path, and the birds came and ate them up.

YLT Matthew 13:4 and in his sowing, some indeed fell by the way, and the fowls did come and devour them,

NAB Matthew 13:4 And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up.

NJB Matthew 13:4 As he sowed, some seeds fell on the edge of the path, and the birds came and ate them up.

GWN Matthew 13:4 Some seeds were planted along the road, and birds came and devoured them.

BBE Matthew 13:4 And while he did so, some seeds were dropped by the wayside, and the birds came and took them for food:

- **the way** - Mt 13:18,19
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

Mark 4:4+ “as he was sowing, some seed fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate it up.

Luke 8:5+ ““The sower went out to sow his seed; and as he sowed, some fell beside the road, and it was trampled under foot and the birds of the air ate it up.

THE HARD SOIL

and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up - Ancient farming consisted of reaching in the bag of seeds and tossing them out in a semi-circle to cover an area. In so doing it was normal for some seeds to fall on the hard packed paths that criss-crossed the fields of that day which were not separated by fences as in our day. These seeds were "easy pickings" for the birds. I live on the coast much of the year and have noticed that if someone tosses a few bread crumbs in the sky, within moments, out of nowhere it seems, come a flock of sea gulls swooping in to have a meal. Birds have keen eyes and these seeds on the hard surface were like setting them a table for an easy meal!

LOSING THE WORD -

As he sowed, some [seed] fell by the wayside, and the fowls of the air came and devoured it. Mark 4:4

What a strange sight greeted my gaze as I looked out over the bay. There was old "Pete the pelican" bobbing around on the waves, and perched right on top of his head was a sea gull. Looking more closely I discovered that "Pete" had caught a fish, but its tail was sticking out one side of his huge beak. What a dilemma the old pelican was in! He had gotten his fish, but now to eat it he would have to open his mouth, and sitting right there ready to snatch it as soon as he did so was Mr. Sea Gull. He knew he had "Pete" right where he wanted him.

As I saw the wise old sea gull ready to grab the food from the pelican's mouth, I was reminded of Jesus' parable about the sower

and the fact that as some seed fell by the wayside, "the fowls of the air came and devoured it." Jesus explained that this was a picture of Satan's tactics in taking the Word from the hearts of those who, although receiving the message of grace, fail to understand and believe it.

How important it is that we not only "receive" the Word, but also that we study it and meditate upon it. Unless we do so, we are the losers. It is possible for the "seed" to be sown in our hearts, and yet not to take root! How many there are who, having been really blessed by a message, come out of a church service, only to be met by friends who begin at once to talk about the weather, the ball game, business, world conditions—anything and everything but the Word of God which they have heard. And the first thing you know, that which had been received is snatched away, and the precious seed fails to bear fruit. The Psalmist declared, "Thy word have I hidden in mine heart . .." (Ps. 119:11). Remember, when the Word is sown, receive it gladly, meditate upon it intently, talk about it to others, memorize it, and then allow it to bring forth fruit in your life! (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

The seed of the Word falls on many a soil,
The fertile, the thorny, the hard;
Lest haply it fruitless in thy heart be sown,
Blest soul, be thou ever on guard.
— H.G.B.

Take heed to the Word; remember,
a man's spirit needs daily food as well as his body!
—Edmund Nelson

Matthew 13:5 "Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil.

NET Matthew 13:5 Other seeds fell on rocky ground where they did not have much soil. They sprang up quickly because the soil was not deep.

GNT Matthew 13:5 λλα δ πεσεν π τ πετρ δη που ο κ ε χεν γ ν πολλ ν, κα ε θ ως ξαν τειλεν δι τ μ χειν β θος γ ς·

NLT Matthew 13:5 Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow.

KJV Matthew 13:5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:

ESV Matthew 13:5 Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and immediately they sprang up, since they had no depth of soil,

NIV Matthew 13:5 Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow.

ASV Matthew 13:5 and others fell upon the rocky places, where they had not much earth: and straightway they sprang up, because they had no deepness of earth:

CSB Matthew 13:5 Others fell on rocky ground, where there wasn't much soil, and they sprang up quickly since the soil wasn't deep.

NKJ Matthew 13:5 "Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth.

NRS Matthew 13:5 Other seeds fell on rocky ground, where they did not have much soil, and they sprang up quickly, since they had no depth of soil.

YLT Matthew 13:5 and others fell upon the rocky places, where they had not much earth, and immediately they sprang forth, through not having depth of earth,

NAB Matthew 13:5 Some fell on rocky ground, where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep,

NJB Matthew 13:5 Others fell on patches of rock where they found little soil and sprang up at once, because

there was no depth of earth;

GWN Matthew 13:5 Other seeds were planted on rocky ground, where there was little soil. The plants sprouted quickly because the soil wasn't deep.

BBE Matthew 13:5 And some of the seed went among the stones, where it had not much earth, and straight away it came up because the earth was not deep:

- Mt 13:20 Eze 11:19 36:26 Am 6:12 Zec 7:12
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

Mark 4:5+ "Other seed fell on the rocky ground where it did not have much soil; and immediately it sprang up because it had no depth of soil.

Luke 8:6+ "Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture.

ROCKY SOIL

Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil- **Others** ("Other seed" in synoptic parallels) is the adjective **allos** referring to seed of the same kind. This emphasizes that the seed is not the variable, but the crucial variable is the nature or quality of the soil.

And immediately (eutheos) **they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil** - **Immediately** the seed germinated and the plant sent up blade above the surface. **Because** is a term of explanation telling us why this growth occurred so quickly. No depth meant the seed was sitting juxtaposed to the rock which provided increased heat so that this soil functioned like a modern **hothouse** which encourages speedy growth through artificial conditions.

NOTE - The warmer temperature in a greenhouse occurs because incident solar radiation passes through the transparent roof and walls and is absorbed by the floor, earth, and contents, which become warmer. As the structure is not open to the atmosphere, the warmed air cannot escape via convection, so the temperature inside the greenhouse rises.

Immediately (2112)(**eutheos** from **euthus** = straight, immediate) is an adverb which generally means at once, right away, forthwith, straightaway, without an interval of time or a point of time subsequent to a previous point of time. Note that the actual interval of time depends on the nature of the events and the manner in which the sequence is interpreted by the writer. **Eutheos** is a "time sensitive" word (see **expression of time**) and should prompt questions like "To what time does it refer?" or "What happens in this time?"

Matthew 13:6 "But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

NET Matthew 13:6 But when the sun came up, they were scorched, and because they did not have sufficient root, they withered.

GNT Matthew 13:6 λ ου δ νατε λαντος καυματ σθη κα δι τ μ χειν ζαν ξηρ νθη.

NLT Matthew 13:6 But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots, they died.

KJV Matthew 13:6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

ESV Matthew 13:6 but when the sun rose they were scorched. And since they had no root, they withered away.

NIV Matthew 13:6 But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root.

ASV Matthew 13:6 and when the sun was risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.

CSB Matthew 13:6 But when the sun came up they were scorched, and since they had no root, they withered.

NKJ Matthew 13:6 "But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.

NRS Matthew 13:6 But when the sun rose, they were scorched; and since they had no root, they withered away.

YLT Matthew 13:6 and the sun having risen they were scorched, and through not having root, they withered,

NAB Matthew 13:6 and when the sun rose it was scorched, and it withered for lack of roots.

NJB Matthew 13:6 but as soon as the sun came up they were scorched and, not having any roots, they withered away.

GWN Matthew 13:6 But when the sun came up, they were scorched. They withered because their roots weren't deep enough.

BBE Matthew 13:6 And when the sun was high, it was burned; and because it had no root it became dry and dead.

- **when** - Mt 13:21 Isa 49:10 Jas 1:11,12 Rev 7:16
- **because** - Mt 7:26,27 Lu 8:13 Eph 3:17 Col 1:23 2:7
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

Mark 4:6+ ""And after the sun had risen, it was scorched; and because it had no root, **it withered away.**

Mark 4:16-17+ In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; 17 and they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.

Luke 8:6+ "Other seed fell on rocky soil, and as soon as it grew up, **it withered away,** because it had no moisture.

Luke 8:13+ "Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.

SCORCHED
BY THE SUN

But (term of contrast - what's contrasted?) **when the sun (**helios**) had risen (**anatello**), they were scorched** - Thin soil with hot rocks beneath the soil resulted in the plant being scorched. A scorched plant means it is burned on the surface and is well on its way to certain death.

And because they (present tense - continually) **had no root** (rhiza)**, they withered away** - **No root** meant no channel to allow the plant to take in **moisture** as explained in Luke's version (Lk 8:6+)

Scorched (2739) **kaumatizo** from **kauma** = heat from **kaio** = to burn) means actively to harm with heat as in Rev 16:8, 9 and passively to describe withering of plants from sun's extreme heat. Not found in Septuagint. Usage: scorch(1), scorched(3). Mt 13:6; Mk 4:6; Rev. 16:8 = " sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire"; Rev. 16:9 = "Men were scorched with fierce heat; (NOTE THE TWO EFFECTS) and they blasphemed the name of God who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory." 4x in NT = Matt. 13:6; Mk. 4:6; Rev. 16:8; Rev. 16:9

Root (4491) rhiza is used to describe a literal root. **Rhiza** is used as a negative metaphor here in 1Ti 6:10 and again in Hebrews 12:15-note., where it is a "root of bitterness." The NT uses **rhiza** as a metaphorical description of the **Messiah** three times (Ro 15:12-note, Rev 5:5-note, Rev 22:16-note). **A root** - Most of our English translations place "**root**" later in the passage, whereas Paul placed it first in the Greek text for emphasis! The "root" is vitally important! One cannot help but think of weeds like crabgrass that begin to grow in our beautiful manicured lawns and which is extremely difficult to eradicate. Furthermore, the root is that part of the plant that is unseen, laying under the grown where it functions as the plant's organ of adsorption, aeration, food supply, anchorage and support! Remember that the root differs from the stem, the buds and the fruit, all of which are intimately dependent on the integrity of the root. Now parlay that picture into this passage by Paul for a powerful picture!

Withered (dry) (3583)(**xeraino**) means to become dry, to dry up and figuratively to become stiff (Mk 9:18). Of plants that wither (Jas 1:11). In the passive voice means to be dried up (Mt 13:6; 21:19, 20; Mk 4:6; 11:20, 21; Lk 8:6; Jn 15:6; 1 Pe 1:24).

Matthew 13:7 "Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out.

NET Matthew 13:7 Other seeds fell among the thorns, and they grew up and choked them.

GNT Matthew 13:7 λλα δ πεσεν π τ ς κ νθας, κα ν βησαν α κανθαι κα πνιξαν α τ .

NLT Matthew 13:7 Other seeds fell among thorns that grew up and choked out the tender plants.

KJV Matthew 13:7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:

ESV Matthew 13:7 Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.

NIV Matthew 13:7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants.

ASV Matthew 13:7 And others fell upon the thorns; and the thorns grew up and choked them:

CSB Matthew 13:7 Others fell among thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them.

NKJ Matthew 13:7 "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.

NRS Matthew 13:7 Other seeds fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.

YLT Matthew 13:7 and others fell upon the thorns, and the thorns did come up and choke them,

NAB Matthew 13:7 Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it.

NJB Matthew 13:7 Others fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked them.

GWN Matthew 13:7 Other seeds were planted among thornbushes, and the thornbushes grew up and choked them.

BBE Matthew 13:7 And some seeds went among thorns, and the thorns came up and they had no room for growth:

- Mt 13:22 Ge 3:18 Jer 4:3,4 Mk 4:18,19
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

Mark 4:7+ Other seed fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked it, and it yielded no crop.

Luke 8:7+ Other seed fell among the thorns; and the thorns grew up with it and choked it out.

Jesus' Interpretation:

Mt 13:22 And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

SEED AMONG THE THORNS

Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out- Weeds were everywhere in the fields in Israel and if they were of sufficient number, they would compete with the good seed for moisture and nutrients. Their root system could also crowd out the good seed's young roots and ultimately strangle the new plant so it would be barren, fruitless.

Thorns (173)(**akantha** from **ake** = a point, edge) describes a thorn, prickle. In classical Greek **akantha** stands for the thornbush and then for all thorns, including any prickling or stinging needle associated with plants, animals, or fish. In a figurative sense it could refer to a "stinging" question. John writes "And the soldiers twisted together a crown of thorns and put it on His head, and put a purple robe on Him." In the famous use in Genesis God curses the land because of Adam's sin declaring "Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field." How interesting that the same word associated with the curse in Genesis 3 is associated with the One Who became a curse for us, wearing a crown of thorns! Jesus wore a

"crown of **thorns**" for believers who will one day cast their own crowns to the King of kings!

Akantha - 14x in 11v - Matt. 7:16; Matt. 13:7; Matt. 13:22; Matt. 27:29; Mk. 4:7; Mk. 4:18; Lk. 6:44; Lk. 8:7; Lk. 8:14; Jn. 19:2; Heb. 6:8.

Gilbrant - The Septuagint employs akantha with both the literal and figurative senses. In Genesis 3:18 the literal and figurative senses are combined: As a result of the curse, the ground will produce thorns and thistles. In other instances the term depicts the difficulties and affliction caused by unfaithfulness (Hosea 9:6) or it may connote enemies of the righteous. Surprisingly God chose to reveal himself to Moses in a thornbush, and He was called “he who lived in the thornbush” (Exodus 3:2-4, NIV translates simply “bush”; the Septuagint does not read akantha here). (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)

Uses in Septuagint - Ge. 3:18; Exod. 22:6; Jdg. 8:7; Jdg. 8:16; 2 Sam. 23:6; Ps. 32:4; Ps. 58:9; Ps. 118:12; Prov. 15:19; Prov. 26:9; Eccl. 7:6; Cant. 2:2; Isa. 5:2; Isa. 5:4; Isa. 5:6; Isa. 7:23; Isa. 7:24; Isa. 7:25; Isa. 32:13; Isa. 33:12; Jer. 4:3; Jer. 12:13; Ezek. 28:24; Hos. 9:6; Hos. 10:8;

Choked (638)(**apopnígo**) means to choke or suffocate,to stifle by drowning. BDAG says this verb means "to check normal breathing or growth through pressure or other restricting measure." Only in Matt. 13:7; Lk. 8:7; Lk. 8:33.

Matthew 13:8 “And others fell on the good soil and *yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.

NET Matthew 13:8 But other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundred times as much, some sixty, and some thirty.

GNT Matthew 13:8 λλα δ πεσεν π τ ν γ ν τ ν καλ ν κα δ δου καρπ ν, μ ν κατ ν, δ ξ κοντα, δ τρι κοντα.

NLT Matthew 13:8 Still other seeds fell on fertile soil, and they produced a crop that was thirty, sixty, and even a hundred times as much as had been planted!

KJV Matthew 13:8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.

ESV Matthew 13:8 Other seeds fell on good soil and produced grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

NIV Matthew 13:8 Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop--a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown.

ASV Matthew 13:8 and others fell upon the good ground, and yielded fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

CSB Matthew 13:8 Still others fell on good ground and produced a crop: some 100, some 60, and some 30 times what was sown.

NKJ Matthew 13:8 "But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

NRS Matthew 13:8 Other seeds fell on good soil and brought forth grain, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

YLT Matthew 13:8 and others fell upon the good ground, and were giving fruit, some indeed a hundredfold, and some sixty, and some thirty.

NAB Matthew 13:8 But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.

NJB Matthew 13:8 Others fell on rich soil and produced their crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

GWN Matthew 13:8 But other seeds were planted on good ground and produced grain. They produced one hundred, sixty, or thirty times as much as was planted.

BBE Matthew 13:8 And some, falling on good earth, gave fruit, some a hundred, some sixty, some thirty times as much.

- **good** - Mt 13:23 Lu 8:15 Ro 7:18
- **some** - Ge 26:12 Joh 15:8 Ga 5:22,23 Php 1:11
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

> Mark 4:8+ "Other *seeds* fell into the good soil, and as they grew up and increased, they yielded a crop and produced thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."
>
> Luke 8:8+ Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great." As He said these things, He would call out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear

BUMPER CROP
OF FRUIT

And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty - **MacArthur** says "In Palestine during New Testament times, the average ratio of harvested grain seeds to those that were planted is said to have been less than eight to one. Even a tenfold crop would have been well above average; and the yields of which Jesus speaks were truly phenomenal." (See MacArthur Commentary)

> **Crop** (fruit) (2590)(**karpos**) literally refers to fruit, produce or offspring which is produced by the inherent energy of a living organism. In the 3 synoptic accounts of the parable of the sower/soils, **karpos** is used by Jesus in it literal sense 4 times each time translated as **crop** but- Mt 13:8+, Mk 4:7, 8+ and Lk 8:8+. **Karpos** is what something produces **naturally**. But for believers **karpos** is something God's Spirit does through us **supernaturally**. Each literal use by Jesus pointed to a figurative meaning of spiritual fruit as indicated by His explanation describing people as **unfruitful** (akarpos in Mk 4:19+, Mt 13:22+) and as those who **bear fruit** (karpophoreo in Mk 4:20+, Mt 13:23+).
>
> Scripture describes 3 general kinds of **spiritual fruit**: (1) **Spiritual attitudes** that characterize a Spirit-filled, Spirit-led believer - Gal 5:22-23+ (2) **Righteous actions** - Ro 6:22+, Php 4:16, 17+; Heb 13:5+ (3) **New converts** - Ro 16:5+

Matthew 13:9 "He who has ears, let him hear."

> NET Matthew 13:9 The one who has ears had better listen!"
>
> GNT Matthew 13:9 χων τα κου τω.
>
> NLT Matthew 13:9 Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand."
>
> KJV Matthew 13:9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.
>
> ESV Matthew 13:9 He who has ears, let him hear."
>
> NIV Matthew 13:9 He who has ears, let him hear."
>
> ASV Matthew 13:9 He that hath ears, let him hear.
>
> CSB Matthew 13:9 Anyone who has ears should listen!"
>
> NKJ Matthew 13:9 "He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"
>
> NRS Matthew 13:9 Let anyone with ears listen!"
>
> YLT Matthew 13:9 He who is having ears to hear -- let him hear.'
>
> NAB Matthew 13:9 Whoever has ears ought to hear."
>
> NJB Matthew 13:9 Anyone who has ears should listen!'
>
> GWN Matthew 13:9 Let the person who has ears listen!"
>
> BBE Matthew 13:9 He who has ears, let him give ear.

- Mt 13:16 11:15 Mk 4:9,23 7:14-16 Rev 2:7,11,17,29 3:6,13,22 13:8,9

- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

> Mark 4:8+ “And He was saying, “He who has ears to hear,let him hear.”
>
> Luke 8:8+ Other seed fell into the good soil, and grew up, and produced a crop a hundred times as great." As He said these things, He would call out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

GOT EARS?
THEN USE THEM!

He who has ears, let him hear (akouo) - "If you can understand it, then understand it." Mark 4:9+ has "He who has ears to hear,**let him hear**." Who has **ears**? Most everyone has a pair, even Malchus (thanks to the Creator)! (Jn 18:10, Lk 22:49, 50, 51+). But Jesus is not speaking solely of physical ears, but of "spiritual ears." This translation almost sounds like a proverb, suggesting it is a good idea for a person to **hear**. Actually this is a command from Jesus Who commands **let him hear** using the present imperative (see need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey). Jesus is not just saying take in the "sound waves!" He is saying make sure you accurately interpret the "sound waves" and respond obediently and without hesitation to the "sound waves!" As His half-brother James would later write "But **prove** (present imperative) yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves.." (James 1:22+).

While I realize the words of Jesus were spoken Pre-Pentecost and so the Spirit was not indwelling believers as He is in the Church Age, (in my opinion) the principle still applies that for one to "hearken" to Jesus' command calling for a supernatural response, he or she can only do so by (1) jettisoning self-reliance and (2) relying wholly on the Holy Spirit to provide the enabling power! John alludes to this in John 3:3-8+, especially verse 8 "The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit.” Unless the Spirit blows, we cannot truly hear! Notice James' parallel passage where he commands us to be "doers." This begs the question "Can we do anything supernatural in our own power?" Not really! And that includes understanding the Word of the Gospel spoken to us! Jesus amplifies this important principle declaring "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for **apart from Me** (AND TODAY THAT MEANS APART FROM RELYING ON THE ONE HE SENT TO BE OUR "HELPER" OR "ENABLER," THE SPIRIT OF CHRIST!) you can do (ABSOLUTELY) nothing (OF ETERNAL VALUE OR SPIRITUAL FRUIT THAT "**REMAINS**" - Jn 15:16)." (Jn 15:5).

I like the **NET Note (see note 12)** - The translation "**had better listen!**" captures the force of the third person imperative more effectively than the traditional "let him hear," which sounds more like a permissive than an imperative to the modern English reader. This was Jesus' common expression to listen and heed carefully (cf. Matt 11:15, 13:43; Mark 4:9, 23; Luke 8:8, 14:35).

MacArthur - Jesus was not mocking His hearers but was rather pointing out to them that they would need more than their own human understanding to interpret the meaning...Only those who accept the King can understand the King and profit from His teaching and lordship. To all others His teaching is meaningless riddles. (See Matthew Commentary)

> **Let him hear** - Only on the lips of Jesus and found 16x in NT, 8 times while He was still on earth and 8 times after He ascended to Heaven! - Mt. 11:15; Mt. 13:9; Mt. 13:43; Mk. 4:9; Mk. 4:23; Mk. 7:16; Lk. 8:8; Lk. 14:35; Rev. 2:7; Rev. 2:11; Rev. 2:17; Rev. 2:29; Rev. 3:6; Rev. 3:13; Rev. 3:22; Rev. 13:9 (Click for comment on **let him hear** in Jesus' command to the church at Ephesus)

Spurgeon rightly said "There are many, who have ears, who do not hear to any real purpose. There is the physical act of hearing, but they do not hear in the heart and the mind. It is a very different thing to have an impression on the drum of the ear and to have an impression on the tablet of the heart. “He that hath ears to hear, **let him hear**.”

Mark Hitchcock - One of my favorite lines from the lips of Jesus is His oft-repeated statement, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Jesus is saying, "Look, if you have a set of ears on your head you'd better use them and listen up to what I'm about to say." It's a direct challenge to us to be spiritually sensitive to the words of Jesus. The responsibility to listen carefully to Him is serious. As we move into a careful study of Jesus' forecast for the future, I can't think of a better reminder. Let's listen carefully and willingly to the mighty Master as He leads us down the corridors of time to the end of the age. And be ready to follow His instructions about how to live while we wait for that day to come. (See What Jesus Says about Earth's Final Days)

John Phillips - Again the Lord's challenge rings forth. He has used these very words before (16 times in the NT). It is a phrase often repeated. In writing from glory to the seven churches of Asia, the Lord uses the expression over and over again (Rev. 2-3). Shakespeare borrowed the expression and used it in a different form when recounting Mark Anthony's speech to the Romans

attending Caesar's funeral: "***Friends, Romans and countrymen, lend me your ears.***" The words are a challenge to us to pay attention to what is being said. That is important when listening to any communication. When the speaker is God, it is vital! (See Exploring the Gospel of Mark: An Expository Commentary)

Avery Willis - The simplest way to receive the Word is to hear it. Even a child or a person who cannot read can hear the Bible. "If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear" (Mark 4:23). "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). Matthew 13:3-23 lists four kinds of hearers of the Word: the apathetic hearer who hears the Word but is not prepared to receive and understand it (v. 19); the superficial hearer who receives the Word temporarily but does not let it take root in the heart (vv. 20, 21); the preoccupied hearer who receives the Word but lets the worries of this world and the desire for other things choke it out (v. 22); and the reproducing hearer who receives the Word, understands it, bears fruit, and brings forth results (v. 23). (Master Life)

Fausset writes that ""Every man 'hath an ear' naturally, but he alone will be able to hear spiritually to whom God has given 'the hearing ear'; whose 'ear God hath wakened' and 'opened."

> **THOUGHT** - The picture of "open ears" (and I would add an "open heart") reminds us of Lk 24:45+ where Jesus "opened (dianoigo) their minds to understand (suniemi) the Scriptures!" Truth be told, if the Spirit of Jesus does not open our minds when we open His book, it will be like reading just another book! Pray Ps 119:18+ "Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Your law."

A T Robertson on **He who has an ear** - An individualizing note calling on **each** of the hearers (cf Rev 1:3+ = "Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy") to listen and a reminiscence of the words of Jesus in the Synoptics (**ED**: This challenge to heed Christ's words appears eight times in the gospels and eight times in Revelation. Mt. 11:15+; Mt 13:9, 43+; Mark 4:9+ = He who has ears to hear, let him hear.", Mk 4:23+; Mk 7:16+; Lk 8:8+; Lk 14:35+ also Rev. 2:7; Rev. 2:11; Rev. 2:17; Rev. 2:29; Rev. 3:6; Rev. 3:13; Rev. 3:22; Rev. 13:9), but not in John's Gospel.

Vance Havner - Are You Listening?

> Speak; for thy servant heareth. I Samuel 3:10.
> He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Matthew 11:15.
> He that hath an ear, let him hear. Revelation 2:7.

It is an oft-recurring word from our Lord, found throughout the Gospels—"**He that hath ears to hear...**" Some have ears—period! Samuel was listening—and God spoke. God has much to say today, but we have "ears to hear, and hear not" (Ezek. 12:2). Some stop their ears (Acts 7:57). Some turn their ears from the truth (2Ti 4:4). Some have itching ears (2Ti 4:3).

Are you tuned in on God? It is said that John Burroughs, the naturalist, could walk along a noisy street and overhear a cricket in the hedge. His ear was tuned to the little voices of nature. You can make your way through the hubbub and still keep in touch with heaven.

Samuel was listening. The boy who listens for God to speak will hear Him, for God is looking for such boys. God's men have been men of a double resolve: "I will hear what God the Lord will speak" (Ps. 85:8); and then, "What the Lord saith unto me, that will I speak" (1Ki 22:14).

Related Resource:

- ARE YOU LISTENING?
- What are some Bible verses about listening? | GotQuestions.org

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Vance Havner - A lot of Sunday-morning Christians, who want to sit with folded hands and listen to a mild discourse on the Teacher of Galilee, need to be aroused from their stupor by a vision of the flaming Christ of the Candlesticks. Eight times in these messages to the churches He says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear." Eight times in the Gospels He says, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." Some of us have ears ... period. "Hearing we hear not." We sit at church looking but not listening. God grant us ears to hear what the Spirit is saying to the churches! And eyes to behold the Lord of the Lampstands bidding us "Repent ... or else!"

Vance Havner - **Learn How to Listen**
We spend much time and money learning how to speak when we need to learn how to listen.

"... hearing they hear not" (Matt. 13:13).
"... if any man hear my words" (John 12:47).

"He that hath ears, let him hear" (Mark 4:9).

After all, we have two ears to hear with and only one mouth to speak with—thank the Lord!

QUESTION - What did Jesus mean when He said, "He who has ears to hear"?

ANSWER - In the Gospels, Jesus speaks of those who have "ears to hear" at the end of a difficult saying or parable (e.g., Matthew 11:15; Mark 4:9, 23). Who is "he who has ears to hear"? Better yet, who is "he who has ears"? Ears are a feature shared by all of humanity—to not have ears would be an unnatural occurrence. Therefore, when Jesus addresses those who have ears, He refers to all who have been given His words—no matter their age, ethnicity, language, or status.

But there is a difference between having ears and having "ears to hear." Jesus' parable of the sower and the seed contrasts types of hearers: those who let the Word of God pass straight through their ears and those who truly listen and seek understanding (Mark 4:13–20). Some hear the Word, yet they do not allow it to take root because the seduction of worldly pleasures and comfort overcomes them. Others end up rejecting the Word because of persecution or trials. Others hear the Word and open themselves to understand and accept it so that it transforms them. Those who have "ears to hear" allow the Word to bear fruit to the glory of God. It is up to the hearer to decide whether to take the Word seriously and pursue understanding; only a few are willing—the rest have ears, but they do not have "ears to hear" (Matthew 7:13–14, 24–27).

Whenever Jesus says, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear," He is calling for people to pay careful heed. It's another way of saying, "Listen up! Pay close attention!" Speaking in parables was one way in which Jesus sought to gain the attention of the crowds —people love stories, and the parables depicted events and characters with which they could readily relate. But unless they were willing to tune out other distractions and come to Jesus to understand the meaning of His preaching, His words would be only empty stories. They needed more than ears, however keen they were; they needed ears to hear.

When asked by His disciples why He was speaking to the crowds in parables, Jesus refers to Isaiah 6, which speaks of people who have eyes and ears, yet who have hardened their hearts and chosen to ignore the Word of the Lord (Matthew 13:10–15; cf. Isaiah 6:8–10). Part of the judgment on those who refuse to believe is that they will eventually lose their opportunity to believe: "Whoever has will be given more, and they will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what they have will be taken from them" (Matthew 13:12; cf. Romans 1:18–32).

A similar phrase is found in Revelation in each of the seven letters to the churches: "Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches" (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). And in Revelation 13:9, immediately following a description of the Antichrist, we read, "Whoever has ears, let them hear." The readers of Revelation are called upon to pay close attention and seek God's wisdom concerning what's written.

Who is "he who has ears"? The simple answer: all people who have been or are being given the words of God. Like the parables' original audience, we must also "Listen up! Pay close attention!" Jesus' simple request is that we use our God-given faculties (eyes to see, ears to hear) to tune in to His words (John 10:27 –28; Mark 4:24; Revelation 3:20). "For whatever is hidden is meant to be disclosed, and whatever is concealed is meant to be brought out into the open" (Mark 4:22). Seeking God's truth takes energy and focus; it takes a willingness to be challenged and changed. While the way of God's truth is not the most convenient or fun path to take, we can be assured that it is the best one (John 1:4; 10:9; 14:6). And so He bids us, "Come" (Matthew 11:28 –30).

Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David. (Isaiah 55:1–3) GotQuestions.org

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Vance Havner - The Deaf Generation

In Caesarea we saw an outdoor theatre, not an amphitheatre, but a semicircular stone auditorium. From the back row we could hear our leader speak in conversational tones from the platform. Moreover, he told us that a larger theatre in Ephesus that could hold twenty-four thousand was constructed centuries ago with the same marvelous acoustics. All this in a day when in my travels all over America I have had congregations of a hundred or so complain that they could not hear in a tiny church! Larger edifices wrestle continually with the problem. All our experts somehow cannot come up with the acoustics of antiquity!

How many times have listeners in little auditoriums lamented that hearing was bad only a few yards from the pulpit! Could it be that we slaves of our own devices have become so accustomed to hearing aids of all sorts that we imagine we cannot hear without them? We limp on our crutches and if the amplifier does not work "hearing we hear not" (Matthew 13:13).

Once I listened to the veteran evangelist, Gipsy Smith. He was a preacher of the old days and abhorred all new devices. I thought I could not hear him and when he asked if any of us were having trouble about it, I raised my hand. "You're not listening!" was his reply. Could it be that, conditioned as we are to mechanical aids, we just think we cannot hear the preacher?

And of course those dear souls who come to church early to get a back seat could move up closer and fill that empty lumberyard of ten rows of seats right in front of the pulpit. But they never do, yet still insist that they cannot hear!
"Ears that hear not." "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear" (Mark 4:9). Ears to hear! All of us are equipped with ears but hearing is another matter. We hear and we do not hear. Our ears catch vocal sounds emanating from the pulpit, but the message escapes us. We hear (after a fashion) what the minister says but our Lord said, "Let him hear what the Spirit saith..." (Revelation 2:7). Of course sometimes the preacher is not saying what the Spirit says and if we listened ever so well there would be no word from God. Or the trouble, may be not with the transmitter but with our receiver! There is a preparation to hear the sermon as well as a preparation to deliver the sermon.

We live now in an ear-splitting age of amplified dissonance and some think the next generation will have to be equipped with hearing aids. The more our eardrums are bombarded with demonic waves of music (which is not music but only an excuse for not being able to make music), the deafer our souls will be.

Something has gone wrong with our hearing—both physically and spiritually. We are not going to correct it by clever devices. We must get at the cause. We need to do something about how we hear as well as what we hear. There is famine of the hearing of the Word of God—a famine because in some quarters it is not being preached and in others because our ears are not tuned and trained to hear it.

God grant us more Samuels who can say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth" (1 Samuel 3:9)!

ILLUSTRATION OF EARS TO HEAR - The Battle of Britain was at its height. Night and day the enemy bombers flew in across the English Channel to unload their cargoes of death and destruction on the cities and villages below. The Royal Air Force had put up a magnificent fight. Sir Winston Churchill, in recounting later what the world owed to that valiant group of men who flew their battered Hurricanes and Spitfires against incalculable odds, declared, "Never before in the field of human conflict have so many owed so much to so few." In one lonely RAF outpost, a group of fighter pilots was gathered in the mess hall. It was a scene often repeated in those days. The men were worn out with fatigue, they were dirty and disheveled, their eyes were bleary, and beards sprouted on their chins. They were snatching a moment's relaxation before climbing the skies again to fight off more of the Nazi airwolves. Suddenly a buzzer sounded, and a voice came over the intercom from the operations room. "Bandits at fifteen thousand feet over P25. Over!" At once the pilots were on their feet and racing for the runways. Pausing on his way, the squadron leader barked back into the intercom one short reply: "**Message received and understood**."

Joseph Parker - "**If any man have ears.**" - This is a common expression in the Scriptures.

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The text says, "If any man have ears." All men have ears, but that is not the meaning of this particular text. He must not only have ears, he must have ears to hear, ears that can hear, and that do hear. It is not enough to have the sense of hearing, it must be put into exercise, and it must be kept at the highest point of attention. Many persons have ears who never hear anything worth hearing. You cannot hear unless you listen. If you were in earnest you would listen—are you? Do not leave all the work upon the preacher: meet him half-way, give him your attention, and he cannot fail; his message is such as to protect him from failure, but he cannot do many mighty works among you if you shut the door of your ear. Take a thousand men listening to a sermon; probably not one in ten hears the sermon as the preacher meant it to be heard. Every man hears a voice, a sound, a noise—he hears one sentence following another; but that inner music which seeks the soul in its loneliness, to heal it with the love and hope of God, who hears in its ineffable meaning and its sweet benediction! Nor is this much to be wondered at. Consider how the ear has been treated all the week. Do not condemn the ear unheard. Let it plead its own cause, and it will mitigate the harshness of our judgment. "All the week long," says the ear, "I have heard nothing throughout the day but the clang of money, the tumult of bargaining, the uproar of commerce, the clamour of selfish controversy; and at night I have heard nothing but gossip, and twaddle, and childish remarks on childish topics—I cannot easily liberate myself from these degradations, and listen to words most ghostly and to gospels that seem to come from other worlds. Have patience with me, for I need awakening first out of an entangled and troubled dream." Verily there is sense in that fair speech; then it should have due weight. But the sense of the speech imposes a corresponding responsibility upon the speaker. We should prepare ourselves to hear the Divine voice. The reader of an immortal play asks, and asks in reason, that the audience should be seated ten minutes before the reading begins. It is a sensible stipulation. Shall I be unjust if I ask that my friends should be an hour with God before coming to hear the public proclamation of his word? Is it decent that we should wait on Shakespeare and leave the Eternal to wait on us? The ear should have a little prayer all its own. I will teach it one: "Lord, still the

waves that are heaving and foaming in me, or I shall miss all that is tenderest in the music of thy voice. Quiet the mean noises which fill me with a worldly din, and let me hear the words, every one of them, which will bless the life. Circumcise me: yea, put thy sharp knife upon me, thou God of the circumcision, and make me hear. Then speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." There would be no poor sermons if we came thus; we should be all ATTENTION. As a matter of fact, how does the case stand? What was the last word you spoke at the door? Some mean word about the cold wind, some poor little narrow word of criticism upon a neighbour's reputation, some childish remark upon a puerile topic, chaffer and chatter, and hollowness, and nothing, and then rushing in you sing, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of hosts." It cannot be done; such miracles are beyond your power. Can you be draggling your wings in the mud this moment, and in the flash of an eye spreading them out in the sun? Then say not that the age of miracles is past! I cannot do it. I must have time. I must think and pray, and then the banquet is always more than enough, abundant to redundance, the lavish generosity of God!

That I am not speaking unjustly of the ear, I may refer to your own proverb, "Believe nothing you hear." Why? Because you do not hear it. The first man did not hear it: he twisted it; in passing through his corkscrew hearing, the straight line got a twist, and he never can straighten it out. So it has come down to him a marvellous story, a wondrous narrative of self-contradiction, utter and palpable absurdity. Then men say, "I thought he said so and so; I understood him to mean thus and thus; O, I beg pardon, I did not catch then what he said." And out of such foul springs do the streams of conversation rise, carrying their mud with them all through the acreage of our social economy. Thus we tell lies without lying; we are carriers of falsehood, though we never mean to be untrue. How is this? Because we do not hear. The ear is preoccupied; invisible speakers are addressing it, lovers unseen are soliciting its attention, or it is asleep or on a journey, or under a spell. Hardly a man in this congregation can listen. It takes a Judge to listen. How the Judges do listen! We are buying and selling all the time the man is preaching; yea, we are doing a little business in the middle of his prayer! To listen—who can do it? God knew this, and therefore again and again he says, "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear." Who would attempt to deliver a message to a man asleep, or propose to speak to a man a mile off? There are men in this house who are just now three thousand miles away!

Many a message has been lost because the speaker has not first roused the attention of his hearers. There is a man standing a little averted from you—his back is partly towards you—he is engaged in doing something, and you say, "Bring me three volumes of the 'Family Magazine,' John." He hears his own name at last, and says, "Sir?" Poor rhetorician thou! That was beginning at the wrong end. You should have said, "JOHN! Bring me three volumes of the 'Family Magazine' out of the library." "Yes, sir." See? Is that in the Bible? Every word of it—as to purpose and philosophy. How does God speak? First, attention. "Moses, Moses," and he said, "Here am I." "Samuel, Samuel." "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." "O earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." There is a science herein; study it, speaker and hearer.

The first thing to be done is to compel the ear to listen for the right thing. When I enter the house of God, it is to hear the word of God. If I went to hear a professional elocutionist I should go to judge of the balance of his voice; I should look out for the colouring of his tones; I should measure the velocity and the weight of his articulation; I should make an elocutionary study of the man. But in going to hear God's preacher, I go to hear God's word, how I may be saved, redeemed, purified, and fitted for Divine uses in this world. I want to hear how I may get home again after many weary wanderings in stony places; I want to hear what Christ said about sin, and pain, and woe, and want, and pardon; I want to hear about those who have gone up, who cares for them, what do they, how near are they; I want to hear about the secret place where the light is pure and the rest is without shock, or pain, or dream. My soul being alive with expectation and aflame with hope, God will not disappoint it, or he will expunge from his own book the sweet promise 'Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

It is said that the manner of the speaker has a good deal to do with the attention of the hearer. That is true, but an earnest hearer will care very little about the manner if he is deeply interested in the matter itself. Just look at that company of men, and listen to that person with a long paper standing at the head of the table. He seems to have chronic bronchitis. How he chammers his words, how hoarsely he utters his sentences, how poor his enunciation! he calls a bush a bash, and a foot a fut. Listen to him and see how the people are all on the qui vive. What is the matter? He is reading a WILL, and every man in the company expects to get something. How choice they are about the elocution! They say to one another, "Rather a bad manner, don't you think? His manner is much against him, don't you think?" No, no. "What is there for me? and how much for me?" and they would go twenty times a day to hear that wheezy, asthmatic, non-elocutionist read a WILL, if they had any hope of getting anything out of it. Now I have a will; hear it:—"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." That is your portion. "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." That is yours. "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Claim your inheritance and enjoy it! "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." Take it all. Have you heard the will? Claim your property!

You say that manner has a good deal to do with speaking. So it has. Let me remind you that manner has a good deal to do with hearing. Our Saviour is reported in the Gospel of Luke to have said, "Take heed, therefore, how ye hear." There is an art of hearing; attention is not without a science of its own. Hear for eternity, hear for your soul's good. Do you want to hear the gospel now? Then you shall. "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." You hear that? "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin." "Let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his

thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come." Hear ye these words, or do they fall upon the cold ears of a dead soul? If you have heard these words you never can say again, long as you live, that you never heard the gospel!

Yes, there is a manner of hearing. Some persons listen captiously—they go for the purpose, express, of finding fault and showing their own cleverness in pointing out the fault which they suppose they have found. "These are spots in your feasts of charity." Some listen critically. They will make a man an offender for a word. They will dwell upon non-essential points: they prefer the pleasure-ground of art to the entangled forests of nature, out of which you cut the navies of the world. "These are clouds without water." Some listen indifferently: they care not what is said, or who says it: the preacher sheds his blood in vain for them—they see not nor heed the living sacrifice; they know not what the passion costs. "These are trees twice dead," and will be "plucked up by the roots."

When I was at Niagara I could not get a drink of water out of the cascade, not because there was so little water, but because there was so much. It is the worst place in the world to go for a glass of water, is the torrent of Niagara; it will drown both you and your glass! If there had been less, I could have got more. It is even so with some discourses. You do not get the benefit of them at the time, but down the river of the week, as far as about Wednesday, you can stoop and drink the quiet stream; the water that was shattered into foam by its infinite plunge is now healed and calmed like a redeemed life, and a mile down you may see your face reflected in the water that was snow a day since, silver foam making rainbows round the rocks—now it falls and quiets itself into a stream which makes glad the city of your life. The torrents of Chalmers are even now settling into quiet streams which many people are drinking with thankful gladness. Even as far down the Time-river as this, the torrents of puritan eloquence and theology are only just flowing at pace enough to be caught and used for the soul's drinking. Wondrous is this. Jesus Christ's speeches dazed the people at the time; they said, "He is mad;" and now these speeches, having taken their plunge like the Niagara cascade, are streams that make glad the city of God.
"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." "If any man have ears to hear, let him hear." "Take heed how ye hear."

"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man." Have you heard these things? If you say, "Yes, every word," then "Be ye DOERS of the word, and not hearers only."

Matthew 13:10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

NET Matthew 13:10 Then the disciples came to him and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?"

GNT Matthew 13:10 Κα προσελθ ντες ο μαθητα ε παν α τ , Δι τ ν παραβολα ς λαλε ς α το ς;

NLT Matthew 13:10 His disciples came and asked him, "Why do you use parables when you talk to the people?"

KJV Matthew 13:10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

ESV Matthew 13:10 Then the disciples came and said to him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?"

NIV Matthew 13:10 The disciples came to him and asked, "Why do you speak to the people in parables?"

ASV Matthew 13:10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?

CSB Matthew 13:10 Then the disciples came up and asked Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

NKJ Matthew 13:10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

NRS Matthew 13:10 Then the disciples came and asked him, "Why do you speak to them in parables?"

YLT Matthew 13:10 And the disciples having come near, said to him, 'Wherefore in similes dost thou speak to them?'

NAB Matthew 13:10 The disciples approached him and said, "Why do you speak to them in parables?"

NJB Matthew 13:10 Then the disciples went up to him and asked, 'Why do you talk to them in parables?'

GWN Matthew 13:10 The disciples asked him, "Why do you use stories as illustrations when you speak to people?"

BBE Matthew 13:10 And the disciples came and said to him, Why do you say things to them in the form of stories?

- **Why** - Mk 4:10,33,34

- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

> Mark 4:10+ As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, began asking Him about the parables.
>
> Luke 8:9+ His disciples *began* questioning Him as to what this parable meant

And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"From Mark's version, the disciple's **questioning** occurs after the crowds have dispersed, for only Mark records the detail "as soon as He was alone." Mark also has the unique phrase "**His followers, along with the twelve** which indicates that at this time the inner circle of followers consisted of more than just the twelve **disciples**. In Mark's version **began questioning** is in the imperfect tense depicting the disciples asking Jesus over and over. Their repetitive questioning indicated they were eager to know the answer. Some writers may be correct in surmising that the disciples were too embarrassed to ask questions in public. **Darrell Bock** explains "After Jesus tells the story, the disciples ask why he is resorting to parables. They know him well enough to recognize that this is not a lesson in agriculture for a 4H class or a polytechnic school." (Luke 8:4-9:17 Call to Faith and Christology) Notice that **parables** is in the plural which would indicate that Jesus had spoken more than just the parable of the soils.

> **Disciples** (3101)(**mathetes** from **manthano** = to learn which Vine says is "from a root *math*, indicating thought accompanied by endeavor". Gives us our English = "*mathematics*") describes a person who learns from another by instruction, whether formal or informal. Discipleship includes the idea of one who intentionally learns by inquiry and observation (cf **inductive Bible study**) and thus **mathetes** is more than a mere pupil. A **mathetes** describes an adherent of a teacher. **Mathetes** itself has no specific spiritual connotation, and was even used of superficial followers of Jesus (John 6:60, 66+) as well as of genuine believers, those who continue in His Word (Jn 8:31). Some teach disciples are a special group of believers and not all believers are disciples. I strongly disagree and feel that is a dangerous teaching! Every believer is a disciple of Christ. On the other hand not all disciples are at the same level of maturity which is why we must keep " teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."(Mt 28:20). Are you passing the baton on, making disciples (Mt 28:19, 2Ti 2:2)?
>
> > **What is the difference between a Christian and a disciple?** Biblically speaking, **a Christian is a disciple of Christ.** A Christian is someone who has placed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12). A Christian has been born again by the power of the Holy Spirit (John 3:3). A Christian "belongs to Christ" and is daily being transformed into the likeness of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18). **A true Christian (and not one in name only) will have to be a disciple of Christ as well.** That is, he has counted the cost and has totally committed his life to following Jesus. He accepts the call to sacrifice and follows wherever the Lord leads. The Christian disciple completely adheres to the teaching of Jesus, makes Christ his number-one priority, and lives accordingly. He is actively involved in making other Christian disciples (Matthew 28:19–20). A true Christian disciple is a believer in Christ and possesses new life through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Because he loves Christ, a Christian will also be an obedient disciple (John 14:15). Paul describes the reality of being a Christian disciple: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20).= This quote is from What is the difference between a Christian and a disciple? | GotQuestions.org (See also What is Christian discipleship? | GotQuestions.org)

Adrian Rogers - Jesus had a twofold motive: His first motive was to reveal; and, surprisingly, His second motive was to conceal. Now, many times, people tell us, "Well, Jesus spoke to us in parables to help us to understand." Well, that's true; but it's only half-true. He also spoke in parables so that some people would not understand. And if you don't understand that, you don't understand the full meaning of teaching in parables.

Matthew 13:11 Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted.

> NET Matthew 13:11 He replied, "You have been given the opportunity to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but they have not.
>
> GNT Matthew 13:11 δ ποκριθε ς ε πεν α το ς, τι μ ν δ δοται γν ναι τ μυστ ρια τ ς βασιλε ας τ ν ο ραν ν,

κε νοις δ ο δ δοται.

NLT Matthew 13:11 He replied, "You are permitted to understand the secrets of the Kingdom of Heaven, but others are not.

KJV Matthew 13:11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

ESV Matthew 13:11 And he answered them, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.

NIV Matthew 13:11 He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them.

ASV Matthew 13:11 And he answered and said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

CSB Matthew 13:11 He answered them, "Because the secrets of the kingdom of heaven have been given for you to know, but it has not been given to them.

NKJ Matthew 13:11 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.

NRS Matthew 13:11 He answered, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.

YLT Matthew 13:11 And he answering said to them that -- 'To you it hath been given to know the secrets of the reign of the heavens, and to these it hath not been given,

NAB Matthew 13:11 He said to them in reply, "Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted.

NJB Matthew 13:11 In answer, he said, 'Because to you is granted to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven, but to them it is not granted.

GWN Matthew 13:11 Jesus answered, "Knowledge about the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you. But it has not been given to the crowd.

BBE Matthew 13:11 And he said to them in answer, To you is given the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

- **to you it has been granted to know** - Mt 11:25,26 16:17 Ps 25:8,9,14 Isa 29:10 35:8 Mk 4:11 Lu 8:10 Lu 10:39-42 Joh 7:17 Ac 16:14 17:11,12 1Co 2:9,10,14 4:7 Jas 1:5,16-18 1Jn 2:27
- **mysteries** - Ro 16:25 1Co 2:7 4:1 13:2 15:51 Eph 1:9,18 3:3-9 5:32 6:19 Col 1:26,27 2:2 1Ti 3:9,16
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

Mark 4:11+ And He was saying to them, “To you has been given the mystery of the**kingdom of God**, but those who are outside get everything in parables,

Luke 8:10+ And He said, “To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the**kingdom of God,** but to the rest it is in parables, so that SEEING THEY MAY NOT SEE, AND HEARING THEY MAY NOT UNDERSTAND.

Multiple related passages dealing with "judicial hardening" and the related topic of Jesus speaking in parables - Dt 29:4+, Isa 6:9,10+ Mt 13:11-15+ Mk 4:11-12+ Lk 8:10+ Jn 9:39-41, Jn 12:38-40 Acts 28:26,27+ Ro 11:7-10+, 2Co 3:14-15+, Eph 4:17-18+, 2Th 2:10-12+.

PARABLES:
REVEAL OR CONCEAL

Barclay adds that “The parable conceals truth from those who are either too lazy to think or too blinded by prejudice to see. It puts the responsibility fairly and squarely on the individual. It reveals truth to him who desires truth; it conceals truth from him who does not wish to see the truth.”(Matthew 13 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible)

Guzik writes that "The same sun that softens the wax hardens the clay; and so the very same gospel message that humbles the honest heart and leads to repentance may also harden the heart of the dishonest listener and confirm that one in their path of disobedience." (Enduring Word Bible Commentary Matthew Chapter 13)

Jesus answered them - He is addressing His "inner circle" of followers which included the twelve and others who also were more committed followers (Mk 4:10+).

To you it has been granted to know - **To you** is emphatic which contrasts with **those who are outside** (Mk 4:11+), and in context the **you** were those who were disciples, those who believed in Jesus, those who continued in His Word (Jn 8:31+). Jesus divided them (and really all men in every place and every time) into the "**haves**" and the "**have nots**" so to speak! "**Haves and have nots**" normally is an idiom referring to those who are wealthy and those who are not. In this context the idiom applies to those who are granted indescribable spiritual wealth and those who have no spiritual wealth.

> **THOUGHT**- Temporal wealth disappears on death (Pr 23:5, Mt 6:19+, 1Ti 6:17+, Jas 5:1-2+), but spiritual wealth endures eternally (Mt 6:20+, Jn 15:16, cf Col 2:3)! Invest in God, not Gold, for the R.O.I., return on investment is "out of this world!" Which are you pursuing in your short sojourn on earth? Your answer will make all the difference in this world and in the next! Paul writes "**Discipline** (gumnazo/gymnazo) in the present imperative see our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey) yourself for the purpose of godliness; for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is **profitable for all things**, since it holds promise for the **present life** and also **for the life to come.**" (1Ti 4:7-8+) Beloved, do not miss your "once in a lifetime opportunity" to store up for yourself treasure in heaven which God graciously will allow you to enjoy for ALL ETERNITY! In Rev 22:12+ Jesus says "**Behold**, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done." (Borrow Randy Alcorn's The Treasure Principle; see also Going for the gold by Joe Wall)

Has been given is in the perfect tense meaning it was given (had been revealed -divine passive) at the time of their "initiation" in the past and has ongoing or present results. It includes the idea of permanency, so that now the disciples were permanent possessors of **the secret of the Kingdom of God**. **To know** is **ginosko** which often means to know by experience, but in this context clearly means they would **know** because they had "experienced" Jesus' explanation of the mystery. On the other hand they would also come to know the mystery by experience. In other words, although they had some degree of understanding based on Jesus' explanation, they did not have a full understanding, but that would come experientially, progressively over time.

The only 3 uses of **mystery** in the Gospels are all in the context of Jesus' parabolic teaching (Matt. 13:11; Mk. 4:11; Lk. 8:10). Hiebert comments that " In its ultimate development, this mystery is the fully unfolded message of the gospel (cf. Ro 16:25–26+)." He goes on to add that "The essence of the revelation was that the **kingdom** was embodied in the Person, words, and work of Jesus. Their faith qualified the disciples to understand that the lowly Jesus is the very revelation of God to men."

Parable reveal meaning to those who receive Him
and conceal meaning from those who do not.

The mysteries (musterion) **of the kingdom** (basileia) **of heaven** (see note for multiple resources) - Suffice it to say that **Kingdom of Heaven** is synonymous with the **Kingdom of God**, the phrase used in the parallel passages in Mark 4:11+ and Luke 8:10+. Since Matthew is writing his gospel especially for a Jewish audience, he knew that they were reticent to use the Name of God and this probably explains what he frequently substituted **Heaven** for the Name God. In addition the Talmud often has the phrase **kingdom of heaven**.

> **MacArthur** on **Kingdom of Heaven** - This is the kingdom that exists spiritually in the hearts of His people while the King is physically absent from the earth. He is present with believers, but He is not visible or evident to the world, except as revealed through their lives and testimony....Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah of the Old Testament, now rules in the hearts of His people, although He is physically absent from earth and rules them from His heavenly dwelling through His Spirit—while the usurper Satan temporarily is the spiritual ruler of this world (John 12:31). The kingdom of heaven has two important but distinct aspects. First is the universal kingdom, which includes every created thing in every time and place. God is the Creator and absolute Sovereign of the universe, and will be eternally. Nothing exists or occurs without His divine provision or permission....The second aspect of God's kingdom is what Alva McClain has appropriately called mediatorial, because His rule is mediated through others. Both the universal and the mediatorial aspects of the kingdom are seen in the Lord's Prayer, as Jesus commands us to pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). "In heaven" refers to God's universal and direct reign, whereas "on earth" refers to the present kingdom, in which only His saints are His subjects in the fullest sense. (See MacArthur Commentary)

Wuest explains that "The mystery is not in the fact that they are difficult to interpret, but that they are impossible to interpret until their meaning is revealed, for only then do they become plain. The disciples had been ***initiated*** into these secret things." (Word Studies)

Adrian Rogers - Now these parables reveal mysteries; and so there is the mystery of His teaching. And you cannot just take cold and callused hands, and lay them upon this book, and open this book, and bring to it an undiscipled and an uncircumcised and an unspiritual mind, and expect to understand this book. This book is full of mysteries. Now a mystery, in the Bible, is a hidden truth; and it cannot be known by human knowledge or by human wisdom, but it must come by revelation. It is a hidden truth that you can only know by revelation. And so Jesus here is speaking in mysteries. And that's the reason that some people don't understand the Bible: They don't have eyes to see..

Barclay - When the New Testament talks of the mystery of the Kingdom, it does not mean that the Kingdom is remote and abstruse and hard to understand; but it does mean that it is quite unintelligible to the man who has not given his heart to Jesus, and that only the man who has taken Jesus as Master and Lord can understand what the **Kingdom of God** means. (Matthew 13 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible)

But to them it has not been granted - Mark 4:11+ expands the meaning of **them** stating that **those who are outside get everything in parables**. This describes hearers who do not believe in Jesus. They have **not been granted** enlightenment concerning the mystery of Jesus' parabolic teachings because they have refused the Light of the Word! (Jn 8:12, read Jn 3:19-20+). **Not been granted** is didomi in the perfect tense meaning this is their state or condition.

John Phillips feels that with this pronouncement "The Lord had closed the door on Israel as a nation. Individual Jews can still be enlightened by exercising personal faith in Christ. These believers become members of the church (the multinational, mystical body of Christ) and heirs of the heavenly kingdom. Unregenerate Jewry to this day is devoid of understanding and blind to the mystery truths of the kingdom." (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

Sean O'Donnell - To those on the inside, so to speak, those who are part of the new family of God-Jesus' brothers and sisters by faith-parables reveal once-hidden truths. Parables unveil what Jesus calls "the secrets of the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 13:11). To most of us secrets are a precious commodity. If someone comes up to you and whispers in your ear, "I want to tell you a secret," I assume that you are immediately engaged with this person and almost instantaneously feel a sense of intimacy that may not have existed before the notion of sharing some secret was communicated. If someone wants to share a secret with me, I recognize that this person is likely going to share with me something he or she is unwilling to share with others, something special that he or she trusts me to keep. So most of the time, secrets are special to us. As a special gift Jesus shares certain secrets with his closest followers, what he calls "the secrets of the kingdom of heaven." To them and only to them he says, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven." Although we are not told specifically the nature of the secret, from what these disciples have "seen" and "heard" we can safely assume that "the secrets of the kingdom of heaven" concern the rule of God revealed in the person, works, and words of Jesus. And from what Jesus says in Mt 13:34, 35, "the secrets of the kingdom of heaven" are similar to Paul's term in Ephesians, "the mystery of the gospel" (Ephesians 6:19; cf. Eph 1:9; 3:1-10; 5:32; Romans 16:25-27). That which has been "hidden since the foundation of the world" (Mt 13:35) is slowly coming to light, this gospel about Jesus-the one who comes to suffer, die, rise again, and commission his church to take the good news to all the world, breaking down the walls of hostility between Jews and Gentiles. In Jesus "the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God" (Ephesians 3:9) comes to light. It is a riddle no more. The secret is out. In him [Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his [God's] grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery [the secret] of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. (Ephesians 1:7-10) That sounds a lot like Mt 28:19, doesn't it? It echoes and expands it. What was once hidden to the world, and still remains hidden to the crowd and the Jewish religious leaders and to any who follow in their faithless footsteps, God has now revealed to a former tax collector, a few former fishermen, and anyone who is humble enough to heed the call of Christ and put on his gentle yoke. Parables conceal, but they also reveal. (See Matthew: All Authority in Heaven and on Earth)

ILLUSTRATION OF MYSTERY - A college professor asked, "How many of you in this class believe the Bible is the Word of God?" He said it with such a sneer on his face that none would raise their hand except for one Christian young man there in that class. And he knew that he must be true to his Lord and Savior, and so he lifted his hand and confessed that he believed that the Bible was the Word of God and that he loved the Lord Jesus Christ as his personal Savior. Then that professor began to cut this young man down. Immediately, at the beginning of the class, he ridiculed the Bible. He ridiculed Christianity. He ridiculed it as superstition, and as fogeyism, and as something that was out of date, and so forth. And then the professor sort of climaxed all that he had to say by saying, "Young man, I want you to know that the Bible is a bundle of blunders and a book of nonsense. I have read it, and it makes no sense to me." And that young man, nonplussed, said, "Sir, may I say a word to you now?" And the professor said, "What is it?" He said, "Sir, the Bible is God's love letter to His children. If you've read it, and it doesn't make any sense to you, it's because

you've been reading somebody else's mail." Amen?

Mystery (3466)(**musterion** - see extensive discussion from **mustes** = one initiated [e.g. "mystery" religions] from **mueo** = to close or shut) in the NT is a truth never previously known (or only partially known) which human intellect could never discover, which has now been made known by divine revelation. It describes "the secret counsels of God which are hidden from the ungodly but when revealed to the godly, are understood by them." This Greek word does not carry the connotation it has today as when we talk of a mystery novel. A mystery in the Bible is a truth which man cannot know by his natural powers, but must be supernaturally revealed. In Paul's day **musterion** was a technical term utilized by the "mystery religions" which referred to a secrets concealed by strange customs and ceremonies and confided only to those initiated into the "mystery cult". The mystery-religions had their secrets and signs as modern secret societies have today. Those initiated into these pagan cults, knew these secret signs.

> **Musterion** - Matt. 13:11; Mk. 4:11; Lk. 8:10; Rom. 11:25; Rom. 16:25; 1 Co. 2:7; 1 Co. 4:1; 1 Co. 13:2; 1 Co. 14:2; 1 Co. 15:51; Eph. 1:9; Eph. 3:3; Eph. 3:4; Eph. 3:9; Eph. 5:32; Eph. 6:19; Col. 1:26; Col. 1:27; Col. 2:2; Col. 4:3; 2 Thess. 2:7; 1 Tim. 3:9; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 1:20; Rev. 10:7; Rev. 17:5; Rev. 17:7

Kingdom (932) **basileia** from **basileus** = a sovereign, king, monarch) denotes sovereignty, royal power, dominion. Basileia can also refer to the territory or people over whom a king rules (See "Three Basic Meanings" below).

> **Swindoll** says **basileia** means ""kingdom," "government," "royal power" This term denotes the dominion of a lawful king, which the Greeks saw as something derived from Zeus. In the Old Testament, Israel was originally a theocracy, a nation whose king was God. Therefore, Israel was the kingdom of God. Even when a human sat on the throne of Israel, he derived his power from God. The Gospels depict the earth as the dominion of Satan or evil, a usurper to the rightful throne of God. Jesus came to reestablish divine rule (i.e., the kingdom of God). (Insights on Luke)
>
> At the outset it should be noted that the **Kingdom of Heaven**/**God** is both simple and complex and has been the subject of many non-Biblical interpretations (this summary makes no attempt to review these interpretations). It is as simple as the truth that wherever the King (God/Jesus) rules and reigns, there the kingdom is present! It is complex in that a number of references to **Kingdom of God**/**Heaven** have prophetic (eschatological) overtones, so it has a present and future aspect. It is also complex in the sense that the **Kingdom of God**/**Heaven** is described in both testaments from Genesis to Revelation (See Tony Garland's interesting related summary of Genesis and Revelation as Bookends). It follows that any attempt to give a Biblical definition of kingdom will be woefully lacking. So as you read these notes on the definition of **basileia**, understand that this is only a summary - --indeed, it will take all eternity to comprehend God's Kingdom, a Kingdom which will endure forever and ever! Amen!

The following passages are discussed in George Peters magnum opus The Theocratic Kingdom published originally in 3 volumes. the passages below are in **Volume 1** (I.), **Volume 2** (II.) and **Volume 3** (III.). Once you open the correct volume, you will have to hunt down the comments related to the respective verse.

- Matthew 13:1–23 III. 186.
- Matthew 13:10 II. 18.
- Matthew 13:11–16 I. 141, 283, 430, II. 16, 18.
- Matthew 13:19 II. 314.
- Matthew 13:24–30 I. 39, II. 21, 181, III. 175.
- Matthew 13:31–33 I. 39, 200, 657, II. 22, 27, 33, 237, 300, 619, III. 175.
- Matthew 13:34, 35 I. 34, II. 23.
- Matthew 13:39–43 I. 577, II. 167, 176, 269, 516.
- Matthew 13:40, 43 II. 177.
- Matthew 13:41–43 I. 283, 414, II. 167, 592, III. 541.
- Matthew 13:44–46 I. 39, II. 23, 384, 408, 420–1.
- Matthew 13:47–50 II. 24.
- Matthew 13:52 I. 20, 39.

Who can understand the mysteries? Clearly only those who have been "initiated" into Christ by the New Birth. To them it is granted (as a divine gift) from God.

> **Vincent** has a helpful note - In this sense Christ uses parables symbolically to expound the **mysteries** of the

kingdom of God; as utterances which conceal from one class what they reveal to another (Matthew 13:11-17), and in which familiar facts of the earthly life are used figuratively to expound truths of the higher life. The unspiritual do not link these facts of the natural life with those of the supernatural, which are not discerned by them (1Corinthians 2:14), and therefore they need an interpreter of the relation between the two....A **mystery** does not denote an unknowable thing, but one which is withdrawn from knowledge or manifestation, and which cannot be known without special manifestation of it. Hence appropriate to the things of the kingdom of heaven (note) , which could be known only by revelation." (Matthew 13 - Vincent's Word Studies)

Barclay - The Greek word in Matthew 13:11, which I have translated **secrets** (as the Revised Standard Version also does), is **musterion**. This means literally mysteries which is, in fact, how the King James Version renders it. In New Testament times this word **mystery** was used in a special and a technical way. To us a **mystery** means simply something dark and difficult and impossible to understand, something mysterious. But in New Testament times it was the technical name for something which was unintelligible to the outsider but crystal clear to the man who had been initiated. In the time of Jesus in both Greece and Rome the most intense and real religion was found in what were known as the Mystery Religions. These religions had all a common character. They were in essence passion plays in which was told in drama the story of some god or goddess who had lived and suffered and died and who had risen again to blessedness. The initiate was given a long course of instruction in which the inner meaning of the drama was explained to him; that course of instruction extended over months and even years. Before he was allowed finally to see the drama he had to undergo a period of fasting and abstinence. Everything was done to work him up to a state of emotion and of expectation. He was then taken to see the play; the atmosphere was carefully constructed; there was cunning lighting; there were incenses and perfumes; there was sensuous music; there was in many cases a noble liturgy. The drama was then played out; and it was intended to produce in the worshipper a complete identification with the god whose story was told on the stage. The worshipper was intended literally to share in the divinity's life and sufferings and death and resurrection, and therefore shared in his immortality. The cry of the worshipper in the end was: "I am Thou, and Thou art I."

We take an actual example. One of the most famous of all the mysteries was the **mystery of Isis**. Osiris was a wise and good king. Seth, his wicked brother, hated him, and with seventy-two conspirators persuaded him to come to a banquet. There he persuaded him to enter a cunningly wrought coffin which exactly fitted him. When Osiris was in the coffin, the lid was snapped down and the coffin was flung into the Nile. After long and weary search, Isis, the faithful wife of Osiris, found the coffin and brought it home in mourning. But when she was absent from home, the wicked Seth came again, stole the body of Osiris, cut it into fourteen pieces, and scattered it throughout all Egypt. Once again Isis set out on her weary and sorrowful quest. After long search she found all the pieces; by a wondrous power the pieces were fitted together and Osiris rose from the dead; and he became for ever afterwards the immortal king of the living and the dead. It is easy to see how moving a story that could be made to one who had undergone a long instruction, to one who saw it in the most carefully calculated setting. There is the story of the good king; there is the attack of sin; there is the sorrowing search of love; there is the triumphant finding of love; there is the raising to a life which has conquered death. It was with that experience that the worshipper was meant to identify himself, and he was supposed to emerge from it, in the famous phrase of the Mystery Religions, "reborn for eternity". (**Ed**: What a Tragic Deception!)

That is a **mystery**; something meaningless to the outsider, but supremely precious to the **initiate**. In point of fact the Lord's Supper is like that. To one who has never seen such a thing before, it will look like a company of men eating little pieces of bread and drinking little sips of wine, and it might even appear ridiculous. But to the man who knows what he is doing, to the man initiated into its meaning, it is the most precious and the most moving act of worship in the Church.

So Jesus says to his disciples: "Outsiders cannot understand what I say; but you know Me; you are My disciples; you can understand." Christianity can be understood only from the inside. It is only after personal encounter with Jesus Christ that a man can understand. To criticize from outside is to criticize in ignorance. It is only the man who is prepared to become a disciple who can enter into the most precious things of the Christian faith (Matthew 13 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible)

Matthew 13:12 "For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.

NET Matthew 13:12 For whoever has will be given more, and will have an abundance. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.

GNT Matthew 13:12 στις γ ρ χει, δοθ σεται α τ κα περισσευθ σεται· στις δ ο κ χει, κα χει ρθ σεται π α το .

NLT Matthew 13:12 To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them.

KJV Matthew 13:12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

ESV Matthew 13:12 For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance, but from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

NIV Matthew 13:12 Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.

ASV Matthew 13:12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that which he hath.

CSB Matthew 13:12 For whoever has, more will be given to him, and he will have more than enough. But whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

NKJ Matthew 13:12 "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.

NRS Matthew 13:12 For to those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away.

YLT Matthew 13:12 for whoever hath, it shall be given to him, and he shall have overabundance, and whoever hath not, even that which he hath shall be taken from him.

NAB Matthew 13:12 To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

NJB Matthew 13:12 Anyone who has will be given more and will have more than enough; but anyone who has not will be deprived even of what he has.

GWN Matthew 13:12 Those who understand these mysteries will be given more knowledge, and they will excel in understanding them. However, some people don't understand these mysteries. Even what they understand will be taken away from them.

BBE Matthew 13:12 Because whoever has, to him will be given, and he will have more; but from him who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

- **For whoever** - Mt 25:29 Mk 4:24,25 Lu 8:18 9:26 19:24-26 Joh 15:2-5
- **from** - Mt 21:43 Isa 5:4-7 Mk 12:9 Lu 10:42 12:20,21 16:2,25 Rev 2:5 Rev 3:15,16
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Mark 4:24-25+ And He was saying to them, “Take care what you listen to. By your standard of measure it will be measured to you; and more will be given you besides. 25 For whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.”

Luke 8:18+ “So take care how you listen; for whoever has, to him more shall be given; and whoever does not have, even what he thinks he has shall be taken away from him.”

Luke 19:25-26+ “And they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas already.’ 26 “I tell you that to everyone who has, more shall be given, but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.

Matthew 25:29+ “For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away.

SPIRITUAL PROGRESSION
OR SPIRITUAL REGRESSION

The fact that this saying (with slight alterations) is repeated some 5 times in the Gospels shows how significant this truth is to Jesus.

If you have ridden a bicycle, you know that if you are pedaling, your are progressing, but if you cease pedaling, you start falling. Jesus is emphasizing the same principle in the spiritual life for every person is either progressing or regressing spiritual. Even as no one can stand still on a bicycle (except acrobats), no man remains still or static in his relationship to God.

> **THOUGHT** - John MacArthur applies this truth - "The longer a person knows and is faithful to Christ, the more his Lord is faithful to reveal His truth and power. The longer a person rejects the knowledge of God he has, whether much or little, the less of God's truth he will understand. Willful human rejection leads to divine judicial rejection. When a man says no to God, God says no to that person. God confirms men in their stubbornness, and binds them with their own chains of unbelief." (See Matthew Commentary) This begs the simple question, are you progressing or regressing spiritually. Standing still or neutrality is not an option!

The **New Living** Paraphrase is helpful - "To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given, and they will have an abundance of knowledge. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them."

For (gar) is a term of explanation. What is Jesus explaining? **John Broadus** says "In v12f., He declares that He withholds some truths from the outside crowd (Mark 4:11) because of their willful blindness." Pulpit Commentary says for explains "The reason of God's action spoken of in the preceding verse. It is based on the following principle." (Matthew 13 Commentary)

NIGTC says the **for** (gar) "explains why the point made in v. 11 can stand as the basis for the present strategy of using parables with the crowds. (New International Greek Testament Commentary – The Gospel of Matthew)

MacDonald says it this way "It may seem arbitrary that these secrets should be withheld from the multitude and revealed to the disciples. **But the Lord gives the reason**. The disciples had faith in the Lord Jesus; therefore, they would be given the capacity for more. They had accepted the light; therefore, they would receive more light. The Jewish nation, on the other hand, had rejected the Light of the world; therefore they were not only prevented from receiving more light, they would lose what little light they had. Light rejected is light denied." (Borrow Believer's Bible Commentary)

Hendriksen points out that "In matters spiritual, standing still is impossible. A person either gains or loses; he either advances or declines. Whoever has, to him shall be given." (Borrow Exposition of the gospel according to Matthew)

D A Carson writes that here Jesus "warns against taking spiritual blessings for granted and serves to increase gratitude and a sense of privilege among those who continue to enjoy them." (BORROW The Expositor's Bible Commentary : abridged edition: 1994).

Whoever has - Has what? In context this refers to the knowledge God gives in Mt 13:11. To this one the mysteries of the Kingdom of God (see resources) have been revealed.

To him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance- In other words, Jesus is saying that the heart that is open to Jesus' teaching and has received it will receive more understanding (ED: ARE YOU HAVING DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING THE WORD? PERHAPS YOU ARE NOT OBEYING WHAT YOU ALREADY KNOW! OBEDIENCE IS THE DOORWAY INTO GREATER UNDERSTANDING IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS!). We see this exemplified in the lives of the disciples to whom He had revealed the mystery of the Kingdom and who after Pentecost had their spiritual eyes further opened to truth they had heretofore not understood (e.g., God opening Peter's eyes to God's opening the door of the Kingdom to Gentiles with Cornelius in Acts 10:1-48+) **Morris** explains that Jesus "has just drawn attention to the importance of God's gifts of grace, and he now emphasizes the importance of human responsibility. When anyone uses the spiritual truth he has, that truth grows. More is added to it....The principle is capable of application in many areas of life (the achievement of sports people, for example). But Jesus was not speaking of such areas; he was referring to a spiritual truth of permanent importance." (BORROW The Gospel according to Matthew) This axiomatic truth reminds me of the old phrase "**Use it or lose it**!"

This truth is repeated in Matthew 25:29 "For to everyone who has, more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but from the one who does not have, even what he does have shall be taken away." The NLT has "To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away." (Mt 25:29NLT).

R T France comments that "We have a similar saying: "Nothing succeeds like success." It is a maxim drawn from the world of trade,

and sums up all too well the capitalist system of economics and its effects on the “have-not” part of our modern world. But here it is not used literally. In the matter of spiritual perception too both gain and loss are compounded; it is the disciples, to whom the secret has already been given, who are now in a position to benefit from further teaching. Once you have started on the road of spiritual enlightenment, the blessings multiply, but those who do not accept the “message of the kingdom” will lose everything." (BORROW The Gospel of Matthew)

Plummer has an interesting way to look at this passage stating that "the purpose is educational to disciples, and disciplinary to those who refuse to become disciples."

NET Note - The meaning is that the one who accepts Jesus' teaching concerning his person and the kingdom will receive a share in the kingdom now and even more in the future, but for the one who rejects Jesus' words, the opportunity that that person presently possesses with respect to the kingdom will someday be taken away forever.

> **THOUGHT** - There is a personal application to us in that we are each responsible to use our gifts for the glory of God, lest they wither and atrophy (so to speak) from disuse (or even worse, from abuse).

But whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him- As the disciple's eyes were opened more and more to God's plan of redemption for the world and the Gentiles, the Jews became more and more blinded to the truth about Jesus, thus "sealing their doom for the entire church age." (Phillips)

Bruce Barton echoes Phillips comment above first asking "How can people “have nothing” yet lose what they have? Jesus’ words meant that those who had rejected him and his message had no knowledge and therefore would lose their privileged status. **Those who “have nothing” were the religious leaders and the vast majority of the Jews**. (**ED**: Only a very small number in Israel truly believed in Him while He was with them! cf 500 in 1 Cor 15:6, cf 120 persons in Acts 1:15) They thought they were privileged and secure as God’s chosen people, but they would lose that position. They would never understand the secret because they would not come to God for the answer. Choosing not to believe in Jesus as their Messiah, they would not be able to understand the kingdom. This phrase means that we are responsible to use well what we have. When people reject Jesus, their hardness of heart drives away or renders useless even the little understanding they had." (LABCM)

MacArthur writes that "Many thousands of people heard Jesus teach and saw Him perform miraculous signs as evidence of His divine messiahship; but most of them did not recognize Him as Lord or receive Him as Savior. They were exposed to God incarnate, and yet they rejected Him—either by direct opposition or by indifferent neglect. They said no to the King, and because they refused to receive the divine light that shined on them, they drifted deeper and deeper into spiritual darkness. To this day, no people on earth are more religiously disoriented than Jews. They were called to be God’s people, given His promises, His covenants, His laws, and His immeasurable blessings. They were even sent His only Son as one of their own people—to teach, heal, comfort, redeem, and deliver them—but they would not have Him rule over them (Luke 19:14). Because they rejected God’s perfect Light, even the light they had went out, and everything in their religion lost its true meaning. The Temple was destroyed by the Romans in A.D. 70, and with it the priesthood and the sacrifices. The ceremonial and sacrificial requirements of their covenant with God could no longer be met; but since that time Jews have continued to follow various aspects of their ancient religion—without prophets, priests, kings, Temple, or sacrifices. Even those who call themselves orthodox believe and practice only a small part of what their own Scripture teaches and commands. The conservative and reformed branches of Judaism believe and practice even less. Most Jews do not even try to make sense out of most of the Old Testament. For most, all that is left is a nonreligious tradition." (MNTC-Mt)

Lenski writes that **whoever does not have** ”because he declined what the others accepted, because he thought he was rich and sufficient in himself, he shall not merely remain as he is, without all the riches that flow to the others, he shall lose even “what he has.” In our relation to Christ we either go forward or go backward; we do not stand still. “What he has” means whatever he may possess of moral endowments from God. The scribes and Pharisees and the foolish people who followed them instead of Jesus lost steadily as their contact with Jesus progressed (11:16–24; 12:38–45). They lost even the natural sense of fairness, right, and justice." (ISMG)

Hendriksen adds that "whoever does not have, from him shall be taken away even that semblance of knowledge, that superficial acquaintance with matters spiritual, which he once had." (Borrow Exposition of the gospel according to Matthew)

Matthew Henry - Here is a threatening to him that has not, that has no desire of grace, that makes no right use of the gifts and graces he has: has not root, no solid principle; that has, but uses not what he has; from him shall be taken away that which he has or seems to have. His leaves shall wither, his gifts decay; the means of grace he has, and makes no use of, shall be taken from him; God will call in his talents out of their hands that are likely to become bankrupts quickly.

Constable comments that "Verse 12 repeats a proverbial truth (cf. Mt 25:29). It encourages gratitude for spiritual blessings and warns against taking these for granted. The believing disciples had access into the kingdom by faith in Jesus Christ. God would give them greater understanding that would result in abundance of blessing. However the unbeliever would not only fail to receive further

revelation, but God would remove the privilege of becoming a subject in the kingdom from him or her."

Matthew 13:13 "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

NET Matthew 13:13 For this reason I speak to them in parables: Although they see they do not see, and although they hear they do not hear nor do they understand.

GNT Matthew 13:13 δι το το ν παραβολα ς α το ς λαλ , τι βλ ποντες ο βλ πουσιν κα κο οντες ο κ κο ουσιν ο δ συν ουσιν,

NLT Matthew 13:13 That is why I use these parables, For they look, but they don't really see. They hear, but they don't really listen or understand.

KJV Matthew 13:13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

ESV Matthew 13:13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

NIV Matthew 13:13 This is why I speak to them in parables: "Though seeing, they do not see; though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

ASV Matthew 13:13 Therefore speak I to them in parables; because seeing they see not, and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

CSB Matthew 13:13 For this reason I speak to them in parables, because looking they do not see, and hearing they do not listen or understand.

NKJ Matthew 13:13 "Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

NRS Matthew 13:13 The reason I speak to them in parables is that 'seeing they do not perceive, and hearing they do not listen, nor do they understand.'

YLT Matthew 13:13 'Because of this, in similes do I speak to them, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor understand,

NAB Matthew 13:13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because 'they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand.'

NJB Matthew 13:13 The reason I talk to them in parables is that they look without seeing and listen without hearing or understanding.

GWN Matthew 13:13 This is why I speak to them this way. They see, but they're blind. They hear, but they don't listen. They don't even try to understand.

BBE Matthew 13:13 For this reason I put things into the form of stories; because they see without seeing, and give ear without hearing, and the sense is not clear to them.

- Mt 13:16 De 29:3,4 Isa 42:18-20 44:18 Jer 5:21 Eze 12:2 Mk 8:17,18 Joh 3:19,20 9:39-41 2Co 4:3,4
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A STRIKING PARADOX

As noted a paradox is a a statement that contradicts itself which is certainly an apt description of Mt 13:13! In another sense this paradoxical statement is "parabolic" for Jesus is using the statement to illustrate spiritual principles, but to those who are outside it will sound like gibberish or even nonsense, for a "natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised." (1 Cor 2:14+) He is speaking of the Jews in context (but applicable to all to whom Jesus has been presented but rejected) who saw and heard Jesus but failed to see Him with an open mind and a willing, broken (because of their sin) heart and thus they could not understand His mission. This passage in a sense is a picture of the soils that received the good seed but in effect "rejected" the seed and had no "fruit" of understanding of Who Jesus was and why He had come to earth as the God-Man.

Therefore (dia touto) means either "for the reason just stated" in Mt 13:12 (“For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him.) or "for the reason now stated".

I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand - Jesus' point is that He used parables because of the spiritual blindness of the people.

William MacDonald - Matthew Henry compares the parables to the pillar of cloud and fire which enlightened Israel while confusing the Egyptians. The parables would be revealed to those who were sincerely interested but would prove “only an irritation to those who were hostile to Jesus.” So it was not a matter of whim on the Lord’s part, but simply the outworking of a principle which is built into all of life—willful blindness is followed by judicial blindness. That is why He spoke to the Jews in parables. H. C. Woodring put it so: “Because they did not have the love of the truth, they would not get the light of the truth.” They professed to see, that is, to be familiar with divine truth, but Truth incarnate stood before them and they resolutely refused to see Him. They professed to hear God’s Word, but the living Word of God was in their midst and they would not obey Him. They were unwilling to understand the wonderful fact of the Incarnation; therefore, the capacity to understand was taken from them.(Borrow Believer's Bible Commentary)

John MacArthur writes "Here Matthew seems to suggest that their own unbelief causes their spiritual blindness. Luke 8:10, however, emphasizes God’s initiative in obscuring the truth from these unbelievers (“to the rest it is given in parables, [so] that ‘Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand’”; cf. Isa. 6:9). Both are true, of course. Yet we are not to think that God blinds them because He somehow delights in their destruction (cf. Ezek. 33:11). This judicial blinding may be viewed as an act of mercy, lest their condemnation be increased. (MacArthur Bible Commentary)

Matthew 13:14 In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, ‘YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;

NET Matthew 13:14 And concerning them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: 'You will listen carefully yet will never understand, you will look closely yet will never comprehend.

GNT Matthew 13:14 κα ναπληρο ται α το ς προφητε α σα ου λ γουσα, κο κο σετε κα ο μ συν τε, κα βλ ποντες βλ ψετε κα ο μ δητε.

NLT Matthew 13:14 This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah that says, 'When you hear what I say, you will not understand. When you see what I do, you will not comprehend.

KJV Matthew 13:14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:

ESV Matthew 13:14 Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled that says: ""You will indeed hear but never understand, and you will indeed see but never perceive."

NIV Matthew 13:14 In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah: " 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding; you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

ASV Matthew 13:14 And unto them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall in no wise understand; And seeing ye shall see, and shall in no wise perceive:

CSB Matthew 13:14 Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says: You will listen and listen, yet never understand; and you will look and look, yet never perceive.

NKJ Matthew 13:14 "And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says:`Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive;

NRS Matthew 13:14 With them indeed is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that says: 'You will indeed listen, but never understand, and you will indeed look, but never perceive.

YLT Matthew 13:14 and fulfilled on them is the prophecy of Isaiah, that saith, With hearing ye shall hear, and ye shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and ye shall not perceive,

NAB Matthew 13:14 Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says: 'You shall indeed hear but not understand you shall indeed look but never see.

NJB Matthew 13:14 So in their case what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah is being fulfilled: Listen and listen, but never understand! Look and look, but never perceive!

GWN Matthew 13:14 So they make Isaiah's prophecy come true: 'You will hear clearly but never understand. You will see clearly but never comprehend.

BBE Matthew 13:14 And for them the words of Isaiah have come true, Though you give ear, you will not get knowledge; and seeing, you will see, but the sense will not be clear to you:

- **the prophecy** - Isa 6:9,10 Eze 12:2 Mk 4:12 Lu 8:10 Joh 12:39,40 Ac 28:25-27 Ro 11:8-10 2Co 3:14
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

TWO PARADOXES
SEEING AND HEARING

A paradox is a self-contradictory or counter-intuitive statement. Those who can see (hear) but can't see (understand) is a paradox.

In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled- The Jews of Jesus' day were a living fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah 6:9, 10+.

Moody Bible Commentary. - The citation from Isa 6:9-10+ (vv. 14-15), spoken by God through the prophet, was for Isaiah's contemporaries, and addressed their spiritual unresponsiveness. That citation served as an analogy for the Jewish rejection of Jesus

> **Fulfilled** (378)(**anapleroo** from aná = up or as an emphatic + pleroo = to fill) means to fill up, spoken of a measure. **Anapleroo** occurs nowhere else in the Gospels, but occurs in the Pauline Epistles. It means to fill up like a cup, to fill another's place (1 Cor. 14:16), to fill up what is lacking (Phil. 2:30) Here it means that the prophecy of Isaiah is fully satisfied in the conduct of the Pharisees and Jesus himself points it out.

Which says, 'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND - This speaks of "divine deafness" resulting in failure to understand spiritual truth, especially the truth about the Messiah.

Leon Morris says "They **will not understand** what they are **hearing**, which evidently means that they will have their minds so made up and will be so set in their ways that when they hear the word of God that challenges them to new thinking and new ways of living they simply do not understand it." (BORROW The Gospel according to Matthew) I would go one step further than Morris -- since they have refused to hear, God gave them over so that they could no longer hear! This is "divine deafness." This is exactly what Jesus had said would happen in Mt 13:12, the NLT version explaining "for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them."

> **Understand** (4920)(**suniemi** from **sun/syn** = with + **hiemi** = send; Related noun **sunesis**) literally means to send together or bring together. The idea is to put together "pieces of the puzzle" (so to speak) and to exhibit quick comprehension. What are the "pieces?" Well, in regard to Messiah, there are over 300 messianic prophecies that without a doubt pointed clearly to Jesus as their Messiah! And yet the Jews simply could not "put the pieces together!" Their refusal to believe the voice of their prophets, led to failure to understand the truth about the Messiah.
>
> **NOTE**: **suniemi** is a key word in Matthew 13 occurring 6 times (24% of all NT uses), so clearly Matthew 13 that reveals the Kingdom of God (see resources) in parables is either understood or not understood, depending on how one responds to Jesus and the Word of Gospel.
>
> All uses of **suniemi** - Matt. 13:13; Matt. 13:14; Matt. 13:15; Matt. 13:19; Matt. 13:23; Matt. 13:51; Matt. 15:10; Matt. 16:12; Matt. 17:13; Mk. 4:12; Mk. 6:52; Mk. 7:14; Mk. 8:17; Mk. 8:21; Lk. 2:50; Lk. 8:10; Lk. 18:34; Lk. 24:45; Acts 7:25; Acts 28:26; Acts 28:27; Rom. 3:11; Rom. 15:21; 2 Co. 10:12; Eph. 5:17

YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE - **Seeing** is blepo in the present tense, this verb meaning that the Jews continually saw Jesus with their eyes wide open, seeing Him with perception (miraculous healings, etc) and yet the paradox is they would not (double negative = ou me = absolutely not) be able to **perceive** Who He was! **This is divine discipline**! So as with hearing, this passage describes divine blindness which makes the Jews unable to see the truth about the Messiah in the abundant Messianic Prophecies in their Scriptures.

John Broadus on the citation from Isa 6:9-10 which exactly follows the Septuagint and "which departs from the Hebrew in only one important particular. The prophet is directed to rebuke the people for their insensibilty to God's cause; and though that criminal insensibility would be increased by his message, he is yet to proclaim the message. Accordingly he is told (in the Heb.), "**Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears dull and their eyes dim, lest,**" etc. This bids him produce the effect by his message; not that such an effect was in itself desired by him or by Jehovah, but because his message was going to be rejected and to have the effect described, and still he must proclaim it. The Septuagint translators understood the Heb. differently, and rendered, "**For this**

people's heart has been made fat, and with their ears they have heard heavily, and their eyes they have closed," etc. This, as sufficiently expressing the general idea of the passage (comp. on Mt 3:3), is retained by Matt. here, and also by Luke in Acts 28:26ff. John 12:40 refers to the same passage, and puts it, '**He hath blinded their eyes and he hardened their heart**,' etc., i.e., God has done so—a rendering which gives the same idea as the Hebrew. So likewise the expressions in Mark 4:12 and Luke 8:10 correspond not to the Septuagint, but to the Hebrew. The insensibility of the people may be variously conceived of, as the result of their own willful opposition, or as a judgment already actually inflicted on them by God, or as a judgment which would follow their rejection of the prophet's message. **God is continually punishing men by that which is the natural result of their own misconduct in violating the natural laws which he has established**. The prophet's expression '**make the heart fat'** involves the image of a heart enveloped in fat, and thus less sensitive to impressions, and less lively in its movement, with a resulting dullness of the senses, so that it strikingly represents a dull, stupid, and insensible mind. We have seen on Mt 6:21 that the **heart** is constantly used in Scripture as the seat of both intelligence, sensibility, and will. "***Fat as to intellect,***" "***fat as to understanding***," are phrases of classic Greek (Grimm) (Matthew 13 Commentary)

Matthew 13:15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'

NET Matthew 13:15 For the heart of this people has become dull; they are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes, so that they would not see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.'

GNT Matthew 13:15 παχ νθη γ ρ καρδ α το λαο το του, κα το ς σ ν βαρ ως κουσαν κα το ς φθαλμο ς α τ ν κ μμυσαν, μ ποτε δωσιν το ς φθαλμο ς κα το ς σ ν κο σωσιν κα τ καρδ συν σιν κα πιστρ ψωσιν κα σομαι α το ς.

NLT Matthew 13:15 For the hearts of these people are hardened, and their ears cannot hear, and they have closed their eyes-- so their eyes cannot see, and their ears cannot hear, and their hearts cannot understand, and they cannot turn to me and let me heal them.'

KJV Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.

ESV Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.'

NIV Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart has become calloused; they hardly hear with their ears, and they have closed their eyes. Otherwise they might see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn, and I would heal them.'

ASV Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, And their ears are dull of hearing, And their eyes they have closed; Lest haply they should perceive with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart, And should turn again, And I should heal them.

CSB Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart has grown callous; their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; otherwise they might see with their eyes and hear with their ears, understand with their hearts and turn back-- and I would cure them.

NKJ Matthew 13:15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, Lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.'

NRS Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart has grown dull, and their ears are hard of hearing, and they have shut their eyes; so that they might not look with their eyes, and listen with their ears, and understand with their heart and turn-- and I would heal them.'

YLT Matthew 13:15 for made gross was the heart of this people, and with the ears they heard heavily, and their eyes they did close, lest they might see with the eyes, and with the ears might hear, and with the heart understand, and turn back, and I might heal them.

NAB Matthew 13:15 Gross is the heart of this people, they will hardly hear with their ears, they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.'

NJB Matthew 13:15 This people's heart has grown coarse, their ears dulled, they have shut their eyes tight to avoid using their eyes to see, their ears to hear, their heart to understand, changing their ways and being healed by me.

GWN Matthew 13:15 These people have become close-minded and hard of hearing. They have shut their eyes so that their eyes never see. Their ears never hear. Their minds never understand. And they never return to me for healing!'

BBE Matthew 13:15 For the heart of this people has become fat and their ears are slow in hearing and their eyes are shut; for fear that they might see with their eyes and give hearing with their ears and become wise in their hearts and be turned again to me, so that I might make them well.

- **heart** - Ps 119:70 = **Their heart is covered with fat** (Lxx = tupoo = curdled, coagulated, made like cheese!), But I delight in Your law. (commentary)
- **ears** - Zec 7:11 Joh 8:43,44 Ac 7:57 2Ti 4:4 Heb 5:11
- **their eyes** - Isa 29:10-12 44:20 2Th 2:10,11
- **and return** - Ac 3:19 2Ti 2:25,26 Heb 6:4-6
- **and I would heal them** - Isa 57:18 Jer 3:22 17:14 33:6 Ho 14:4 Mal 4:2 Mk 4:12 Rev 22:2
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE HEART OF ISRAEL'S PROBLEM!

The **heart** of Israel's problem was the problem of their **heart**. And this is the root of the problem for all who have the seed of the Word continually sown and yet continually reject it. What they have will be taken away as Jesus stated proverbially in Matthew 13:12!

As shown below Matthew is quoting from Isaiah, specifically when the prophet was called to speak forth words of warning and judgment and comfort to Israel. God told Isaiah that although he was to go and speak truth to Israel, the nation would not hear him and would not repent and return to the Lord. How would you like it if you felt a call to minister and God told you that you minister would fail to see any fruit! That's the message Isaiah heard! And that is the message Jesus speaks to the nation of Israel because they rejected the truth He spoke and so clearly demonstrated. His light could not have shown brighter, and yet because of the veil over the eyes of Israel's heart they could not see Him for Who He really was and for why He had really come!

Paul quotes this same passage to the Jews in Rome who resisted his presentation of the Gospel. Luke records this event at the end of the book of Acts which is **apropos** for it was like a **harbinger** of the hard hearted response of the majority of Jews for the next 20 centuries (and more if Jesus should tarry!).

> And when they did not agree with one another, they began leaving after Paul had spoken one parting word, "The Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet to your fathers, 26 saying, 'GO TO THIS PEOPLE AND SAY, "YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND; AND YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE; 27 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, AND WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES; OTHERWISE THEY MIGHT SEE WITH THEIR EYES, AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM."' 28 "Therefore let it be known to you that this salvation of God has been sent to the Gentiles; they will also listen." (Acts 28:25-28+)

FOR (**gar**) is a term of explanation, explaining why the Jews had a problem with their ears and eyes as described in Mt 13:14. "Thus parables both conceal or reveal depending on whether one is open to hearing what they teach." (NET)

THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL - **The heart** is the control center of a person, the locus of one's thoughts (mind), volition (will), emotions and knowledge of right and wrong (conscience)! **This people** is a reference to the nation of Israel, for almost the entire nation had rejected Jesus as their Messiah. **Become dull** is in the **aorist tense** which describes a past historical event. This dullness had occurred! Jesus had been ministering for over a year and the nation had rejected Him. O yes, **this people** loved His miraculous healings and exorcisms but failed to receive Him and thus failed to understand that these miracles were like **giant blinking billboard signs** in **Times Square in New York City** pointing to Jesus clearly announcing 'THIS MAN IS

YOUR MESSIAH! THIS MAN IS YOUR MESSIAH!" Notice also that **has become dull** is **passive voice** which in context is clearly the so-called **divine passive**. In other words the dullness of their **heart** was judicial divine judgment for their willful rejection of the light they had been privileged to receive. **Become dull** is also the first word in Greek for emphasis! Stephen spoke of the dull hearts in his bold sermon (which got him stoned to death) declaring "You men who are stiff-necked and **uncircumcised in heart** (CF DULL HEARTS) and ears are always resisting (antipipto in present tense = continually rushing against, striving against, opposing) the Holy Spirit; you are doing just as your fathers did." (Acts 7:51+)

> **Heart** (2588)(**kardia**) is always used figuratively in Scripture to refer to the seat and center of human life. The heart is the center of the personality, and it controls the intellect, emotions, and will. No outward obedience is of the slightest value unless the heart turns to God. **Kardia** refers not to the physical organ (over 800 mentions and none refer to the physical organ!), but is always used figuratively to center of our personality, to so to speak to our "**control center**" (to make a play on the "air traffic control center" at the airport which carefully guards and guides what flies in and what flies out. How applicable to our "hearts" which are so prone to wander!). In short **kardia** refers to the the affective center of our being wherein lies the capacity of moral preference and volitional desire. The **kardia** generates thoughts that make the decisions which the mind works out. In other words, our logic flows out of our heart-decisions and not vice versa. Gleason Archer called the **kardia**, the "desire-producer that makes us tick" for it is the place where our "desire-decisions" occur, and which establish who we really are. WHO ARE YOU? HAVE YOU HAD A HEART CHECK UP RECENTLY? We are assiduous to do this medically, but woefully lax in doing it spiritually (beloved, I speak from experience!). At regeneration God reverses the spiritual atherosclerosis of our old sinful heart by giving us a total heart transplant! Daily confession and repentance are thereafter necessary to avoid "spiritual atherosclerosis" and gradual, subtle hardening (and becoming cold to the things of God) of our heart! (Read and practice daily "preventative maintenance" = 1 Jn 1:9+, Pr 28:13+).
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> > **Kardia in Matthew** - Matt. 5:8; Matt. 5:28; Matt. 6:21; Matt. 9:4; Matt. 11:29; Matt. 12:34; Matt. 12:40; Matt. 13:15; Matt. 13:19; Matt. 15:8; Matt. 15:18; Matt. 15:19; Matt. 18:35; Matt. 22:37; Matt. 24:48;
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> **Dull** (3975)(**pachuno** from **pachus** = dull) mean to thicken, to fatten and figuratively to make dull.**Friberg** = " literally make fat, thicken; figuratively make impervious, insensitive, dull; only passive in the NT become dull or insensitive, be unable to understand." Only other use is Acts 28:27. Uses 5 verses in the Septuagint - Dt. 32:15 "Jeshurun (Term of affection for Israel) grew fat and kicked,-- you are grown fat (Lxx = pachuno)" ; 2 Sam. 22:12; Eccl. 12:5; Isa. 6:10; Isa. 34:6 Here is the use in Isaiah 6:10 = "**Render** the hearts of this people **insensitive**," (Lxx = pachuno) where "**render....insensitive**" is a command. This is clearly judicial hardening.
>
> Notice that Matthew quotes Isaiah 6:10+ from the **Septuagint** (not the Hebrew text)
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> > Septuagint (Greek) of Isaiah 6:10 - παχ νθη γ ρ καρδ α το λαο το του κα το ς σ ν α τ ν βαρ ως κουσαν κα το ς φθαλμο ς α τ ν κ μμυσαν μ ποτε δωσιν το ς φθαλμο ς κα το ς σ ν κο σωσιν κα τ καρδ συν σιν κα πιστρ ψωσιν κα σομαι α το ς (Isa 6:10 BGT)
> >
> > Greek of Matthew 13:15 - - - - - - παχ νθη γ ρ καρδ α το λαο το του, κα το ς σ ν βαρ ως κουσαν κα το ς φθαλμο ς α τ ν κ μμυσαν, μ ποτε δωσιν το ς φθαλμο ς κα το ς σ ν κο σωσιν κα τ καρδ συν σιν κα πιστρ ψωσιν κα σομαι α το ς. (Mat 13:15 BGT)

WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR (akouo) - **Scarcely** is the Greek word **bareos** which means with difficulty ("to hear heavily with the ears") and thus in context means they were "hard of hearing." And in context the word **hear** implies to heed, to pay close attention to something and respond in conformity to what is heard! They heard Jesus' "sound waves" but did not truly receive the Savior's words! **Hear** is **aorist tense** (past completed action) but this time is **active voice** indicating they made a deliberate, willful, volitional choice not to receive Jesus' words. It is as if Jesus was broadcasting beautiful music for the soul (the ultimate "soul music"!) on God's **FM Band** and they made the conscious choice to "tune their ears" to Israel's popular **AM Band!**

AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES - **Closed** is **kammuo** meaning literally to shut one's eyes and as with the verb **hear** above **closed** is also in the **aorist tense** (past completed action) and **active voice** indicating a deliberate, willful, volitional choice not to receive Jesus' words. They were intentionally unwilling to learn and to evaluate fairly the words of Jesus and the Gospel. They refused to recognize Jesus as their Messiah!

OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR (akouo) **WITH THEIR EARS, AND UNDERSTAND** (suniemi) **WITH THEIR HEART** - The key word in this section is **otherwise** which is the Greek word **mepote** which means "lest" which means "so as to prevent any possibility that" or "with the intention of preventing something." **A T Robertson** offers a sobering comment that "This negative purpose (**mepote**) as a judgment is left in the quotation from Isaiah. It is a solemn thought for all who read or hear the word of God."

Understand was mentioned in Mt 13:14 and is the word suniemi which is a picturesque word meaning to put together the pieces as one would a puzzle. Because of their repeated rejection, they will be prevented from putting together the priceless puzzle entitled "THE MESSIAH!" Notice that understanding that heals is not intellectual (in the mind) but is in the heart (cf Lydia in Acts 16:14+). A lot of people know Jesus intellectually (cf Mt 7:21-22+) but have never truly received Him as Lord in their hearts (Ro 10:9-10+) and they will be sadly surprised and shocked when they hear His decree announcing their eternal doom "I never knew you. **Depart** from Me, you who (habitually - because their heart had never changed) practice lawlessness!" (Mt 7:23+).

> **THOUGHT** - Dear reader, are you reading these words of warning and yet stubbornly refusing to accept them, but instead choosing to reject them as foolishness? If so, rest assured that your eternal destiny will prove you to be the far greater fool! You would be wise to hear and heed the words of Jesus Who 2000 years ago declared that "the time is fulfilled (HE WAS THE FULFILLMENT!) and the Kingdom of God (see resources) is at hand. **Repent** and **believe** in the Gospel!" (Mark 1:15+) Both verbs in **red** are commands in the present imperative which means they can only be obeyed by willingly submitting to the wooing of the Holy Spirit (See discussion of the Need for the Holy Spirit to obey NT commands). The upshot is "Do not resist the Spirit when you sense He is calling you to come to Jesus for salvation!" As these passages show, He may not always strive with you forever (Genesis 6:3) and continue to call you to Jesus (Mt 11:28-30+) and as a result your heart may become dull to the Gospel! Ponder 2 Cor 6:2! **Do it today**!

AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM - This is what could have been Israel's experience, had they not continued to reject Jesus' words! "*What could have been*" will be the tragic lament of many in the eternal fires of hell!

> **Return** (1994)(**epistrepho** from **epí** = motion toward + **strepho** = twist, turn quite around or reverse) means to revert, to turn about, to turn around, to turn toward, to return and figuratively to convert. The idea is a definite turn to God in conduct as well as in one's mind. In the NT uses it is notable that return is frequently associated with the word for repentance. No repentance, no conversion!
>
> **Heal** (cure) (2390)(**iaomai**) means to cure, to heal, to restore. **Iaomai** is used literally of deliverance from physical diseases and afflictions and so to make whole, restore to bodily health or heal. Figuratively as in this passage iaomai speaks of deliverance from sin and its evil consequences and restoration to spiritual good health and wholeness, something that this passage says will not be available because of the dullness of Israel's heart.
>
> > **THOUGHT** - As depressing as this passage is, praise God it does not sound the death knell for **every** Jewish person. All we have to do is study the life of one of the greatest Jewish men named Saul, who praise God met the Messiah, was blinded and made to see, and who turned around and was healed and re-named Paul the apostle! Amazing grace indeed! And praise God that many Jews in our day are having a similar "Saul to Paul" experience. If you would like a wonderful blessing, take time to watch and listen to this Jewish doctor (which is close to my heart as I continually pray for the soul of my dearest Jewish doctor friend who was my partner for over 30 years). **Watch and listen**. (For more encouraging videos **see here** and also see the main website **One for Israel**).

Luke records a striking illustration of the fulfillment of this prophecy in his description of Stephen's sermon to the religious leaders in Jerusalem - "But they cried out with a loud voice, and **covered their ears** (THEY DID NOT WANT TO HEAR HIS CONVICTING WORDS!) and rushed at him with one impulse." (Acts 7:57+)

MacArthur explains "Because they chose to ignore God and His word, God judicially locked them up in their unbelief so that they would fear His judgment. The first fulfillment of Isaiah's warning came in the judgment of the Babylonian Captivity, just as the prophet promised. The second fulfillment, Jesus declared, was about to be accomplished as Israel once again turned her back on the Lord and faced the judgment of centuries of darkness and despair. Jesus' parables were a similar form of judgment on unbelief. Those who would not accept His clear and simple teachings—such as those in the Sermon on the Mount—not only would not be able to understand His deeper teachings but would lose the benefit of the teaching and miraculous witness they had been given." (See Matthew Commentary)

Matthew 13:16 But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.

> NET Matthew 13:16 "But your eyes are blessed because they see, and your ears because they hear.
>
> GNT Matthew 13:16 μ ν δ μακ ριοι ο φθαλμο τι βλ πουσιν κα τ τα μ ν τι κο ουσιν.

NLT Matthew 13:16 "But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear.

KJV Matthew 13:16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.

ESV Matthew 13:16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.

NIV Matthew 13:16 But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear.

ASV Matthew 13:16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.

CSB Matthew 13:16 "But your eyes are blessed because they do see, and your ears because they do hear!

NKJ Matthew 13:16 "But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;

NRS Matthew 13:16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see, and your ears, for they hear.

YLT Matthew 13:16 'And happy are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear,

NAB Matthew 13:16 "But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear.

NJB Matthew 13:16 'But blessed are your eyes because they see, your ears because they hear!

GWN Matthew 13:16 "Blessed are your eyes because they see and your ears because they hear.

BBE Matthew 13:16 But a blessing be on your eyes, because they see; and on your ears, because they are open.

- Mt 5:3-11 Lk 16:17 Lu 2:29,30 Lk 10:23,24 Joh 20:29 Ac 26:18 2Co 4:6 Eph 1:17,18
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE GREATEST BEATITUDE:
ABILITY TO SEE AND HEAR JESUS

But (**de**) is a term of contrast which introduces a dramatic change of direction, from spiritual blindness and deafness to spiritual sight and sound.

The idea of **blessing** goes back to what He had stated earlier in Mt 13:12 "**To him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance**." Since the disciples had chosen to believe, Jesus would now give them more truth in the form of an explanation of the parable.

Olshausen writes that “All the longing desires of the pious throughout the Old Test. centred in the Messiah. To behold Him was the loftiest object of Old Test. hope. This blessing was granted to the disciples, and all their happiness, all their glory, consisted in this, that they were illumined by the radiance of the Sun of righteousness. The special grace thus vouchsafed is brought to their remembrance by Christ, not to exalt them above the Old Testament saints, but to lay them low before the Lord.”

> Turning to the disciples, He said privately, “Blessed are the eyes which see the things you see,for I say to you, that many prophets and kings wished to see the things which you see, and did not see them, and to hear the things which you hear, and did not hear them.” (Lk 10:23-24+)

Blessed are your eyes - **Your eyes** refers to the twelve (and others in the inner circle - cf the phrase "**His followers, along with the twelve**" in Mk 4:10+) What a contrast with most of Israel who had closed their eyes and therefore could not see the Messiah. John tells us "He came to His own (THE JEWS, ISRAEL), and those who were His own did not (ABSOLUTE NEGATION) receive (paralambano - to take to oneself - active voice = they made a choice of their will not to receive) Him." (John 1:11+) In Luke 10:23ff+ we find similar language used on a different occasion.

> **Blessed** (3107)(**makarios** from root **makar**, but others say from **mak** = large or lengthy) means to be happy, but not in the usual sense of happiness based on positive circumstances. From the Biblical perspective **Makarios** describes the person who is free from daily cares and worries because his every breath and circumstance is in the hands of His Maker Who gives him such an assurance (such a "blessing"). Makarios is a key word at the beginning of the Sermon of the Mount and yet so few of those who heard those gracious words actually partook of those beatitudes because they refused to believe. **No belief mean no beatitudes**!

Because - Term of explanation. This one is easy to decipher! They were blessed because they knew this God-Man was Jesus the Christ, their Messiah.

They see; and your ears, because they hear (akouo**)** - Jesus distinctly intimates that He is the Messiah. "Seeing and hearing are here to be understood both of the senses and of the spirit; they saw the miracles and heard the teachings of Jesus, and they understood and appreciated their spiritual meaning." (Broadus) Without Jesus opening their eyes and ears they were like every natural (unregenerate) man who "does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised." (1 Cor 2:14+) Why are the disciples now able to **see** and **hear** spiritual truth? Because the Spirit had opened their eyes and ears. Because they saw and heard and believed Jesus. In John 7:17 Jesus said ""If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know (ginosko - know by experience) of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself." The disciples were willing to do His will. The disciples of Jesus could **see** and **hear** Jesus' words (like His beatitudes on the Sermon on the Mount) and understand (of course they often still misunderstood some things and would until Pentecost and they received the Spirit of Truth - Jn 14:17, 15:26, 16:13) what He was saying (as stated not completely because after His resurrection He had to open "**their minds to understand** [suniemi = put together the "pieces of the puzzle"] **the Scriptures** [especially the OT prophecies of the Messiah]**.**" Lk 24:45+) After Jesus had explained the parable of the sower to them He asked "**Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes.**" (Mt 13:51+) These "ignorant" men could understand the truth that the "educated" religious leaders could not grasp! What was the difference? The disciples believed while the Pharisees and scribes did not believe. Such was the price of unbelief then, and such is still true today! It is that simple! The result was that their eyes were blinded to the truth of Jesus' teaching because of their unbelief. Let us be among those like godly Simeon who believe and see Jesus as He really is (Lk 2:29,30+).

> While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor 4:18+)
>
> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. (Eph 1:18-19a+)

Oh that Thou would give us eyes to see and ears to hear more clearly the things of God and eternity. Amen

Paul alludes to this same truth emphasizing that believers can now see deeper spiritual truth because of the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit

> but just as it is written, "THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEEN AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND which HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." 10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. (1 Cor. 2:9-10+)

Petulant for toys and trifles! (James Meikle, 'Solitude Sweetened")
O for what trifles, will men cast away their precious souls!

It is proper only to children, not to men--to be petulant for toys and trifles. So let the men of this world lament the loss of worldly vanities. But let the heirs of God, the joint-heirs with Christ, rejoice that the treasures of eternity are theirs!

"But blessed are your eyes, for they see." Happy are those who have the eyes of their mind opened, and clearly see . . .

- the deformity of sin,
- the beauty of holiness,
- the excellency of piety,
- the necessity of the new birth,
- the preciousness of Christ,
- the glory of eternal realities.

I see the mutable and fickle state of temporal things, and therefore hold a loose grip on the creature, however dear, however near--and set my affections on things which are above!

> "Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth. 3For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory" Colossians 3:1-4+

Matthew 13:17 "For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

NET Matthew 13:17 For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

GNT Matthew 13:17 μ ν γ ρ λ γω μ ν τι πολλο προφ ται κα δ καιοι πεθ μησαν δε ν βλ πετε κα ο κ ε δαν, κα κο σαι κο ετε κα ο κ κουσαν.

NLT Matthew 13:17 I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but they didn't see it. And they longed to hear what you hear, but they didn't hear it.

KJV Matthew 13:17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

ESV Matthew 13:17 For truly, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

NIV Matthew 13:17 For I tell you the truth, many prophets and righteous men longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

ASV Matthew 13:17 For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear, and heard them not.

CSB Matthew 13:17 For I assure you: Many prophets and righteous people longed to see the things you see yet didn't see them; to hear the things you hear yet didn't hear them.

NKJ Matthew 13:17 "for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.

NRS Matthew 13:17 Truly I tell you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, but did not see it, and to hear what you hear, but did not hear it.

YLT Matthew 13:17 for verily I say to you, that many prophets and righteous men did desire to see that which ye look on, and they did not see, and to hear that which ye hear, and they did not hear.

NAB Matthew 13:17 Amen, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

NJB Matthew 13:17 In truth I tell you, many prophets and upright people longed to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.

GWN Matthew 13:17 I can guarantee this truth: Many prophets and many of God's people longed to see what you see but didn't see it, to hear what you hear but didn't hear it.

BBE Matthew 13:17 For truly, I say to you that prophets and upright men had a desire to see the things which you see, and saw them not; and to have knowledge of the words which have come to your ears, and they had it not.

- That many - Lu 10:24 Joh 8:56 Eph 3:5,6 Heb 11:13,39,40 1Pe 1:10-12
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

For (gar) is a term of explanation. What is Jesus explaining in context?

Truly (amen) **I say to you** - **Truly** underscores the truth of what Jesus is about to say, while**I say to you** underscores the authority with which Jesus says it. He did not need to quote the rabbis or the Talmud but always spoke as the One "having authority and not as their scribes." (Mt 7:28+).

That many prophets (prophetes) and righteous (dikaios) men desired (epithumeo) to see what you see and did not see it, and to hear (akouo) what you hear (akouo) , and did not hear (akouo) it - This implies that the **prophets and righteous men** of the Old Testament knew Messiah was coming and they naturally desired to see and hear Him.

Righteous men would be men like **Moses** of whom the writer of Hebrews wrote "By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, 25 choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing

pleasures of sin, 26 considering the reproach of Christ (IMPLICATION? MOSES KNEW OF THE COMING CHRIST) greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward. 27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king; for he endured, as seeing Him who is unseen (CHRIST). 28 By faith he kept the Passover (A PICTURE OF CHRIST) and the sprinkling of the blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn would not touch them." (Heb 11:24-28+)

Righteous men would be men like **Abraham** who "believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as **righteousness**." (Ge 15:6+) As Paul would later explain "The Scripture (SYNONYMOUS WITH THE OLD TESTAMENT), foreseeing that God would justify (DECLARE RIGHTEOUS) the Gentiles **by faith**, preached the Gospel beforehand to **Abraham**, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU." (Gal 3:8+)

In short, the **righteous men** were saints in the Old Testament, men and women, who believed in God's promise of a Redeemer, a Redeemer they had never seen (EXCEPTION - OT Christophanies - see Angel of the LORD).

> **Righteous** (1342) see note below on dikaios
>
> **Desired** (longed) (1937)(**epithumeo** from **epí** = upon, used intensively + **thumós** = passion) (Click study of noun **epithumia**) means literally to fix the desire upon, in this case upon the Messiah, the Christos, the Expected One, the One promised in the Old Testament.

Peter has a parallel passage

> "As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. 12 It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven–things into which angels long to look." (1 Pet. 1:10–12+).
>
> **THOUGHT** - Believers do not have Jesus sitting with them and explaining His teaching like He did to the disciples. We do have His Spirit of Truth Who is God's gift to us to enable us to understand spiritual truth. It behooves us to be careful not to grieve or quench Him lest we hinder His "eye opening " ministry. Practically, this suggests that it would be an excellent practice to confess and repent (as necessary) before we open the Word of God.
>
> **C H Spurgeon** gives a great illustration of our desperate, constant need of the Holy Spirit to open our natural eyes to supernatural truth...
>
> > The Spirit guiding into all truth - Truth may be compared to some cave or grotto, with wondrous stalactites hanging from the roof, and others starting from the floor; a cavern glittering with spar and abounding in marvels. Before entering the cavern you inquire for a guide, who comes with his lighted flambeau. He conducts you down to a considerable depth, and you find yourself in the midst of the cave. He leads you through different chambers. Here he points you to a little stream rushing from amid the rocks, and indicates its rise and progress; there he points to some peculiar rock and tells you its name, then takes you into a large natural hall, tells you how many persons once feasted in it, and so on. Truth is a grand series of caverns, it is our glory to have so great and wise a Conductor as the Holy Spirit. Imagine that we are coming to the darkness of it. He is a light shining in the midst of us to guide us. And by the light He shows us wondrous things. He teaches us by suggestion, direction, and illumination.

May our prayer ever be...**Open My Eyes, That I May See -** Play this hymn by Clara H Scott

> Open my eyes, that I may see
> Glimpses of truth Thou hast for me;
> Place in my hands the wonderful key
> That shall unclasp, and set me free.
>
> Refrain:
> Silently now I wait for Thee,
> Ready, my God, Thy will to see:
> Open my eyes, illumine me,
> Savior divine!

Open my ears, that I may hear
Voices of truth Thou sendest clear;
And while the wave notes fall on my ear,
Ev'rything false will disappear.

Refrain

Open my mouth, and let me bear
Gladly the warm truth ev'rywhere;
Open my heart, and let me prepare
Love with Thy children thus to share.

Refrain

Related Resource

- Illumination of the Bible

Matthew 13:18 "Hear then the parable of the sower.

NET Matthew 13:18 "So listen to the parable of the sower:

GNT Matthew 13:18 με ς ο ν κο σατε τ ν παραβολ ν το σπε ραντος.

NLT Matthew 13:18 "Now listen to the explanation of the parable about the farmer planting seeds:

KJV Matthew 13:18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.

ESV Matthew 13:18 "Hear then the parable of the sower:

NIV Matthew 13:18 "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means:

ASV Matthew 13:18 Hear then ye the parable of the sower.

CSB Matthew 13:18 "You, then, listen to the parable of the sower:

NKJ Matthew 13:18 "Therefore hear the parable of the sower:

NRS Matthew 13:18 "Hear then the parable of the sower.

YLT Matthew 13:18 'Ye, therefore, hear ye the simile of the sower:

NAB Matthew 13:18 "Hear then the parable of the sower.

NJB Matthew 13:18 'So pay attention to the parable of the sower.

GWN Matthew 13:18 "Listen to what the story about the farmer means.

BBE Matthew 13:18 Give ear, then, to the story of the man who put the seed in the earth.

- Mt 13:11,12 Mk 4:14-20
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE SAVIOR EXPLAINS
THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

John Broadus notes that "Our Lord's authoritative explanation of this parable and that of the Tares, furnishes us a model for the interpretation of his parables in general (comp. on v. 3),—a beautiful medium between excessive meagerness and excessive minuteness." (Matthew 13 Commentary)

Hear (akouo) then the parable of the sower - KJV = "**Hear ye therefore**," with strong emphasis on "**ye**" which sets the disciples in clear distinction from the hardened Jews to whom He gave no explanation (The "ye therefore" is not in the newer translations but in the Greek text!) **Hear** is in the aorist imperative commanding immediate attention (see our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey). The other synoptic accounts do not have this command. Mark 4:13+ does give us the added information "**And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How will you understand all the parables?**" In other words, understanding of the parable of the sower would enable one to understand the other parables of Jesus.

Broadus - The idea of this parable as a whole is, that as the same grain yielded variously, according to the character and preparation of the soil which received it, so the same word of truth produces various effects according to the way in which it is received. No analogy between physical and spiritual things can ever be perfect. The soil was not responsible if it was trampled, or rocky, or thorny; but men are accountable for hearing the word improperly.

MacArthur - The most fascinating thing about this parable is that it says nothing about the skill of the sower. It completely undercuts the contemporary notion that in order to be effective in evangelism, Christians have to use the right formula or implement a certain program that employs the appropriate "seeker–friendly" technique. Instead, the issue is the condition of the soils.

John Phillips - let us consider the sower. "Behold, a sower went forth to sow," said Jesus (13:3). In the next parable (the parable of the tares), the sower is said to be the Son of man, the Lord Jesus; John the Baptist plowed and prepared the soil, and the Lord Jesus sowed the seed. In the parable of the sower, however, the Lord did not restrict the sowing to Himself. It seems that the sowing in the story represents the constant sowing of the gospel seed from His day to ours. Almost nothing is said about the sower. We know nothing about his personality or whether he was an old hand at his task. We know nothing about his method. The Lord evidently wanted to keep the sower in the background. As someone has said, a child can drop a seed as effectively as the most experienced farmer. **Not much is said about the seed either,** except that it is the Word of God, according to the Lord's interpretation of the parable. That is all we need to know about the seed. It is the best kind of seed in the world; we can sow nothing better than the inspired, infallible, inerrant, inimitable Word of God. It is infinitely superior to the philosophies and theories of man. Like any other seed, the Word of God has life. Because seed is imprinted with a genetic code, a supply of seed can turn into a field of flax or a barnful of barley. Once the seed is sown, that imprinted law of life goes to work. The Word of God is the same. It carries within it the genetic code of eternal life and when it is planted in the right kind of soil, it germinates and produces life. Let us consider an example: When James Chalmers set sail for the cannibal isles, he was the idol of Britain. His friend Robert Louis Stevenson said he was "bigger than a house and far bigger than a church." Years later when news was brought back to Britain that he had been eaten by cannibals, Joseph Parker of London's City Temple said, "I can't believe it. I don't want to believe it." Called the "Greatheart of New Guinea," Chalmers was a national hero. He devoted thirty years to sowing gospel seed among the cannibals, often with great success. Over 130 mission stations in New Guinea alone bore witness to the fruitfulness of his labors. As a result of his ministry, more than three thousand natives of all ages gathered monthly to break bread in a communion service. Many of them Chalmers had known as wild man-eaters, but they had been radiantly transformed by the mighty power of the Word of God. Many of them still bore on their breasts the tattoos that marked those who had achieved manhood by murder. Now they quietly took their places as regenerated men at the table of the Lord. How can we account for these transformations? Socialism, moral rearmament, and political reform can produce no such fruits. Only sowing the precious seed of the gospel can transform lost people. Down into the hearts of poor wicked men goes the seed; up it springs in new life, the very life of God germinating and growing in the soul. (Exploring Matthew)

QUESTION - **What is the meaning of the Parable of the Sower?** **(See also video by gotquestions)**

ANSWER: The Parable of the Sower (also known as the Parable of the Four Soils) is found in Matthew 13:3-9; Mark 4:2-9; and Luke 8:4-8. After presenting this parable to the multitude, Jesus interprets it for His disciples in Matthew 13:18-23; Mark 4:13-20; and Luke 8:11-15.

he Parable of the Sower concerns a sower who scatters seed, which falls on four different types of ground. The hard ground "by the way side" prevents the seed from sprouting at all, and the seed becomes nothing more than bird food. The stony ground provides enough soil for the seeds to germinate and begin to grow, but because there is "no deepness of earth," the plants do not take root and are soon withered in the sun. The thorny ground allows the seed to grow, but the competing thorns choke the life out of the beneficial plants. The good ground receives the seed and produces much fruit.

Jesus' explanation of the Parable of the Sower highlights four different responses to the gospel. The seed is "the word of the kingdom." The hard ground represents someone who is hardened by sin; he hears but does not understand the Word, and Satan plucks the message away, keeping the heart dull and preventing the Word from making an impression. The stony ground pictures a man who professes delight with the Word; however, his heart is not changed, and when trouble arises, his so-called faith quickly disappears. The thorny ground depicts one who seems to receive the Word, but whose heart is full of riches, pleasures, and lusts; the things of this world take his time and attention away from the Word, and he ends up having no time for it. The good ground portrays the one who hears, understands, and receives the Word—and then allows the Word to accomplish its result in his life. The man represented by the "good ground" is the only one of the four who is truly saved, because salvation's proof is fruit (Matthew 3:7-8; 7:15-20).

To summarize the point of the Parable of the Sower: "A man's reception of God's Word is determined by the condition of his heart." A secondary lesson would be "Salvation is more than a superficial, albeit joyful, hearing of the gospel. Someone who is truly saved will

go on to prove it." May our faith and our lives exemplify the "good soil" in the Parable of the Sower. GotQuestions.org

Matthew 13:19 "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.

NET Matthew 13:19 When anyone hears the word about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches what was sown in his heart; this is the seed sown along the path.

GNT Matthew 13:19 παντ ς κο οντος τ ν λ γον τ ς βασιλε ας κα μ συνι ντος ρχεται πονηρ ς κα ρπ ζει τ σπαρμ νον ν τ καρδ α το , ο τ ς στιν παρ τ ν δ ν σπαρε ς.

NLT Matthew 13:19 The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don't understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts.

KJV Matthew 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.

ESV Matthew 13:19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is what was sown along the path.

NIV Matthew 13:19 When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path.

ASV Matthew 13:19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the evil one, and snatcheth away that which hath been sown in his heart. This is he that was sown by the way side.

CSB Matthew 13:19 When anyone hears the word about the kingdom and doesn't understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the one sown along the path.

NKJ Matthew 13:19 "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. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

NRS Matthew 13:19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what is sown in the heart; this is what was sown on the path.

YLT Matthew 13:19 Every one hearing the word of the reign, and not understanding -- the evil one doth come, and doth catch that which hath been sown in his heart; this is that sown by the way.

NAB Matthew 13:19 The seed sown on the path is the one who hears the word of the kingdom without understanding it, and the evil one comes and steals away what was sown in his heart.

NJB Matthew 13:19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom without understanding, the Evil One comes and carries off what was sown in his heart: this is the seed sown on the edge of the path.

GWN Matthew 13:19 Someone hears the word about the kingdom but doesn't understand it. The evil one comes at once and snatches away what was planted in him. This is what the seed planted along the road illustrates.

BBE Matthew 13:19 When the word of the kingdom comes to anyone, and the sense of it is not clear to him, then the Evil One comes, and quickly takes away that which was put in his heart. He is the seed dropped by the wayside.

- t**he word** - Mt 4:23 Lu 8:11-15 9:2 10:9 Ac 20:25 28:23 Ro 14:17 2Co 4:2,3 Eph 3:8
- **and does not understand** - Pr 1:7,20-22 Pr 2:1-6 Pr 17:16 Pr 18:1,2 John 3:19,20 Jn 8:43 Jn 18:38 Ac 17:32 Acts 18:15 Acts 24:25,26 Acts 25:19,20 Acts 26:31,32 Ro 1:28 2:8 2Th 2:12 Heb 2:1 1Jn 5:20
- **the evil** - Mt 13:38 Mk 4:15 Lu 8:12 1Jn 2:13,14 3:12 5:18
- **This** - Mt 13:4
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

> Mark 4:15+ "These are the ones who are beside the road where the word is sown; and when they hear, immediately Satan comes and takes away the word which has been sown in them.
>
> Luke 8:12+ "Those beside the road are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their heart, so that they will not believe and be saved.

HARD SOIL
A CALLOUS HEART

Callous means made insensitive, having feelings or morals deadened, describing one who is emotionally hardened, insensitive; indifferent; unsympathetic. One might be discouraged by this soil, but remember this is a parable and it does not state that the soil cannot be altered by plowing, etc.

> **THOUGHT** - Many (most?) of us were "hard soil" until God got our attention and plowed our heart with adversity or affliction (as was the case in my late conversion at age 39). God is the ultimate Husbandman and He knows how to cultivate the conditions of the soil of His elect in order that they receive the Word implanted which is able to save their soul! And not only that but in Jeremiah, God reminds us about the power of His Word asking "**Is not My Word like fire? And like a hammer which breaks the rock?** (Jer 23:29). So dear sower who has been frustrated by failure of results in a dear friend or loved one whose "soil" seems so hard for so long, for God is able to break the soil of their heart and penetrate it with His Gospel which has His inherent power (dunamis) (Ro 1:16+). So keep praying for the soil of their soul and keep sowing the Gospel seed as God's Spirit gives you opportunity to do so. My father prayed for me literally for 20 years before God's adversity plowed deep furrows in my heart for His Gospel seed (My Testimony to God's Grace). And then I prayed 20 years for my youngest son who was ensnared in opioid addiction almost to the point of death and God's Gospel penetrated his hard heart and saved him from addiction and gave him a new life in Christ. As Paul writes in Galatians "**Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith**." (Gal 6:9-10+) So pray and sow, pray and sow, pray and sow!
>
> Sow with a view to righteousness,
> Reap in accordance with kindness;
> Break up your fallow ground,
> For it is time to seek the LORD
> Until He comes to rain righteousness on you.
> Hosea 10:12

One could write John 12:37-39 beneath this verse "But though He had performed so many signs before them, yet they were not believing in Him. 38 This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke: "LORD, WHO HAS BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM HAS THE ARM OF THE LORD BEEN REVEALED?" 39 **For this reason they could not believe,**" This has to be one of the saddest passages in the entire Bible!

> THOUGHT - Did you know that your heart can get so hard that you cannot believe, that the Word of God can never get in, and your heart just becomes charred and stubborn and unbreakable and un-yieldable?

When anyone hears (akouo) the Word (logos) of the Kingdom (basileia) - What is the **Word of the Kingdom**? It is the seed sown by the sower. Luke 8:11 adds that "**the seed is the word of God**" Mark 4:15 has just "the word." Matthew 4:23 says "Jesus was going throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming **the Gospel of the Kingdom**." (cf Mt 9:35, Mt 24:14) It follows that the **Word of the Kingdom** was equivalent to the **Gospel of the Kingdom**. Broadus adds that the **Word of the Kingdom** "is the word which tells of the nature and requirements of the Messianic reign."

> **THOUGHT** - This is a beautiful picture of the Word because it speaks of the fact that the "word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword." (Heb 4:12+) In John 6:63 Jesus said "the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." Souls are "born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and enduring word of God." (1Pe 1:23+) The Word of God pulsates with spiritual life! Beloved disciple of Christ, this truth should encourage you to throw out Gospel seed, for that seed is "living and active" and is the "power of God for salvation to everyone who believes." (Ro 1:16) The results do not depend on us, but on God's Word and the receptivity of the soil of the person's heart. All we are held responsible for is sowing the seed. As Paul said "I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth."

(1 Cor 2:6). So the pressure is off! Now just **go** and **sow**! Be like the one described in Psalm 126:6 "He who goes to and fro weeping, carrying his bag of seed, Shall indeed come again with a shout of joy, bringing his sheaves with him." And as Solomon advised in his latter years "Cast your bread (HEBREW CAN ALSO MEAN GRAIN ~ SPIRITUAL SEED) on the surface of the waters, for you will find it after many days." (Eccl 11:1) And remember, it is not our job to judge the type of soil we are sowing on because might seem hard today, might be plowed by God's adversity tomorrow and the seed you had sown days, months, years earlier now is able to go down deep and germinate and bear fruit of a redeemed life! Leave it to God to assess the ultimate quality of the soil! You let God take care of the harvest. He's the Lord of the harvest. Our duty is just to scatter the Word.

In Mark Jesus says "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God (see resources) is at hand; **repent** and **believe** in **the gospel**." (Mk 1:15+) And so the **Word of the Kingdom** is the **Word of God** which is the **Gospel** which must be believed in order for one to gain entrance into the Kingdom. As Jesus told Nicodemus "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." (Jn 3:3+).

> **MacArthur** - The Old Testament would call them the hard-hearted and the stiff-necked. They are resolute and rigid in their indifference, disinterest and love of sin. This is the condition of the heart which corresponds to the hardness of that footpath around the field. The heart of this kind of person is a thoroughfare, crossed by the mixed multitude of iniquities that traverse it day after day after day after day. And it's not fenced so it lies exposed to all the evil stompings of everything that comes along. It's never broken up. It's never plowed by conviction. It's never plowed by self-searching, self-examination, contrition, honest assessment of guilt, repentance. The heart is callous. It's callous to the sweet reasonings of grace and it's callous to the fearful terrors of judgment. Nothing wrong with the seed. Nothing wrong with the sower. Something terribly wrong with his hard, impenitent heart. (Sermon)

And does not understand it - Such hearts are hard to begin with. As noted earlier, **understand** is a **key word** in this section on the parables (6x = Mt. 13:13, 14, 15, 19, 23, 51). **Understand** is the verb is **suniemi** which means in essence these truth rejecters will be unable to put together the pieces of the puzzle (so to speak) regarding the Kingdom of God (see resources), the King Jesus and the good news of the Kingdom, the Gospel.

Spurgeon says it is "easy for birds to pick up seed which lies exposed on a trodden path. If the soil had been good and the seed had entered it, he would have had far greater difficulty. But a hard heart does the Devil's work for him. There lies the un-received word on the surface of the soul, and he takes it away. The power of the evil one largely springs from our own evil!"

Phillips - Some people listen to the good news of the gospel, but what they hear makes no impression on their souls. The words go in one ear and out the other. It is hard to say what such people think of as they sit in church and are exposed to the most magnificent truths ever expounded. We only know that they get up and walk away. They might as well have been watching a football game or standing at the kitchen sink or closing a business deal....People with hard hearts hear the message and say to themselves, "I don't believe that. I don't agree with that. I never heard such nonsense." They have their own philosophies, their own religions, their own ideas. They say, "If I accept what I'm hearing, I'll have to give up this or that. I'm not at all interested in this kind of preaching." Before people who receive the Word superficially have gone a dozen steps, Satan has snatched away the seed. The message is dismissed from their minds as soon as they hear a joke, a piece of gossip, the latest football score, or a crying baby. An invitation to lunch or a chance to talk about business comes, and the Word is completely gone, just as if it had never been heard. (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

Luke 8:12+ adds a phrase not in Matthew or Mark "**They will not believe and be saved** - One must personally believe the Gospel in order to be saved. There is no other way (cf Jn 14:6, Acts 4:12). Failure to believe the Gospel will eventually result in eternal damnation. Sadly it is that simple!

John Broadus on **does not understand** - There is here reference to the state of those described in Mt 13:11–13; see the same word 'understand' in Mt 13:13. The people were hardened into indifference, and some of them even into malignant opposition to the word, and hence they did not understand it Christianity is so eminently practical a thing that one will not truly understand it unless he is willing to receive it Pascal: "In other things, a man must know in order to love; in religion he must love in order to know." Whenever through inattention, lack of spiritual sympathy, unwillingness to receive, or opposition, men fail to 'understand' the word, it cannot benefit them. It lies for a moment on the surface of the mind, till by some one of the thousand evil influences which Satan and his subordinates employ, it is caught away. Often the whole impression made on some mind by a solemn sermon seems to be destroyed the instant the service is over, by an idle jest of a trifling comrade. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

The evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart - **The evil one** is **Satan** (Mk 4:15+, cf Mt 6:13+, Mt 12:45+, Mt 13:38+), the **devil** (Lk 8:12+), where the word **evil** is poneros which speaks of active evil, evil with intent to

harm. Recall Jesus had said earlier "those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them." (Mt 13:12NLT) **Comes** is in the **present tense** picturing the evil one (and his minions) constantly on the prowl to snatch the Word. **Snatches away** conveys the idea is of suddenly and violently seizing and carrying off. Note the phrase **sown in his heart** which identifies the "soil" as one's **heart** "the seat of intelligence and will, as well as of feeling." (Broadus) **Spurgeon** comments that the **evil one** "does not mind their merely hearing. What he is afraid of is their believing, for he knows that in believing lies the secret of their salvation." In fact as **Darrell Bock** notes "When God seeks to speak to humanity, a cosmic battle breaks out." (Call to Faith and Christology)

> **Snatches** (726)(**harpazo**) from **haireô** = take, in NT only in **middle voice** = **haireomai** = to take for oneself, to choose; akin to **airo** = to raise up) means to snatch up or way, to seize or seize upon, to steal (see comparison to klepto below), to catch away or up, to pluck, to pull. Harpazo means to take suddenly, with speed and without warning. What a picture of the Word of the Kingdom which can be "gone in a flash" if it is not laid hold of by one's mind! I can't resist the thought that there is a possible play on words for this same verb is used for those who receive the Word implanted and are saved and are snatched away when the Church is raptured (1 Th 4:17+)! If Satan snatches away the Word from souls in that last generation of the Church, that soul will not be snatched away by God!
>
> **Heart** (2588)(**kardia**) is always used figuratively in the NT and is the center of the personality, and it controls the intellect, emotions, and will. Our "**control center**" (to make a play on the "air traffic control center" at the airport which carefully guards and guides what flies in and what flies out. How applicable to our "hearts" which are so prone to wander!). In short **kardia** refers to the the affective center of our being wherein lies the capacity of moral preference and volitional desire. The **kardia** generates thoughts that make the decisions which the mind works out. In other words, our logic flows out of our heart-decisions and not vice versa. Gleason Archer called the **kardia**, the "desire-producer that makes us tick" for it is the place where our "desire-decisions" occur, and which establish who we really are. WHO ARE YOU? HAVE YOU HAD A HEART CHECK UP RECENTLY? We are assiduous to do this medically, but woefully lax in doing it spiritually (beloved, I speak from experience!). At regeneration God reverses the spiritual atherosclerosis of our old sinful heart by giving us a total heart transplant! Daily confession and repentance are thereafter necessary to avoid "spiritual atherosclerosis" and gradual, subtle hardening (and becoming cold to the things of God) of our heart! (Read and practice daily "preventative maintenance" = 1 Jn 1:9+, Pr 28:13+).

This **soil** reminds me of several men in the NT -

> **King Herod** - Herod was afraid of John, knowing that he was a righteous and holy man, and he kept him safe. And when he heard him, he was very perplexed; but he **used to enjoy listening to him**. (**ED**: AND WE KNOW HE PREACHED THE WORD OF THE KINGDOM!) (Mark 6:20+)
>
> **Felix** - And as he (PAUL) was discussing righteousness, self-control and the judgment to come, Felix became frightened and said, "Go away for the present, and when I find time, I will summon you." (Acts 24:25+)
>
> **King Agrippa** - And Agrippa replied to Paul, "In a short time you will persuade me to become a Christian." And Paul said, "I would to God, that whether in a short or long time, not only you, but also all who hear me this day, might become such as I am, except for these chains." (Acts 26:28-29+)

We see this same principle in the last days when Antichrist is given power to rule during the tribulation

> Then that lawless one (ANTICHRIST) will be revealed (IN THE LAST 3.5 YEARS OF THE TRIBULATION) whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming (Rev 19:20+); 9 that is, the one (ANTICHRIST) whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan (Rev 13:2-6+), with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because (EXPLAINS WHY THEY PERISH) they did not receive (THEY MADE A PERSONAL CHOICE TO REJECT) the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 For this reason (AGAIN SEE THE PRINCIPLE OF Mt 13:12b) God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false (THEY BELIEVE THE LIES OF THE ANTICHRIST - THESE ARE THE EARTH DWELLERS IN REVELATION THOSE WHO ABSOLUTELY CANNOT BE SAVED BECAUSE OF THEIR PERSONAL CHOICE TO REJECT TRUTH), 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth (THEIR INABILITY TO EVEN NOW BELIEVE TRUTH IS JUDICIAL HARDENING OF THEIR HEARTS!), but took pleasure in wickedness. (2 Th 2:8-12)

This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road- This simply identifies what Jesus has just stated about the first soil in Mt 13:4.

John Phillips reminds us that "Soil can usually be improved. No sower scatters seed on soil that has not been plowed and harrowed. Hard hearts can be softened. False beliefs can be uprooted. God's kindness shows Him how to break up the soil of a human soul."

John Piper points out that "the final and most fearful consequence of having the Word taken from our hearts. Jesus says in John 15, "Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away . . . If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned." Ultimately what is at stake if Satan takes away the Word of God is our salvation. **Without the Word of God abiding and taking root in our heart we cannot bear fruit, be disciples, or inherit eternal life.** So it matters more than words can express that we not be among those who hear the Word and lose it to the work of Satan. (Satan Takes Away the Word)

Steven Cole writes that "Satan hardens people's hearts by the traffic of worldly philosophies. People engage in worldly, man-centered thinking so often that their hearts grow callused to the truth of God. For example, many in our culture are so steeped in the **postmodern ideas** that spiritual truth is relative and that it doesn't matter what you believe that they automatically reject the exclusive claims of the Gospel because it runs counter to the ideas they have trafficked in for all their lives. It is ironic that these are people who would scoff at the idea of a personal devil, and yet that very devil is the one who **snatches away the seed of the Gospel** from them! (ED: WAS THIS NOT THE STRATEGY PAR EXCELLENCE IN "SCREWTAPE LETTERS" = THERE IS NO DEVIL!) In their hardness of heart, they feel no need for God. We need to pray that God will **break up the hard ground of their hearts with the plow of trials** so that they will be open to receive the truth of the Gospel." (Sermon on Luke 8:4-15)

Rich Cathers on how **Satan takes away the Word** is he shoots **flaming arrows** (ED: Eph 6:16) reminding them of "the insidious lies the world has told us: (1) "The Bible is just a bunch of made-up stories" (2) "Jesus was not a real person" (ED: Or one I hear a lot - "Jesus never claimed to be God.") (3) "We are all products of evolution, there is no God who created everything" (ED: THANK YOU CHARLES DARWIN!) When a person has swallowed some of these lies, it's easy for them to just blow it off when they hear that God loved them so much that He gave His Son to die for them."

MacArthur explains how **evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart** - How does he snatch it? Through **false teachers** that come and attack the Gospel. He **snatches** it through the **fear** of man (ED: Pr 29:25 = The fear of man brings a snare [moqesh]."), an embarrassment about being identified with Jesus Christ or fear of being unsynagogued or cut off from your friends (ED: THIS IS PARTICULARLY AT PLAY IN MUSLIM AND HINDU CULTURES WHERE A BELIEVER MAY LOSE HIS/HER FAMILY!) He snatches it through **pride**. You think you know everything and you are not willing to confess that you don't and be broken before God. He snatches it through **doubt**, through **prejudice**, through **stubbornness**, mostly through the **continual love of sin** which he panders to this wretched world system. It's either crushed under the continual pedestrian activity of wickedness or snatched away by Satan. That's such a sad thing. (Receptivity to the Gospel)

Ray Stedman says this person has "what we can call the **callous heart**. The seed is sown upon the beaten, trodden-down pathway. This represents people whose hearts are busy, who are not open, who have been beaten down so many times they have grown cynical, hardhearted, callous to truth. When the seed hits them, the birds come and gather it up immediately. (Perhaps there are people like that here this morning. You are here not because you wanted to hear the Word but because coming to church is the "right" thing to do. Your hearts are callous and unresponsive, and the Word falls on them as on asphalt.) What does Jesus say about that kind of a life? He says it is strictly for the birds! The seed will be snatched away by Satan before you even have a chance to hear it. **C S. Lewis, in his *Screwtape Letters,*** describes a man who goes into a library to read and meditate. His mind is suddenly opened to deep thoughts of God. Confronted with his own standing before God, he starts thinking in terms of his eternal welfare. **Then, Lewis says, the demons that are assigned to keep him from discovering truth call his attention to the sounds on the street, to the newsboy calling out the latest news, and to the fact that he is hungry, ready for lunch. And that is all it takes. All thoughts of God disappear, and he is involved in the mundane affairs of life.** And, from the point of view of the satanic emissaries, he is delivered from this danger of thinking about God. That is what happens to the callous mind and heart. (Seed Thoughts)

Broadus - The gospel not understood. I. Causes. (1) Indifference and inattention to it. (2) Prejudices which exclude it. (3) Desire to do things it forbids. (4) Insensibility through previous neglect. II. Consequences. (1) It does not reach the deeper affections. (2) It gives no impulse to the will. (3) It never touches the life. (4) It goon passes away from the memory (Matthew 13 Commentary)

Related Resources:

- Why is skepticism of religion so prevalent today?
- What are the dangers of postmodernism?
- What does the Bible say about busyness / being too busy?
- What is Neopaganism?

Satan's Strategies to take away the Word
John Piper

There are two other kinds of soil where the Word bears no fruit. There is the rocky ground in Mk 4:16 and the thorny ground in Mk 4:18. Jesus doesn't mention Satan in connection with these. But we know from other teachings in the New Testament that Satan is very much at work in these soils to nullify the Word of God and make the hearers fruitless. So there are really three strategies (at least!) by which Satan takes away the Word. Let's look at each briefly.

1. Immediately—with Inattention, Ill-Will, or Ignorance

In Mk 4:15 it says that he does it**immediately**. He does it before there is any sympathetic response at all. "Satan immediately comes and takes away the word which is sown in them." I can think of at least three ways this happens. It happens through people's **inattention, ill-will, or ignorance**.

Satan works overtime to keep people from giving serious attention to the Word of God He may keep you up late Saturday night so that you can't stay awake during the sermon or Sunday School. He may put a dozen different distractions around you in the service to take your mind away from the message. He may send thoughts into your mind (**ED**: Eph 6:16b+ Note the antidote/defense is found in the first clause in this same verse!) about tomorrow's meeting with your supervisor. If he can only distract you so that the sounds coming out of the preacher's mouth go in one ear and out the other, he will have successfully taken away the Word of God and made it ineffectual for you (**ED**: cf James 1:25+ = contrast "forgetful hearer but an effectual doer"). Inattention is his game. (**ED**: disregard; heedlessness; neglect; ATTENTION is the cognitive process of selectively concentrating on one aspect of the environment while ignoring other things. Attention has also been referred to as the allocation of processing resources.).

He also uses ill-will. (**ED**: a hostile, very unfriendly, disposition, enmity, dislike) He causes feelings of aversion to block the Word. These feelings might be against the preacher or against his language or simply against the truths of the gospel. People may hear and understand exactly what is being said, but despise it. Paul said the gospel is foolishness to those who are perishing (**ED**: 1 Cor 1:18). Satan works to maintain their worldly sense of values so that the value of the death of Christ is as nothing. Satan gives people such a high estimation of themselves that the evangelical message of brokenness before the cross for our sin is disgusting and threatening. So the Word of God gains no foothold. Satan takes it away.

Satan also uses ignorance. The work of Satan can be so thorough that his servants can actually lose the capacity to grasp what is being said well enough even to get angry about it. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 4:3–4, "Even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the likeness of God." When the glory of God is described, Satan blinds the eyes of his people so that they wonder what in the world is going on when spiritual people are deeply affected by this glory. Thus Satan takes away the Word of God.

2. Eventually—with Shallow Soil and Persecution

But Satan's battle against the Word is not just directed against that first hearing of the Word. Even after a person has heard the Word and received it with joy, Satan does his best to take it away and bring the person to fruitlessness and ruin. Mark 4:16–17 describe this attack. "And these in like manner are the ones sown upon rocky ground, who, when they hear the word, **immediately** receive it with joy; and they have no root in themselves, but endure for a while; then, when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, **immediately** they fall away."

The reason I feel confident in saying that this too is the work of Satan, even though Jesus doesn't mention him here, is that **persecution** is mentioned and this is a key strategy of Satan elsewhere in the New Testament. For example, when Paul heard that the Thessalonian Christians were being persecuted, he chalked it up to the devil and said, "For this reason, when I could bear it no longer, I sent that I might know your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and that our labor would be in vain." (1 Th 3:5+) It's clear that Paul saw persecution as a work of Satan that could destroy the gospel labor he had expended. In other words, the Word could be taken away.

Just because Satan is not able to keep everyone from responding joyfully to the Word of God, doesn't mean he gives up on those people. He brings many of them to ruin by keeping their soil shallow and battering them with hard times so that they fall for the lie that the Word of God is not worth the trouble it brings. And so Satan takes away the Word of God even after it has gained a little toehold.

3. Eventually—with Prosperity

If persecution doesn't look like it will work, Satan will try prosperity. This is his third strategy for taking away the Word and making

people fruitless. Mk 4:18–19 describe this strategy: "And others are the ones sown among thorns; they are those who hear the word, but the cares of the world, and the deceit of riches, and the desire for other things, enter in and choke the word, and it proves unfruitful."

Ephesians 2:2–3+ teaches that when people follow Satan they are not dragged along against their desires, but are giving in to their ungodly desires. Satan takes away the Word by making us feel that if we hold fast to the Word, we will have to give up something better. He is the great deceiver. And in America he majors not on soil 2 but on soil 3. He doesn't snatch the Word as much by the threat of persecution (ED: AS IN PLACES LIKE INDIA AND MUSLIM NATIONS WHERE A PERSON'S LIFE MAY BE AT STAKE IF THEY RECEIVE THE WORD OF THE GOSPEL!) as by the deceptive promise that things will go better if you don't get fanatical about the Word of God. And so thousands of people who had made a start with the Word of God give in to his lies and have the Word choked out of their lives.

In summary, Satan has three strategies to take away the Word of God.

1. First, he often acts immediately as soon as the Word is heard to make people inattentive, or cause them to feel ill-will, or to simply be so ignorant of spiritual reality they can't grasp what's being said.
2. Second, he comes in after the Word has been received with joy and attacks it with hard times. He convinces some that holding fast to the Word is not worth the trouble.
3. Third, he comes in where the Word has begun to take root and strangles it with the lie that too many good things are being sacrificed. (Read the rest of Dr Piper's message as he discusses 3 strategies to fight the enemy's 3 strategies).

Matthew 13:20 "The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

NET Matthew 13:20 The seed sown on rocky ground is the person who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy.

GNT Matthew 13:20 δ π τ πετρ δη σπαρε ς, ο τ ς στιν τ ν λ γον κο ων κα ε θ ς μετ χαρ ς λαμβ νων α τ ν,

NLT Matthew 13:20 The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy.

KJV Matthew 13:20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;

ESV Matthew 13:20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy,

NIV Matthew 13:20 The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy.

ASV Matthew 13:20 And he that was sown upon the rocky places, this is he that heareth the word, and straightway with joy receiveth it;

CSB Matthew 13:20 And the one sown on rocky ground-- this is one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy.

NKJ Matthew 13:20 "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

NRS Matthew 13:20 As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;

YLT Matthew 13:20 'And that sown on the rocky places, this is he who is hearing the word, and immediately with joy is receiving it,

NAB Matthew 13:20 The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and receives it at once with joy.

NJB Matthew 13:20 The seed sown on patches of rock is someone who hears the word and welcomes it at once with joy.

GWN Matthew 13:20 The seed planted on rocky ground is the person who hears the word and accepts it at once with joy.

BBE Matthew 13:20 And that which went on the stones, this is he who, hearing the word, straight away takes it with joy;

- **received** - Mt 13:5,6
- **and immediately receives it with joy** - 1Sa 11:13-15 2Ch 24:2,6,14 Ps 78:34-37 106:12,13 Isa 58:2 Eze 33:31,32 Mk 4:16,17 6:20 Joh 5:35 Ac 8:13 Ga 4:14,15
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

Mark 4:16+ ""In a similar way these are the ones on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with joy; 17 and they have no firm root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.

Luke 8:13+ "Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.

The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places - This is not soil with a few rocks, for most soil has at least a few rocks. the soil was deceptive. It was shallow because a hidden ledge of rock ran just beneath the thin layer of soil, like **bedrock** (see picture but with more soil than Jesus' example). And Luke 8:6+ adds the fact that moisture cannot be retained in such thin soil. So this soil functions much like a sort of "hot house" so the seed springs up immediately. The problem is it grows up but does not grow down! In other words there is no root system. The results are two-fold, rapid growth and rapid withering. This soil typifies the shallow heart, one that is superficial, emotional, easily interested and impressed, but with no depth of conviction. They have feeling but lack faith! (cf the rich young ruler - Lk 18:18-21+, second son of Mt 21:30). And so when the sun comes out, and both the soil and the seed are scorched, and the early promise withers away.

Phillips writes that "There was just enough soil to give promise but not enough to give performance. What is depicted for us here is mere profession of faith rather than true possession of Christ. People who exhibit this kind of response to the gospel often have only an emotional experience of some sort. Sometimes people give only an intellectual assent to the truth. In neither case is there more than a superficial stirring of the soul. The condition described is illustrated in the case of Orpah. Both Ruth and Orpah initially responded to Naomi's testimony. However, as soon as Orpah was confronted with the hard facts involved, she went back on her profession and returned to Moab (read Ru 1:14-15+). Ruth went all of the way. "Two walked the aisle," so to speak, "but there was only one wedding. (read Ru 1:16-17+)" (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

John Broadus - Like the wheat sown on a thin layer of earth spread over a rock, the gospel will produce some impression on such persons sooner than elsewhere, and the effect will look extremely promising for a time, so that people think this person will soon be a Christian, or even that he is so already. But when persecution or any severe test of principle occurs, it is at once seen that the thing was not deeply rooted, for it perishes without having produced any real results. It is often the case that superficial and transient religious impressions produce a speedier and more boisterous joy than those which are deep and genuine. Such joy may result from general views of the beauty of piety and the blessedness of possessing it, with a self-deceived appropriation of its consolations and hopes; or from the excitement of natural feeling by touching allusions and fervid appeals; or from mere sympathy with kindred and friends; or even from utterly erroneous notions of religion, with the elation of self-righteousness and spiritual pride. See an example on a large scale in John 6:15, 22, 66. But the deepest religious experiences may also produce, and ought to produce, a true and abiding joy.(Matthew 13 Commentary)

This is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy - **Bob Utley** comments that "This was obviously a superficial response to Jesus and His message as the context shows. True salvation is an initial response of repentance and faith followed by an ongoing response of repentance and faith (cf. 1 Jn. 2:19). There are many in the visible Church who use Christian words, attend Christian meetings, and read the Christian Bible but do not have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (cf. Matt. 7:21–23).

MacDonald - The **rock**-hearers heard the word too, but they did not let the word break them. They remained unrepentant. No encouragement (moisture) was given to the seed, so it withered away and died.(Borrow Believer's Bible Commentary)

Immediately (2117)(**euthus**) as **adverb** to mean immediately, right away, at once, without delay or hesitation; with no time intervening. The use of **euthus** with the meaning of **immediately** is a key word in the Gospel of Mark. **Euthus** in Matthew - Matt. 3:3; Matt. 3:16; Matt. 13:20; Matt. 13:21; Matt. 14:27; Matt. 21:2; Matt. 21:3; Matt. 26:74

Lenski comments that "The moment they hear it they are delighted—this is what they have been waiting for, they sing the praises of the Word. The seed on the rock-soil springs up more quickly than that on the good soil, but beyond that fact this soil proves disappointing." (IIMG)

> **THOUGHT** - How many times I have been so encouraged by what seems like such a promising response to the Gospel "seed" and later to be disappointed when they fell away! In my immaturity, I thought I had done something wrong, that my presentation of the Gospel was faulty, etc. I wish I had fully understood Jesus' parable of the soils when I was a younger believer, for it would have saved me a great deal of angst. The problem is not with the **sower** nor with the **seed** but with the **soil**, the heart of the person who hears the Gospel. Remember, that the **Gospel** by definition is like a natural seed which has within its husk the power to germinate into a plant which grows and flourishes. Paul "defines" the Gospel as "the **power** (inherent power, "germinating power" - dunamis) of God for salvation to everyone who believes." (Ro 1:16note). So the Gospel has the intrinsic, supernatural **power** but the person's heart lacks true belief. The heart of the problem is the heart (the soil), not the Gospel seed or the Gospel sower! Add to this the sad truth that most of the souls with whom we share the Gospel will not believe the Gospel for as Jesus clearly warned "**Enter** through the **narrow gate**; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction (not loss of existence, but loss of the purpose and reason for existing!), and there are **MANY** who enter through it. 14 “For (term of explanation) the **gate is small** and the **way is narrow** that leads to life, and there are **FEW** who find it. (Mt 7:13-14+)

Steven Cole adds that "If you have been a Christian for a while, you have ridden the roller coaster of great joy in seeing someone make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, followed by awful disappointment as the same person later fell away from the faith. For a while he seemed to be dramatically changed. He got involved in the church. He was zealous for the things of God. But then a difficult trial hit. Perhaps he had a conflict with someone in the church. Or he had a personal health problem or he lost a loved one. His zeal cooled off and gradually he stopped coming to church. Every effort to restore him failed. Today he is back in the world. Others don’t fall away altogether, but their early enthusiasm wanes. They settle into a routine that includes going to church as long as there isn’t something “better” to do for the weekend. But God is not central in their lives. They are more focused on their things and on having a good time in life. They profess to be Christians, but they have no burden for the lost and no desire to serve God. They are living basically for self and for pleasure. But they are not living in light of eternity. How do you explain such people? Some would say that they have lost their salvation, but that clearly contradicts the many clear passages that teach that those whom God saves, He keeps for eternity. Others say that these folks are saved, but they are “carnal.” They can go through life living in this carnal or worldly state and they will still go to heaven, but they won’t have many rewards waiting for them. But this popular but false teaching contradicts Heb 12, which says that if a person is truly God’s child, then God will discipline him. If a person lacks such discipline, he is not a true child of God at all....The parable serves both as an **encouragement to His followers** and a **warning to His hearers**. The encouragement to His followers is that when we see people respond superficially to the gospel and later fall away, we should not be discouraged in that even Jesus had the same response. The problem was certainly not in His preaching, but in the audience’s hearing. The warning to those who hear the parable, of course, is to take it to heart so that we avoid a superficial faith. (Superficial and Genuine Believers)

Matthew 13:21 yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.

> NET Matthew 13:21 But he has no root in himself and does not endure; when trouble or persecution comes because of the word, immediately he falls away.
>
> GNT Matthew 13:21 ο κ χει δ ζαν ν αυτ λλ πρ σκαιρ ς στιν, γενομ νης δ θλ ψεως διωγμο δι τ ν λ γον ε θ ς σκανδαλ ζεται.
>
> NLT Matthew 13:21 But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word.
>
> KJV Matthew 13:21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.
>
> ESV Matthew 13:21 yet he has no root in himself, but endures for a while, and when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.
>
> NIV Matthew 13:21 But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away.

ASV Matthew 13:21 yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straightway he stumbleth.

CSB Matthew 13:21 Yet he has no root in himself, but is short-lived. When pressure or persecution comes because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

NKJ Matthew 13:21 "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.

NRS Matthew 13:21 yet such a person has no root, but endures only for a while, and when trouble or persecution arises on account of the word, that person immediately falls away.

YLT Matthew 13:21 and he hath not root in himself, but is temporary, and persecution or tribulation having happened because of the word, immediately he is stumbled.

NAB Matthew 13:21 But he has no root and lasts only for a time. When some tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away.

NJB Matthew 13:21 But such a person has no root deep down and does not last; should some trial come, or some persecution on account of the word, at once he falls away.

GWN Matthew 13:21 Since he doesn't have any root, he lasts only a little while. When suffering or persecution comes along because of the word, he immediately falls from faith.

BBE Matthew 13:21 But having no root in himself, he goes on for a time; and when trouble comes or pain, because of the word, he quickly becomes full of doubts.

- **root** - Mt 13:6 7:22,23,26,27 Job 19:28 Pr 12:3,12 Lu 8:13 Joh 6:26,61-65 Joh 6:70,71 15:5-7 Ac 8:21-23 Ga 5:6 6:15 Eph 3:17 2Pe 1:8,9 1Jn 2:19,20
- **but is only temporary** - Mt 10:22 24:13 Job 27:8-10 Ps 36:3 Ho 6:4 Ro 2:7 Php 1:6 1Pe 1:5
- **And when affliction or persecution arises** - Mt 5:10-12 10:37-39 16:24-26 Mk 4:17 8:34-36 13:12,13 Lu 9:23-25 14:26-33 21:12-18 Joh 12:25,26 Ga 6:12 2Ti 4:10 Heb 10:35-39 Rev 2:13
- **falls away** - Mt 13:57 11:6 24:9,10 26:31,33 2Ti 1:15
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

Mark 4:17+ “and they have no *firm* root in themselves, but are only temporary; then, when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately they fall away.

Luke 8:13+ “Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no *firm* root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.

Yet he has no *firm* **root** (rhiza) **in himself, but is only temporary** (proskairos) - "**Firm**" is not in the Greek text. Literally it reads "he has no root," none at all! No root of course means there can be no fruit. Why some like Dr Thomas Constable (I like and quote many of his expository notes) contend this is a believer who simply falls away is a puzzle. The word **temporary** even in English means not permanent; not lasting. So if words mean anything this person's "belief" is not permanent. Jesus could hardly have been clearer! These people are professors of Jesus but not possessors of Jesus! This is soil that "believes" (intellectually but not genuine saving belief - cf the belief of the Jews in Jn 8:30 and their subsequent action in Jn 8:59 because Jesus called Himself "I Am" in Jn 8:58!) for a season and then cease to even profess. This is not a believer. And it is not a believer who has lost his salvation. This person could not lose what they never possessed! This person was never a believer. There was never fruit indicative that there was a root in the Gospel. There was no **perseverance** in this person.

Such “temporary Christians” abound in times of extraordinary revival.
--John Broadus

Phillips comments that "High pressure evangelism often produces this kind of shallow "conversion." Professions of faith are unsubstantial and worthless. People who respond to the gospel on this level have awakened souls, but they are not regenerated in spirit." (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

Temporary (passing)(4340)(**proskairos** from **pros** = for, toward + **kairos** = an opportune time) means literally for a season and just like a season comes and goes, so **proskairos** conveys that sense (passing). The idea is that something lasts for only for a short or limited time (= temporary, transient). **Proskairos** is essentially the diametric opposite of eternal or everlasting. Mt 13:21 and Mk 4:17 describe the stony heart hearers as only

> temporary. The other two (of the 4) NT uses describe "things which are seen are **temporal**, but the things which are not seen are eternal." (2 Cor 4:18+). The writer of Hebrews describes Moses "choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin." (Heb 11:25+). Notice the effect of ill-treatment on the faith of Moses? He endure or persevered, which is always a mark of genuine, saving faith.

Spurgeon notes that these hearers "did not recollect that between this and heaven there are temptations to be combatted and to be overcome, trials to be endured, stern trials, too, through which we can only be brought by divine help. Right arms must be cut off, and right eyes must be plucked out; there are costs to be counted, and reckonings to be made, as to whether the future will repay for the labors of the present. Youthful Hopefuls vow that they will have the brave country of Canaan, but they do not recollect the roughness of the road thither. Like Pliable, they set out for the Celestial City' but they have not reckoned upon the Slough of Despond, and therefore after the first mouthful of mud they are ready to turn back, and let those have the brave country who care for it; as for them, if they can keep whole bones in their body, they will be well content to let the future go as it may. (The Seed Upon the Stony Ground)

Excerpt from Pilgrim's Progress regarding **Pliable**

> Now I saw in my dream, that just as they had ended this talk, they drew nigh to a very miry Slough that was in the midst of the plain, and they being heedless, did both fall suddenly into the bog. The name of the Slough was Despond. Here therefore they wallowed for a time, being grieviously bedaubed with dirt; and Christian, because of the Burden that was on his back, began to sink in the mire.
>
> Pliable: Then said Pliable, Ah! neighbor Christian, where are you now?
>
> Christian: Truly, said Christian, I do not know.
>
> Pliable: At that Pliable began to be offended, and angrily said to his fellow, Is this the happiness you have told me all this while of? If we have such ill speed at our first setting out, what may we expect between this and our Journey's end? May I get out again with my Life, you shall possess the brave Country alone for me. And with that he gave a desperate strug
>
> See Commentary Notes on Pliable

And when affliction (thlipsis) **or persecution** (diogmos) **arises because of the word** - Notice the word is not "if" but "**when**" because **affliction** and **persecution** will come! **Affliction** is a more general term, while **persecution** is more specific. As I like to tell my pastor friends "Preach the Word and duck!" Notice the strategic "**because**" a term of explanation which tells us that when one stands for the Word of God, everything that stands against God will stand against you! And if you are not a genuine believer when this affliction and persecution come, you will fall away and prove you were never a believer in Jesus, for Jesus gave a "test" of genuine belief promising that "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples (ALL BELIEVERS ARE DISCIPLES OF JESUS!) of Mine" (Jn 8:31+). This is a soul sobering truth from the lips of our Lord. It costs to be a true believer, as many who convert to Christianity in the Middle East, India and other predominantly non-Christian nations know all too well. Some pay the cost with excommunication from families and relationships. Some pay the cost with their very life and are martyred **because of the Word**!

> **Dietrich Bonhoeffer** on the cost to a true believer - Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: "ye were bought at a price," and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God."

John Phillips - Preachers know this kind of soil as well. They are familiar with people who are stirred, enthusiastic, and overjoyed by a message and make immediate professions of faith. There is an initial response; everything is bright with promise. But then hard times come; as soon as these shallow people discover what it is going to cost to maintain a testimony for Christ, they give up...The opposition that confronts them is solid, real, adamant, and unyielding. At once, they abandon their profession of faith, thereby proving it to have been worthless. The opposition, moreover, is directed specifically toward the Word that they profess to have believed. The world soon shows itself to be the enemy of God's Word. The test invariably comes soon after a profession of faith is made. (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

John Piper - The reason I feel confident in saying that this too is the work of Satan, even though Jesus doesn't mention him here, is that **persecution** is mentioned and this is a key strategy of Satan elsewhere in the New Testament. For example, when Paul heard that the Thessalonian Christians were being persecuted, he chalked it up to the devil and said, "For this reason, when I could bear it

no longer, I sent that I might know your faith, for fear that somehow the tempter had tempted you and that our labor would be in vain." (1 Th 3:5+) It's clear that Paul saw persecution as a work of Satan that could destroy the gospel labor he had expended. In other words, the Word could be taken away. (ED: ALSO COMPARE THE PERSECUTION SATAN BROUGHT ON JOB - Job 1:12-19, Job 2:3-10)

> **Affliction** (2347)(**thlipsis** from **thlibo** = to crush, press together, squash, hem in, compress, squeeze in turn derived from **thláo** = to break) originally expressed sheer, physical pressure on a man. Thlipsis is a strong term which does not refer to minor inconveniences, but to real hardships. Medically **thlipsis** was used of the pulse (pressure). It is a pressing together olives in a press in order to extract the oil and of squeezing grapes to extract the juice. It conveys the idea of being squeezed or placed under pressure or crushed beneath a weight. When, according to the ancient law of England, those who willfully refused to plead guilty, had heavy weights placed on their breasts, and were pressed and crushed to death, this was literally **thlipsis**. ***Thlipsis*** thus refers not to mild discomfort but to great difficulty. Figuratively**thlipsis** pictures one being "crushed" by intense pressure, difficult circumstances, suffering or trouble pressing upon them from without.
>
> > **THOUGHT**- Think of thlipsis as the "***toothpaste word***" for when pressure comes on you, what comes out is what is within, either the fruit of the Spirit or the rotten fruit of the flesh! (cf Mt 12:34b+)
>
> **Persecution** (1375)(**diogmos** from **dioko** = to chase, to pursue) literally refers to a chase or pursuit and figuratively means to put to flight or to pursue with repeated acts of enmity. To persecute is to to harass in a manner designed to injure, vex, grieve, or afflict. Used 8x in NT - Matt. 13:21; Mk. 4:17; Mk. 10:30; Acts 8:1+; Acts 13:50+; Ro 8:35+; 2 Co. 12:10+; 2 Th. 1:4; 2 Ti 3:11+

Immediately he falls away - Notice this **immediately** (**euthus**) unfortunately cancels out their **immediately** receiving the Word with joy in Mt 13:20. Falls away could be paraphrase stumbles, falls into a trap, takes offense. In English word **scandalized** means struck with disgust or revulsion. They turn away quickly (**immediately**) from the Word and the God of the Word. **Fall away** is in the present tense indicating this is their continual state. These are not believers who fell away for a while (cfBacksliding), but those who continued to fall away.

> **Falls away** (stumbles; takes offense) (4624)(**skandalizo** from **skandalon**= a trap = put a snare ; Eng = scandalize) means to put a snare or stumbling block in the way, and so causing to stumble or to take offense. They are in a sense "scandalized" by the Word, where the English word scandalized means struck with disgust or revulsion. Broadus - "the man finds an obstacle to progress, and abandons the gospel he had apparently received."

Paul alludes to this in his last letter to Timothy writing "You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes." (2Ti 1:15+)

Adrian Rogers says of this soil "what you have is a false profession. And it is all emotionalism. Oh, there are these people. You can give an invitation and get people to get emotional and to give their heart to Jesus, but they don't really mean business with God. There is no root. It is all emotion. Now I'm not against emotion. Praise God for emotion. But, friend, you're not saved by emotion. Sometimes people think that in order to be saved you have to shout or cry. You may do both, but you don't have to do either. The Bible doesn't mention feelings. You're not saved by feelings. As a matter of fact, as far as I can find, the word feeling is only used twice in the entire New Testament. Over and over again, the Bible speaks of faith, trust, and commitment—of a life that is rooted in Jesus Christ. Now let me tell you something, friend, about these emotional, candy-legged soldiers. They say, "Yes, I'm going for Christ." They'll join anything if you give them a badge and a button. But listen. As soon as persecution and affliction comes, they fall away. There are some people who would give up membership in this church before they would give up getting a new car. There are some people, if it gets tough and if it gets tight, they will fall away. They won't lose their salvation. They never had it. They are about a half-inch deep. Listen. Salvation is the deepest work of God. Your emotions are the shallowest part of your life. God doesn't do His deepest work in the shallowest part. I'm not against emotions, but you've got to be more than just a half-inch deep. Do you mean business with God? (Be Careful How You Hear - go to page 83).

Ray Stedman says these "are the impulsive hearts. The seed falls upon them and they immediately respond with joy. The seed takes root and grows up quickly. The trouble is, they respond like this to everything -- food fads, new books, political leaders, whatever popular movement happens to be abroad at the time. As a result, their lives are so shallow that the seed of the life-giving Word cannot take deep root and change them. Consequently, the life which apparently is there withers away and dies. Jesus says that this kind of life is shallow; it cannot stand the heat. When persecution and tribulation come, immediately it is withered. They turn away and lose interest, and cannot abide." (Seed Thoughts)

Steven Cole on the seed in rocky soil - This represents the person who impulsively welcomes the gospel without counting the cost. Perhaps he heard that following Jesus would magically solve all his problems and that Jesus offers an abundant life, so he

emotionally responds. At first, he seems to be zealous for the Lord. He seems to make rapid progress in the faith. But then, trials hit. Because his Christian experience was based more on emotion than on truth, he has no deep roots into the Word. He falls away. It's not that he lost his salvation; it's that he never truly was saved in the first place. When we share the gospel, we need to be careful not to paint too rosy a picture. Yes, God freely forgives all a person's sins the moment he trusts in Christ. Yes, God's Word is sufficient for all the problems we face in this life. But, no, God usually does not solve our problems instantly or easily. The Christian life is a fight of faith, and while we are assured of final victory, the battle can get pretty tough in the meanwhile. We don't do people a favor to gloss over the reality of what it means to follow Jesus. (Luke 8:4-15 Superficial and Genuine Believers)

Spurgeon's devotional - *These have no root."* - My soul, examine thyself this morning by the light of this text. Thou hast received the word with joy; thy feelings have been stirred and a lively impression has been made; but, remember, that to receive the word in the ear is one thing, and to receive Jesus into thy very soul is quite another; superficial feeling is often joined to inward hardness of heart, and a lively impression of the word is not always a lasting one. In the parable, the seed in one case fell upon ground having a rocky bottom, covered over with a thin layer of earth; when the seed began to take root, its downward growth was hindered by the hard stone and therefore it spent its strength in pushing its green shoot aloft as high as it could, but having no inward moisture derived from root nourishment, it withered away. Is this my case? Have I been making a fair show in the flesh without having a corresponding inner life? Good growth takes place upwards and downwards at the same time. Am I rooted in sincere fidelity and love to Jesus? If my heart remains unsoftened and unfertilized by grace, the good seed may germinate for a season, but it must ultimately wither, for it cannot flourish on a rocky, unbroken, unsanctified heart. Let me dread a godliness as rapid in growth and as wanting in endurance as Jonah's gourd; let me count the cost of being a follower of Jesus, above all let me feel the energy of his Holy Spirit, and then I shall possess an abiding and enduring seed in my soul. If my mind remains as obdurate as it was by nature, the sun of trial will scorch, and my hard heart will help to cast the heat the more terribly upon the ill-covered seed, and my religion will soon die, and my despair will be terrible; therefore, O heavenly Sower, plough me first, and then cast the truth into me, and let me yield thee a bounteous harvest.

THOUGHT - As as aside I realize many evangelicals hold **Charles Finney** in high regard but it behooves all of us to examine what Finney actually taught. Tim Challies a respected young reformed writer says "Perhaps the closest modern-day successor to Pelagius was Charles Finney. Like Pelagius, **he denied original sin** saying, "Moral depravity is sin itself, and not the cause of sin." He believed the whole notion of a sinful nature is "anti-scriptural and nonsensical dogma" and taught that we are all **born in a state of moral neutrality,** able to choose between good and evil—to choose between being good or being sinful." False Teachers) (If you are still not convinced and hold Finney in high regard, you might want to read some of his statements recorded here.

Phil Johnson records some of the evangelical fallout of Finney's "revivals" - Predictably, most of Finney's spiritual heirs lapsed into apostasy, Socinianism, mere moralism, cultlike perfectionism, and other related errors. In short, Finney's chief legacy was confusion and doctrinal compromise. Evangelical Christianity virtually disappeared from western New York in Finney's own lifetime. Despite Finney's accounts of glorious "revivals," most of the vast region of New England where he held his revival campaigns fell into a permanent spiritual coldness during Finney's lifetime and more than a hundred years later still has not emerged from that malaise. This is directly owing to the influence of Finney and others who were simultaneously promoting similar ideas. The Western half of New York became known as "the burnt-over district," because of the negative effects of the revivalist movement that culminated in Finney's work there. These facts are often obscured in the popular lore about Finney.....One of Finney's contemporaries registered a similar assessment, but more bluntly:

> During ten years, hundreds, and perhaps thousands, were annually reported to be converted on all hands; but now it is admitted, that real converts are comparatively few. It is declared, even by [Finney] himself, that "the great body of them are a disgrace to religion" [cited in Warfield, 2:23]. (from A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing)

THOUGHT - The discerning reader needs to be aware of a teaching among some evangelicals that says only the first soil represents lost souls and the other three represent saved souls, a teaching with which I strongly disagree, but present so that you are not caught off guard. I have been shocked at how many people have gotten upset when I taught that the first 3 soils are lost souls. Here is a short critique from **Middletown Bible Church** regarding the interpretation that only one soil is lost which is what is taught by **Zane Hodges** (former professor at Dallas Theological Seminary) and **Joseph Dillow**. They teach that...

> The **carnal, barren believer** is represented by the **rocky** ground and the **thorny** ground. The rocky ground represents a saved person who believes at first but then **falls away from the faith**. The thorny ground represents a saved but carnal person who is given over to the things of the world and thus is **fruitless**.
>
> According to this understanding of the parable the only ground which represents the heart of an unsaved person is the hard ground by the way side (Luke 8:12). The other three categories, according to Hodges and Dillow, all refer to saved people. Hodges explains his position on this parable in the book The Hungry Inherit and Dillow explains this parable in The Reign of the Servant Kings on pages 396-400.

This interpretation contradicts our Lord's clear teaching in Matthew 7:16-20+ where we are told that "**every good tree brings forth good fruit.**" Since there is no good fruit connected with the rocky soil and the thorny soil, how can there be a good tree? The root is corrupt!

It is correct to understand all of the saved as represented by the "good ground." Matthew 13:23 teaches two important principles: 1) All those who are truly saved are fruitful at least to some extent (see Matt. 3:8-10; 7:16-20); 2) Some believers are much more fruitful than others. There is a big difference between 30 baskets of apples and 100 baskets of apples! (The Parable of the Sower)

(In a separate note) The Hungry Inherit is the title of one of Zane Hodges' earlier books. In this book Hodges sets forth the position that in Jesus' parable of the Sower (Matt. 13:3-9), all of the soils except the first soil represent saved individuals. **This view is quite consistent with Hodge's teaching that a person can have eternal life but not evidence it in any way.** (ED: READ THAT LAST SENTENCE AGAIN!) Hodges thus teaches that a saved person can be totally worldly (thorny ground) and a saved person may believe only for a time, have no root, and then fall away (stony ground). In either case, there is no fruit. It is interesting to contrast Hodges' position with that of the Free Will Baptists. The Free Will Baptist position is that a true believer may depart from the faith and be lost forever. Hodges position is that a true believer may depart from the faith and be saved forever. **The teaching of the Word of God is that a true believer's faith will not fail because of the intercessory ministry of Christ** (Luke 22:31-32+; John 17) **and the keeping power of God** (1 Pet. 1:5+). God's Word teaches that a true believer may have a very serious lapse of faith (as Peter did) but not a total departure from the Lord, because "we are not of them who draw back unto perdition, but of them that believe to the saving of the soul" (Heb. 10:39+). (**ED: ILLUSTRATION**) **Every believer is on the ship of faith, as it were. We may fall down on the deck and we may fall very hard, but we will never fall overboard**. Our faith will never fail in a final way because we have the blessed intercessory ministry of our Saviour on our behalf, as did Peter (Luke 22:31-32+). The Lord prays for us, as He did for Peter, that our faith will not fail! (The Hungry Inherit) (Addendum - Hodges and Dillow teach that a "Spiritual Believer" will be the "Heir of the Kingdom" (this person's salvation is accompanied by works) and the "Carnal Believer" is a saved person who DOES NOT inherit the Kingdom (this person is said to be saved but his life is devoid of good works. In contrast James 2:17, 26+ says "This 'faith' is called a 'dead faith.'" see The Hungry Inherit)

The upshot is **Be a Berean** (Acts 17:11+) and be very discerning when reading (any) commentary (including the one you are reading). Always check the comments of the commentary with the Scripture under prayerful tutelage by your Teacher, the Holy Spirit!

Related Resources: All of the resources below are from the excellent site Gotquestions.org.

- What is a carnal Christian?
  EXCERPT - The key thing to understand is that while a Christian can be, for a time, carnal, a true Christian will not remain carnal for a lifetime. (**ED**: READ THAT STATEMENT AGAIN!) Some have abused the idea of a "carnal Christian" by saying that it is possible for people to come to faith in Christ and then proceed to live the rest of their lives in a completely carnal manner, with no evidence of being born again or a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17+). **Such a concept is completely unbiblical**. James 2+ makes it abundantly clear that genuine faith will always result in good works. Ephesians 2:8-10+ declares that while we are saved by grace alone through faith alone, that salvation will result in works. Can a Christian, in a time of failure and/or rebellion, appear to be carnal? Yes. Will a true Christian remain carnal? No.
- What is easy believism?
- What is free grace? What is Free Grace Theology?
- How 'Free Grace' Theology Diminishes the Gospel
- What is cheap grace?
- How can believers be in the world, but not of the world?
- Are Christians sinners, saints, or both?
- Do we sin daily? Is it possible to go an entire day without sinning?
- Can a Christian lose salvation?
- Does Hebrews 6:4-6 mean we can lose our salvation?
- Does Matthew 7:21-23 mean that believers can lose salvation?
- Does Hebrews 10:26 mean that a believer can lose salvation?

Matthew 13:22 "And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the

worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

NET Matthew 13:22 The seed sown among thorns is the person who hears the word, but worldly cares and the seductiveness of wealth choke the word, so it produces nothing.

GNT Matthew 13:22 δ ε ς τ ς κ νθας σπαρε ς, ο τ ς στιν τ ν λ γον κο ων, κα μ ριμνα το α νος κα π τη το πλο του συμπν γει τ ν λ γον κα καρπος γ νεται.

NLT Matthew 13:22 The seed that fell among the thorns represents those who hear God's word, but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life and the lure of wealth, so no fruit is produced.

KJV Matthew 13:22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

ESV Matthew 13:22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it proves unfruitful.

NIV Matthew 13:22 The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.

ASV Matthew 13:22 And he that was sown among the thorns, this is he that heareth the word; and the care of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

CSB Matthew 13:22 Now the one sown among the thorns-- this is one who hears the word, but the worries of this age and the seduction of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

NKJ Matthew 13:22 "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.

NRS Matthew 13:22 As for what was sown among thorns, this is the one who hears the word, but the cares of the world and the lure of wealth choke the word, and it yields nothing.

YLT Matthew 13:22 'And that sown toward the thorns, this is he who is hearing the word, and the anxiety of this age, and the deceitfulness of the riches, do choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful.

NAB Matthew 13:22 The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit.

NJB Matthew 13:22 The seed sown in thorns is someone who hears the word, but the worry of the world and the lure of riches choke the word and so it produces nothing.

GWN Matthew 13:22 The seed planted among thornbushes is another person who hears the word. But the worries of life and the deceitful pleasures of riches choke the word so that it can't produce anything.

BBE Matthew 13:22 And that which was dropped among the thorns, this is he who has the word; and the cares of this life, and the deceits of wealth, put a stop to the growth of the word and it gives no fruit.

- **seed** - Mt 13:7 Mk 4:18 Lu 8:14 18:24 2Ti 4:10
- **the worries**- Mt 6:24,25 19:16-24 Ge 13:10-13 Jos 7:20,21 2Ki 5:20-27 Jer 4:3 Mk 10:23-25 Lu 12:15,21,29,30 14:16-24 21:34 Ac 5:1-11 Ac 8:18 1Ti 6:9,10 2Pe 2:14,15 1Jn 2:15,16 Jude 1:11
- **the deceitfulness** - Ps 52:7 62:10 Pr 11:28 23:5 Ec 4:8 5:10,11,13,14 Mk 4:19 Lu 18:24,25 1Ti 6:17
- **choke** - Lu 8:14 2Ti 4:10 Jude 1:12
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

Mark 4:18-19+ “And others are the ones on whom seed was sown among the thorns; these are the ones who have heard the word, 19 but the worries of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things enter in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.

Luke 8:14+ “Those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no *firm* root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away.

And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns- The first seed can't even get in the soil.The second seed can't go down in the soil. As Phillips says "Thorny soil depicts the worldliness of some people. They too show initial promise, but no lasting results. Over them we can write the words no resistance.Thorny soil is infested with the emblem of the curse (Genesis 3:18). Life is

choked out of seed that falls there. The Lord described three kinds of thorns that destroy the seed: "the care of this world," "the deceitfulness of riches," and "the lusts of other things" (Matthew 13:22; Mark 4:19)."

> **Thorns** (173) see note above on **akantha**

This is the man who hears the word - Although they hear it, they do not "internalize" it into the soil of their heart. In this soil, the seed gets in, the seed goes down, but the seed does not have undisputed hold in the soil. There is a "rival crop" so to speak so there are two crops growing on the same soil. This pictures the person who never pulls the weeds, who never repents. Sadly there are many who make a profession that they believe but they have never repented of the "weeds" and in time their "belief" is choked out. Jesus was clear in Luke 13:3+ ""I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

And the worry of the world - This is the first thorn that competes with the seed of the Gospel and impedes its growth. **Worry of the world** strangles the Word from another world (i.e., from God)! The **world** Mt 13:39f, Mt 12:32) means the present age, the course of life as it is lived currently on this earth by those who do not know God and are still subjects of the kingdom of darkness and Satan the king of that kingdom.

Phillips on **worries of the world** - A thousand cares exist to occupy the mind of the poor. Worry is a daily ingredient of their lives. The Devil uses worry to focus our attention on this world. The gospel, which focuses attention on the next world, is often crowded out, despite its "exceeding great and precious promises," (2 Pe 1:4+) by preoccupation with the pressures of life. (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

> **Worry** (anxiety) (3308)(**merimna** from **merizo** = to divide or draw different directions - which is exactly what **anxiety** does to most of us!) refers to a **care** (the sole way it is translated in the KJV) or concern and so to care for someone or something. It is often used in a negative sense and thus is translated as **worry**. From the origin, one can see that **merimna** describes the state of "being pulled apart." Thus when circumstances are difficult, it is easy to let oneself be dominated by anxiety and worry.
>
> Some cross references on **worries** - Mt 6:25, Mt 6:31, Lk 12:29, Lk 21:34, Php 4:6, 1 Pe 5:7, Ps 39:6, Ps 127:2
>
> > The Etymology of **worry** is fascinating (especially the idea of "to strangle"!) and very relevant to the effect worry exerts on the Word - Middle English wirien (c. 1300), "to slay, kill or injure by biting and shaking the throat" (as a dog or wolf does), from Old English wyrgan "**to strangle**," from Proto-Germanic *wurgjan (source also of Middle Dutch worghen, Dutch worgen, Old High German wurgen, German würgen "to strangle," The "strangle" sense was obsolete in English after c. 1600; the figurative meaning "to annoy, bother, vex" is by c. 1400. Meaning "to cause mental distress or trouble" is attested from 1822; intransitive sense of "to feel anxiety or mental trouble" is attested by 1860. Related: Worried; worrier; worrying.
>
> **World** (age)(165) (**aion**) generally means an extended period of time and has various meanings depending on the context. In the present context **aion** refers to the "present evil **age** " (Gal 1:4+), to "the whole **world** (which) lies in the power of the evil one (SATAN)" (1Jn 5:19+), who is "the god of this **world** (aion)" (2Cor 4:4+).
>
> > Gilbrant paraphrases Trench's description of the moral/ethical meaning of **aion** "All of this—the fleeting mass of thoughts, the opinions, maxims, speculations, hope, impulses, aims, aspirations, which always circulate in the world—is included in the meaning of the term. It might be impossible to grasp it or define it accurately, but it is something which **forms a very real and effective power. It is the moral or amoral atmosphere which we inhale each moment of our life in order to inevitably exhale it again**. All this is included in **aiōn** (**See Synonyms of the New Testament,**). If one looks at the texts of the New Testament where aiōn occurs in this way, one will meet the characteristic features of the world or age represented by **aiōn**. Note that this depicts a **world** which is driven forward by the prince of the powers of the air (Ephesians 2:2+), the god of this age (2 Corinthians 4:4+); and spiritual forces are called the powers of this dark world (Ephesians 6:12+; cf. 1 Corinthians 2:6,8; and see 2 Peter 2:17+; Jude 1:13+). The present age cherishes its wise men (1 Corinthians 1:20) and its seducing wisdom (1 Corinthians 2:6). Many are blinded by this wisdom so they choose it rather than "the foolishness of preaching" (1 Corinthians 1:21). The anxieties accompanying this age, coupled with the seductive power of riches, can strangle a spiritual life (Matthew 13:22+; Mark 4:19+; 1 Timothy 6:17). The people of God can be seduced by this false splendor so they are attracted by the present world (2 Timothy 4:10+). But those belonging to the Lord must not be conformed to this world (Romans 12:2+). To stand in opposition to the world will always cost something because those who want to live godly will be persecuted (2 Timothy 3:12+). Believers have

been delivered from this present age, with its enticements and offsetting afflictions, through Christ's giving of himself in death (Galatians 1:4+).

Worry, wealth, and worldliness are all enemies of the gospel.

And the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word - The seduction which comes from the temptress named "Weath!" What does **wealth** do? It deceives. Mark this down as an axiomatic truth. Be careful when you begin to seek to possess wealth (aka idolatry!), for it won't be long before wealth possesses you! And it is a harsh "**taskmaster**." And remember that when a person is deceived, by definition they do not even know they are deceived! Watch out for wealth! Solomon was right that "When you set your eyes on it, it is gone. For **wealth** certainly makes itself wings, like an eagle that flies toward the heavens." (Pr 23:5, cf Pr 27:24, Pr 11:28, James 5:1-2+, Eccl 5:13, the antidote = Mt 6:19+) **Choke** is in the present tense indicating the choking effect of **worry** and **wealth** is continual.

John Broadus comments that the phrase "the **deceitfulness of riches** is a stronger expression than simply deceitful riches; it presents deceitfulness not merely as a quality of riches, but as here the prominent thought; comp. 'the uncertainty of riches' (1 Ti 6:17), 'newness of life' (Ro 6:14); also Heb. 3:13; 2 Th 2:10. **Riches** deceive men in many ways: as to the means of acquiring them, making things look honest that are not so; as to the reasons why we desire them, and the objects for which we intend to use them, etc. Some *professed* Christians imagine that they are so absorbed in the pursuit of gain, and so reluctant to give much at present, simply from a desire to be able to do great things hereafter; when the true reason is that they love wealth. And we must remember that riches often as grievously deceive and distract those who vainly seek, as those who obtain them. "They that desire to be rich" (1 Tim. 6:9+), may get the evil consequences without getting the wealth. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

John Chrysostom - "There is a way, if thou wilt, to check this evil growth, and to make the right use of our wealth. Therefore he said not 'the world,' but 'the care of the world'; nor 'riches,' but 'the deceitfulness of riches.' Let us not, then, blame the things, but the corrupt mind. For it is possible to be rich and not to be deceived; and to be in the world, and not to be choked with its cares."

John Phillips - **Wealth** can be as much a snare as poverty. Many people have seemed to say yes to Christ, only to lose sight of spiritual things when worldly advancement beckons. Perhaps a promised promotion at work cuts right across a dawning conviction that one should become a missionary. Or business booms at the cost of neglecting the gatherings of the Lord's people. When prosperity arrives, it brings the entanglements of luxury and ease. The gospel seed can be choked out by success. (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

> **Deceitfulness** (539)(**apate** from **apatao** = cheat, delude, deceive, beguile) describes that which gives a false impression, whether by appearance, statement or influence. It is spoken of anything which is **seducing** (a leading astray by persuasion or false promises), in this case wealth. **Apate** describes that which causes someone to have misleading or erroneous views concerning the truth.
>
> **Wealth** (riches) (4149)(**ploutos** from **pletho** = to fill) properly denotes abundance, plentitude, and literally is used to refer to material wealth or prosperity (abundance of earthly, temporal goods) which is the meaning in the parable of the seed and the soils (Mt 13:22, Mk 4:19, Lk 8:14 = Material riches are deceitful and choke out reception of the Word of God. Be careful all you wealthy readers! Contrast spiritual riches - Ep 3:8+) Indeed, think of the people who know whose whole lives glow with the glory of God for they are rich in spiritual possessions, albeit often poor in material possessions!
>
> > Some cross references on **riches** - Mk 4:19, 1 Ti 6:9, Jas 5:2, Mt 19:23, 1 T 6:7, Dt 8:13-14, Job 20:28, Ps 49:10, Pr 23:5, Eccl 2:18, Jer 17:11
>
> **Choke** (4846)(**sumpnigo** from **sun** = with + **pnigo** = to choke, strangle, "seizing by the throat") means to crowd together and thus to choke or suffocate (Mt 13:22, Mk 4:7, 19, Lk 8:14). **BDAG** has "to check the growth or well-being of something by pressure." Figuratively it means to crowd around, to press upon, almost to crush ("crowds were pressing against Him" = Lk 8:42, 12:1). **Friberg** on **sumpnigo** - literally, of weeds too thickly surrounding plants choke, cause to die; metaphorically, of things causing a message to be ineffective in a life crowd out, i.e. overwhelm, take over (Mk 4.19); exaggerated for effect, of a thronging crowd suffocate, almost crush, crowd in around (Lk 8.42) (Analytical Lexicon) **Sumpnigo** - 5x in 5v - Mt. 13:22; Mk. 4:7; Mk. 4:19; Lk. 8:14; Lk. 8:42. Not found in the Septuagint.

Luke 8:14+ adds a third point (pun intended - "thorn"), "**and pleasures of this life**." Mark 4:19 adds a third "thorn" **the desires for other things enter in choke the Word**. And as John Phillips explains **the desires for other things** "refers to **the pleasures of this life** (Luke 8:14+) Often pleasures that are legitimate in themselves take up time that should be devoted to the Lord's work. Or sinful pleasures allure and choke the seed. Some people amount to nothing for God because they refuse to give up some destructive, dominating habit that gives them temporary pleasure (CONTRAST MOSES - Heb 11:24-25+). The Lord Jesus warned that the **pleasures of this life** can strangle the seed; it has little chance in souls filled with such thorns. Pleasure-seekers may profess to be

saved, but their lives betray them. Their profession is not real because there is no evidence that the Word of God is bearing spiritual fruit in their lives!" (Ibid)

And it becomes unfruitful - An unfruitful Christian is not a Christian at all. Fruit is the evidence of the root. Spiritual fruit is the evidence that one is truly rooted in Christ (Col 2:7). There are some really life-like plants and fruit as I found out one day when I tried to bite down on a red "juicy looking" red apple!

Concern for spiritual things is crowded out by material things.

John Broadus on **unfruitful** - As fruit-bearing is the test, they are thus shown to have no real piety. Alas! how often men seem deeply stirred, by the word of the gospel, and perhaps resolve that they will give heed to the message, perhaps for a while seem diligently to do so, but worldly anxieties, especially about wealth, and worldly desires (Mark 4:19), and worldly pleasures (Luke 8:14), soon get complete possession of the mind, and all the seeming good effect is gone, leaving the soul a very thicket of thorns. Bruce: “It may be asked who has a chance of bringing forth fruit unto perfection, for what character is free from thorns? But the question is not, who is free from evil desires, or from temptation to inordinate affection, but what attitude you assume towards these.” (Matthew 13 Commentary)

Adrian Rogers - And why is it that so many people—members of this congregation and other congregations—are unfruitful? I’ll tell you why. They have never let go of this world with both hands and taken Jesus Christ with both hands. Have you done that? Is He Lord of all? Many of you are not fruitful, because you’ve never been saved—you have never been saved. The seed has gotten in; but the seed has not gotten an undisputed hold in your life, and you’ve never said, “Lord Jesus, you are Lord of all.” And, friend, if you’ve not made Him Lord of all, in my estimation, you are not saved. He cannot be half Lord. You cannot say, “There’s room in my heart for weeds, and there’s room in my heart for the seed.” No, dear friend, if you do not say, “Jesus Christ alone, Jesus Christ only, and Jesus Christ always,” I’m afraid that you’ve never met the Lord of glory. Nothing wrong with the seed; nothing wrong with the sower; the problem is with the soil. (The Parable of the Sower scroll to page 977)

> **Unfruitful** (175)(**akarpos** from **a** = without + **karpos** = fruit, produce) means barren, without fruit or unprofitable. **Akarpos** pictures a tree without fruit under the most favorable of circumstances. **Akarpos** -7x in 7v - Mt 13:22; Mk 4:19; 1Cor 14:14; Ep 5:11+ = "the unfruitful deeds of darkness" ; Titus 3:14; 2 Pet 1:8+ = " if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."; Jude 1:12

Prepared Soil

The farmer may be shoveling snow or enjoying the warmth of a winter fire right now, but he’s thinking ahead to spring planting. Already he’s anticipating those days when he turns over the soil. He’ll pull out rocks that have risen with the frost, spread the right fertilizers, and get the earth ready for the seed. He knows that the harder he prepares in the spring, the better his harvest will be.

Jesus used that kind of word picture in the parable of the sower. The seed is the Word of God, and the soil is our hearts. The “noble and good heart” (Lk. 8:15) receives the Word, retains it, and produces fruit. **How about our hearts**? Are they prepared to receive the seed of God’s Word? Or are there hindrances that keep it from growing and bearing fruit? Jesus identified three kinds of thorns that spring up and choke out the seed—”the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things” (Mk. 4:19).

If you’ve grown cold toward God’s Word, if it’s not firmly established in your life and producing fruit, it may be that you’re too concerned about this world with its riches and distractions. Tear out those thorns! How much fruit you’ll harvest depends on how well you prepare the soil. (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

It may not be some heinous deed
That chills our heart and chokes the seed;
It's often just a trifling toy
That grabs our eye and steals our joy.
—Gustafson

To bear good fruit, clear out the weeds of sin.

Weed Control

The cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things . . . choke the Word. —Mark 4:19

The Parrotfeather is an attractive aquatic plant that looks like a forest of small fir trees growing on top of the water. In the springtime

it produces a blanket of small, white flowers. But it's a noxious weed. It forms a dense mat of vegetation that covers the surface of lakes and ponds, crowding out native plants and destroying fish and wildlife habitat.

Recently I was hiking by a small lake in Washington State that was choked with Parrotfeather plants. It occurred to me that, like that weed, "the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful," as Jesus taught in Mark 4:13-20.

Jesus was talking about how unbelievers receive the gospel, but His words can apply to us as well. Sometimes when we read God's Word, our minds are taken up with troubles, worries, and fears. The pressure of things to be done today and concerns about tomorrow's decisions are "weeds" that can choke the Word and make it unprofitable.

To control the weeds, we must ask God to quiet our hearts so we can pay attention to Him (Psalm 46:10). When we turn our worries over to God, we'll be free to enjoy His presence and hear what He has to say. By: David H. Roper (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

The weeds will take over and choke out good fruit;
But you can control them—just follow this plan:
Make sure that the seed of God's Word has deep root,
And pull out the weeds just as soon as you can.
—Hess

To uproot the weeds of anxious care, get down on your knees.

Matthew 13:23 "And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

NET Matthew 13:23 But as for the seed sown on good soil, this is the person who hears the word and understands. He bears fruit, yielding a hundred, sixty, or thirty times what was sown."

GNT Matthew 13:23 δ π τ ν καλ ν γ ν σπαρ ς, ο τ ς στιν τ ν λ γον κο ων κα συνι ς, ς δ καρποφορ κα ποι μ ν κατ ν, δ ξ κοντα, δ τρι κοντα.

NLT Matthew 13:23 The seed that fell on good soil represents those who truly hear and understand God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!"

KJV Matthew 13:23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

ESV Matthew 13:23 As for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it. He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

NIV Matthew 13:23 But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown."

ASV Matthew 13:23 And he that was sown upon the good ground, this is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; who verily beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

CSB Matthew 13:23 But the one sown on the good ground-- this is one who hears and understands the word, who does bear fruit and yields: some 100, some 60, some 30 times what was sown."

NKJ Matthew 13:23 "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."

NRS Matthew 13:23 But as for what was sown on good soil, this is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty."

YLT Matthew 13:23 'And that sown on the good ground: this is he who is hearing the word, and is understanding, who indeed doth bear fruit, and doth make, some indeed a hundredfold, and some sixty, and some thirty.'

NAB Matthew 13:23 But the seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold."

NJB Matthew 13:23 And the seed sown in rich soil is someone who hears the word and understands it; this is the one who yields a harvest and produces now a hundredfold, now sixty, now thirty.'

GWN Matthew 13:23 But the seed planted on good ground is the person who hears and understands the word. This type produces crops. They produce one hundred, sixty, or thirty times as much as was planted."

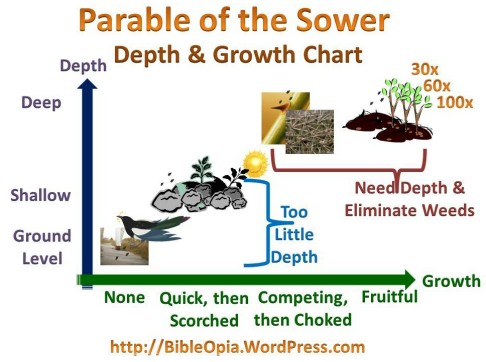
BBE Matthew 13:23 And the seed which was put in good earth, this is he who gives ear to the word, and gets the sense of it; who gives fruit, some a hundred, some sixty, some thirty times as much.

- **the one on whom seed was sown** - Mt 13:8 Mk 4:20 Lu 8:15
- **good** - Pr 1:5,6 2:2-6 Eze 18:31 36:26 Mk 10:15 Joh 1:11-13 8:47 10:26 Joh 10:27 17:7,8 Ac 16:14 17:11 2Th 2:10,13,14 Heb 4:2 8:10 Jas 1:21,22 1Pe 2:1,2 1Jn 5:20
- **indeed bears fruit** - Mt 3:8,10 12:33 Ps 1:1-3 92:13-15 Lu 6:43,44 13:9 Joh 15:1-8,16 Ga 5:22,23 Php 1:11 4:17 Col 1:6,10 Heb 6:7 13:15,16
- **some a hundredfold** - 2Co 8:1,2 9:10 1Th 4:1 2Pe 1:5-8 3:18
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

Mark 4:20+ "And those are the ones on whom seed was sown on the good soil; and they hear the word and accept it and bear fruit, thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold."

Luke 8:15+ "But the seed in the good soil, these are the ones who have heard the word in an honest and good heart, and hold it fast, and bear fruit with perseverance.



Schematic of Four Soils, Four Results

THE GOOD SOIL
THE SINCERE HEART

And the one on whom seed was sown on the good(kalos) **soil** (Mt 13:8+) - Jesus turns from the problem soils to the one productive soil! **Good** (**kalos**) **soil** describes a heart which is inherently excellent or intrinsically good, providing some special or superior benefit

In other things, a man must know in order to love;
in Christianity he must love in order to know.
-- Blaise Pascal
(cf Jn 14:21)

This is the man who hears (akouo) **the word and understands it** - The word **understands** is suniemi in the present tense (continually understands) and literally means to bring together. Jesus uses it figuratively meaning this man is able to "**piece together**" the "puzzle" of the Gospel (E.g., [1] you are a sinner, [2] you need a Savior, [3] you must repent and receive/believe Jesus. See the Romans Road to Salvation).

Understand (suniemi) is a key word in this chapter on the parables and is used in Matt. 13:13; Matt. 13:14; Matt. 13:15; Matt. 13:19; Matt. 13:23 and Matt. 13:51;

In place of understand Mark's version (Mk 4:20+) uses the verb **accept** which is paradechomai in the present tense indicating they continually **accept** the Word deliberately, willingly, favorably, readily. **Accept** is in the reflexive middle voice indicating they take the **Word** to themselves **personalizing** the Word of the Gospel. In essence this person "Puts out the welcome mat" for the Gospel.

> **Luke's** version says that these "have heard the word in an honest and good heart and hold it fast."**Hold fast** is **katecho** in the present tense and active voice (volitional choice, decision of our will) signifying that holding fast to the truth of the Gospel is to be the continual choice of one's will! Notice also that one's continually holding fast to the Word of the Gospel is evidence that God's Spirit is continually holding onto us. This "dual dynamic" emphasizes the mysterious juxtaposition of divine sovereignty and human responsibility, God's part, our part! We continually choose to **hold fast** to the Gospel because the Spirit continually enables us to make the choice to **hold fast** (see Php 2:13NLT+). Combining the three synoptic accounts, we learn that the **good soil** hears the good **word** of the Gospel, gladly **accepts** it and fully **understands** it.

Bob Utley writes "Bearing fruit is the evidence of genuine conversion and not just an emotional initial decision! Christianity is not one high moment but a life of discipleship."

Who indeed bears fruit - **Bears fruits** is in the present tense which describes true believers who bring forth fruit ("**good works**") continually in all manner of activity undertaken for the glory of the Father (cf Mt 5:16+, Jn 15:8), in the Name of the Son and in the energizing/enabling power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, upon Whom the believer is entirely dependent. Indeed, **good works** could be aptly termed "**God works**" and those are the only works that will endure throughout eternity! Luke 8:15+ adds that this these "**bear fruit with perseverance**." Thus **perseverance** is the condition in which they are enabled by the Holy Spirit to **bear fruit**, this fruit bearing serving to prove that they are genuine saints! Stated another way, a saint without fruit ain't! That is to say a person who professes to be a saint, but never bears fruit "ain't a saint," bad grammar, but accurate theology! **Bear fruit with perseverance** also implies that bearing genuine spiritual fruit will take **perseverance**. This is especially true when one considers the pressures that Jesus had just described which adverse effect that affect growth in the soils/hearts. Clearly not only does bearing fruit take time, but it also necessitates (Holy Spirit enabled) steadfast endurance to resist the distracting, destructive pressures Jesus described!

> **Bears fruit** (2592) (**karpophoreo**) from **karpos** = fruit, produce + **phero** = bear, bring) literally means to bring forth fruit, to be fertile, productive. It is used figuratively to refer to bringing forth deeds or works (fruit), which depending on the context can be good fruit or bad fruit, in this case of course describing good fruit.

Wiersbe concludes that "**This soil alone is fruitful**. It illustrates the individual who hears the Word, understands it, receives it within, **is truly saved**, **and proves it by patiently producing fruit** (see 1 Th. 2:13; 1 Pe 1:22-25). Not everybody produces the same amount of fruit (Mt. 13:8), but all true believers will produce **some fruit** as evidence of spiritual life. That fruit may include winning others to Christ (Ro 1:13), money given to God's work (Ro 15:25-28), good works (Col 1:10), Christian character (Gal 5:22-23), and praise to the Lord (Heb. 13:15). (Bible Exposition Commentary) (Bolding added) (See What is the key to bearing fruit as a Christian? | GotQuestions.org)

And brings forth some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty - **Brings forth** (poieo) is in the present tense which describes this saint as continually producing fruit. Luke adds that these "**bear fruit with perseverance**." Thus **perseverance** is the condition in which we are enabled by the Holy Spirit to **bear fruit**, this fruit bearing serving to prove that we are genuine saints! Stated another way, a *saint* without fruit *ain't*! That is to say, a person who professes to be a saint, but never bears fruit "ain't a saint," bad grammar, but accurate theology!

> **THOUGHT** - Those figures represent yields of 3,000, 6,000, and 10,000 percent! Usually the yields were less than eightfold, and a crop that produced tenfold would have been extraordinary. But here God speaks of supernatural fruit not natural fruit. This should get us excited, for this fruit is not necessarily harvested on this earth, but it will be harvested in Heaven and it will remain or endure eternally (cf Jn 15:16)! Mark it down beloved, when we sow the Gospel, it goes forth empowered by the Spirit of God and the results are supernatural, even "far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power (THE SPIRIT) that (WHO) works within us." (Eph 3:20+). What is the upshot? Sow the Gospel seed today while it is still called today, "night is coming when no one can work." (Jn 9:4) Redeem the Time for eternity, for the glory of the Lord!

MacArthur - Though believers are not saved by doing **good works** (Eph. 2:8-9+), those who are truly saved will give evidence of their new life in Christ through the fruit of obedience (Eph. 2:10+; cf. Matt. 7:16-20+; 2 Cor. 5:17+).

John the Baptist called for fruit bearing to validate the authenticity of one's repentance...

> "Therefore **bear fruit** (aorist imperative only possible as one depends on the Holy Spirit - which in fact is evidence that one has the Spirit indwelling!) in keeping with repentance." (Mt 3:8+)

Abundant fruit bearing is God's will for every believer for **Jesus** declared

> "My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. (Jn 15:8)

David Thompson - Some produced a yield of 30 times, some 60 times and some 100 times. Naturally, 100 times yield would be the ideal. But all these numbers are good. Now Palestinian interpreters say that a typical yield in Palestine would be fivefold or tenfold at most, so the numbers described here are remarkable. Herodotus, the Greek historian who lived about 450 B.C., claimed that some of the soil was so rich in Palestine that it had a 700 fold return. He was probably exaggerating a bit, but Jesus uses the top number of 100 times return.(Sermon)

Alan Carr asks "So, what kind of fruit does good soil produce?"

- Good works – Col. 1:10+, cf Col 1:6+
- Holiness and righteousness – Ro 6:22+; Phil. 1:11+
- Genuine spirituality – Gal. 5:22-23+
- A burden for souls – Ro 1:13+
- Praise and thanksgiving – Heb. 13:15+
- Sharing material goods – Ro 15:27-28+ (The Parable Of The Soils)

John Broadus - Even of those who truly understand and receive the word, some exhibit better results than others.**Gill**: "**The fruits of grace in believers are of the same quality, yet not of the same quantity**." That which yields a less abundant harvest is still called **good** ground, seeing that it does produce a real crop. So the servant who made a good use of but two talents was a**good and faithful servant.** (Mt 25:23.) Yet we should all desire and strive to be not merely of those who bring forth, but of those who bring forth a hundredfold. **Ambition is a worthy and noble thing, when it aims at eminent usefulness, rises above envy and jealousy, and subordinates everything to the glory of God**. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

John Phillips comments on the gradation of yields of spiritual fruit - A genuine conversion is evidenced by fruit. However, not all truly saved people realize their full potential in bearing fruit. Moderate development can be seen in some lives. They love the Lord, they love His people, and they love the Bible. They are genuinely saved and take the initial steps toward fruitfulness, yet certain areas of their lives somehow remain untouched by the Word of God and the Spirit of God. Marked development can be seen in other lives. They become the backbone of a local church. They are helpful, cooperative, and zealous members of the family of God. They teach in Sunday school, witness to others about Christ, give conscientiously to the Lord's work, maintain an interest in missions, and stand behind the local leadership. Their lives give evidence that they love the Lord and are seeking to grow in grace and increase in the knowledge of God. Marvelous development can be seen in a few lives. They go all the way with God. They are Spirit-filled, Christlike, soul winning Christians. The fruit of the Spirit-love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control-can be seen developing in their lives (Galatians 5:22-23). (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

Puritan Thomas Watson on Effectual Hearing - If you would hear the Word aright, be not only attentive, but retentive. Lay the Word up in your memories and hearts. "The seed on the good ground are they who, having heard the Word, keep it." The Greek word for "keep" signifies "to hold the Word fast, that it do not run from us." If the seed be not kept in the ground, but is presently washed away, it is sown to little purpose: so, if the Word preached be not kept in your memories and hearts, it is preached in vain. Many people have memories like leaky vessels — the Word goes out as fast as it comes in: how, then, can it profit? If a treasure be put into a chest and the chest not locked, it may easily be taken out: a bad memory is like a chest without a look, the devil can easily take out all the treasure. Labour to keep in memory the truths you hear: the things we esteem we are not so apt to forget.

Broadus makes a good point that - The illustration cannot touch at all points. It takes no account of the fact that the condition of the spiritual soil may be altered by divine grace—that the trampled ground can become soft, the rocky ground deep, and the thorns be rooted out. The inspired teachers in general go straight forward with the subject in hand, and towards the point in view, without pausing at every step to guard against misapprehension, or to introduce related truths; otherwise their discourse would gain no momentum, and exert no force. Other passages of Scripture will always furnish the means of preventing misapprehension or of completing the view. But, taken within the limits of its design, this parable is strikingly comprehensive. All those who hear the word to no real profit may without straining be referred to one of the three classes first given; and the fourth class comprehends various grades of actual fruitfulness. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

John MacArthur sums it up this way - All believers are called to be witnesses to the gospel of Jesus Christ (cf. Matt. 28:18-20). They are not to tamper with the seed, nor can they cultivate the soil. Rather, they are to faithfully cast the gospel message. As they do, they can expect the responses they receive to fall into one of these categories. Some will reject outright, due to hard-heartedness. Others will demonstrate a superficial interest, only to fall away when hardship comes. Still others will profess a love for Christ while simultaneously nurturing a deadly affection for the world. Finally, there will be some who genuinely receive the gospel.

They will humbly turn from their sins and wholeheartedly embrace the Lord Jesus as their Savior and King. The genuineness of their profession will be demonstrated by the abundant fruit of their transformed lives, as they walk in obedience and faith. On the one hand, knowing that many will reject the gospel enables believers to approach evangelism with proper expectations. On the other hand, knowing that some will truly believe ought to serve as a great encouragement. In evangelism, Christians are privileged to participate in an enterprise that cannot fail. Those whom God is sovereignly drawing to Himself will be saved. If He has prepared the soil of their hearts, the seed will invariably take root and bear abundant fruit.....What a comfort it is to know that soil preparation is God's work. He supplies both the seed of His Word and the power of His Spirit. He readies the soil, working in the hearts of those whom He is drawing to Himself. The task of the evangelist is simply this: to disseminate the seed through the faithful proclamation of the gospel. Having fulfilled that responsibility, believers can rest in the sovereignty of God, knowing that His Word will bear fruit in the hearts and lives of those whom He has called. (MNTC-Mk)

ILLUSTRATION OF DIFFERENT SOILS - The popular preacher, Chuck Swindoll, tells of ministering at a family conference. There was a young couple there with several small children, and it was obvious that they had some serious problems in their marriage. But as the week progressed, Chuck watched this couple change as they sat under the teaching of God's Word. The husband seemed to hang on every word. The wife had her Bible open and followed carefully from passage to passage. On the last day, they both came up to Chuck and said, "We want you to know that this week has been a 180 degree turn around experience for us. When we came, we were ready to separate. We're going back now stronger than we have ever been in our marriage."That's tremendous! But the sad thing, Chuck said, is that at the same conference with the same speakers, the same truths, and the same surroundings, another man was turned off. He wasn't open to God's Word. He attended the first few sessions, but his guilt became so great and his conviction so deep that he went home. His family left hurting, perhaps even more so than when they came. What was the difference between those two men at the same conference? The difference was the condition of the soil of their hearts.

Prepared Soil

Read: Luke 8:4-15

The ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit. — Luke 8:15

The farmer may be shoveling snow or enjoying the warmth of a winter fire right now, but he's thinking ahead to spring planting. Already he's anticipating those days when he turns over the soil. He'll pull out rocks that have risen with the frost, spread the right fertilizers, and get the earth ready for the seed. He knows that the harder he prepares in the spring, the better his harvest will be.

Jesus used that kind of word picture in the parable of the sower. The seed is the Word of God, and the soil is our hearts. The "noble and good heart" (Lk. 8:15) receives the Word, retains it, and produces fruit.

How about our hearts? Are they prepared to receive the seed of God's Word? Or are there hindrances that keep it from growing and bearing fruit? Jesus identified three kinds of thorns that spring up and choke out the seed—"the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things" (Mk. 4:19).

If you've grown cold toward God's Word, if it's not firmly established in your life and producing fruit, it may be that you're too concerned about this world with its riches and distractions. Tear out those thorns! How much fruit you'll harvest depends on how well you prepare the soil. (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

It may not be some heinous deed
That chills our heart and chokes the seed;
It's often just a trifling toy
That grabs our eye and steals our joy.
—Gustafson

To bear good fruit, clear out the weeds of sin.

Son Followers

The seed on good soil stands for those with a noble and good heart, who hear the word, retain it, and by persevering produce a crop.Luke 8:15

Today's Scripture & Insight:Luke 8:11–15

Sunflowers sprout in a carefree manner all over the world. Pollinated by bees, the plants spring up on the sides of highways, under

bird feeders, and across fields, meadows, and prairies. To produce a harvest, however, sunflowers need good soil. Well-drained, slightly acidic, nutrient-rich soil "with organic matter or composted," says the Farmer's Almanac, finally produces tasty sunflower seeds, pure oil, and also a livelihood for hard-working sunflower growers.

We also need "good soil" for spiritual growth (Luke 8:15). As Jesus taught in His parable of the farmer scattering seed, God's Word can sprout even in rocky or thorny soil (see vv. 6–7). It only thrives, however, in the soil of "honest, good-hearted people who hear God's word, cling to it, and patiently produce a huge harvest" (v. 15 nlt).

Young sunflowers are just as patient in their growth. Following the sun's movement throughout the day, they turn sunward daily in a process called heliotropism. Mature sunflowers are just as deliberate. They turn eastward permanently, warming the face of the flower and increasing visits from pollinator bees. This in turn produces a greater harvest.

As with those who care for sunflowers, we can provide a rich medium for God's Word to grow by clinging to is Word and following after His Son—developing honesty and a good heart for God's Word to mature us. It's a daily process. May we follow the Son and grow. By: Patricia Raybon (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

What's the condition of your spiritual soil? Rocky, thorny, or rich in spiritual "nutrients"? Why? When you follow the Son daily, how does this practice impact your honesty and heart?

What Kind Of Soil Are You?

Those who [hear] the Word with a noble and good heart keep it and bear fruit. — Luke 8:15

Today's Scripture: Luke 8:4-15

A new resident at the drug rehabilitation center where I worked was given the task of planting runner-bean seeds. With no experience growing vegetables, Jim quickly became bored waiting for the seeds to sprout.

After weeks of seeing nothing happen, Jim finally noticed signs of life coming up. Before long, he had to put poles in the ground for the beans to climb. One day Jim ran excitedly into the kitchen with some freshly picked beans for dinner. "Wow! All this from tiny seeds!" he exclaimed. "I've sure learned a lot!"

As I talked with Jim, it became clear that he learned more than how plants grow. He gained a new insight: If we willingly listen to God in His Word and do what's right for the right reasons and for the right length of time, our lives will be fruitful.

In Luke 8, Jesus used a parable to teach that the seed of the Word of God will produce a harvest in good soil. But the seed is productive only if the soil is receptive.

People with receptive hearts hear God's Word, obey it, and bear fruit. Others, however, have resistant hearts that fall prey to the devil, do not allow the seed to take root, or are overgrown with the cares and temptations of life.

God's Word is good seed. Is your heart good soil? —JEY (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Lord, I would be soil in which You can plant
Your Word with its promise of fruit;
I want to be open to You every day,
So what You have planted takes root.
—Hess

To be spiritually fruitful, plant God's Word in your heart.

Gardening Tips

These are the ones sown on good ground, those who hear the Word, accept it, and bear fruit. —Mark 4:20

Today's Scripture: Mark 4:1-9

I picked up a gardening book the other day and got some good advice: Take care of the soil, and don't worry about the plants. If the soil is good, the seed will take root and grow."

In the parable of the sower in Mark 4, Jesus spoke of the importance of "good ground" (or good soil). He defined good soil as

referring to those who “hear” God’s Word, “accept it,” and “bear fruit” (v.20). If we keep our heart soft and receptive, God’s Word will take root, grow, and produce fruit.

In gardening, life is in the seed. Under the right conditions, it will grow until it reaches maturity and produces fruit. Similarly, if the seed of the Word is planted in the good soil of a receptive heart, it will grow until the character of Jesus is seen.

For the Christian, the power of the spiritual life comes from the indwelling Holy Spirit. As we open our heart to the Word with an eagerness to obey it, the Spirit causes us to grow and bear fruit (Galatians 5:22-23).

We can’t make ourselves grow, any more than we can force growth from the seeds in our gardens. But we can tend the soil, keeping our hearts soft, receptive, and obedient to God’s Word. Then we will yield the fruit of righteousness.

What kind of soil are you? By: David H. Roper (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Lord, I would be soil in which You can plant
Your Word with its promise of fruit;
I want to be open to You every day,
So what You have planted takes root.
—Hess

A heart open to God is soil in which the seed of His Word can flourish.

Matthew 13:24 Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.

NET Matthew 13:24 He presented them with another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a person who sowed good seed in his field.

GNT Matthew 13:24 λλην παραβολ ν παρ θηκεν α το ς λ γων, μοι θη βασιλε α τ ν ο ραν ν νθρ π σπε ραντι καλ ν σπ ρμα ν τ γρ α το .

NLT Matthew 13:24 Here is another story Jesus told: "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a farmer who planted good seed in his field.

KJV Matthew 13:24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:

ESV Matthew 13:24 He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field,

NIV Matthew 13:24 Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.

ASV Matthew 13:24 Another parable set he before them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his field:

CSB Matthew 13:24 He presented another parable to them: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.

NKJ Matthew 13:24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;

NRS Matthew 13:24 He put before them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field;

YLT Matthew 13:24 Another simile he set before them, saying: 'The reign of the heavens was likened to a man sowing good seed in his field,

NAB Matthew 13:24 He proposed another parable to them. "The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field.

NJB Matthew 13:24 He put another parable before them, 'The kingdom of Heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field.

GWN Matthew 13:24 Jesus used another illustration. He said, "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who planted good seed in his field.

BBE Matthew 13:24 And he gave them another story, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like a man who put good seed in his field:

- **presented another parable**- Mt 21:33 Judges 14:12,13 Isa 28:10,13 Eze 17:2
- **The kingdom** - Mt 13:33,44,45,47 3:2 20:1 22:2 25:1 Mk 4:30 Lu 13:18,20
- **good seed** - Mt 13:19,37 4:23 Col 1:5 1Pe 1:23
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Tares - Probably Lolium temulentum

THE PARABLE OF
THE WHEAT AND THE WEEDS

This parable is a good follow-up to the parable of the soils where the first 3 soils give "lip service" to Jesus (at best) and only the fourth soil gives "life surrender" to Jesus. Now we see the kingdom of Heaven composed of two groups, false professors and true disciples.

Ligon Duncan gives an excellent introduction to this parable - In the Parable of the Sower, the disciples learned that Israel, and many of the Gentiles, would reject Jesus' claims for Himself to be the Messiah, and the good news that He brought, thus correcting His expectations about the kingdom, because they thought that when the Messiah set up his kingdom, all of Israel and all the Gentiles would come to Him. In the parable of the tares, the disciples learn that the kingdom itself will be mixed in character, thus correcting their expectation that the kingdom would be perfectly pure, and would involve a righteous rule over all the unrighteous of the world. They had apparently taken Jeremiah 31, verses 31 through 34, very seriously. They expected the law of God to be written on the hearts of all of those who were involved in the kingdom of heaven. They expected all of those involved in the kingdom to know the Lord from the greatest to the least, and they believed, with John the Baptist, that when the Lord came He was going to lay the axe to the root of the tree. He was going to bring judgment to the unrighteous in the land, and set up a righteous kingdom. And, consequently, they needed to be corrected in what the kingdom of heaven would be like in this experience between two ages: the coming of Christ the first time and the coming of Christ the second time. And so, the parable of the tares is designed to show them that in Christ's kingdom, the sons of the kingdom and the sons of the evil one are going to exist side by side for a long time. And so, they must wait patiently and give themselves to building up the wheat (that is the sons of the kingdom) and be careful in their judgment not to harm those who are believers. This parable is designed to remind the disciples that there will be judgment and condemnation for those who appear to be in the kingdom, but who are, in fact, not....This parable also indicates that there will be many who are identified with the kingdom of heaven who are not part of it. It is interesting to see the similarities between the parable of the sower and the parable of the tares. The parable of the sower talks about a sower, so does the parable of the tares. Both parables talk about a field. They both talk about a seed. They both talk about a crop yield and in both parables the evil one is mentioned. But there are also differences between the two parables. For one thing, in the parable of the sower all the seed is good. In the parable of the tares, of course, some of the seed is wheat and some of the seed is weed. In the parable of the sower, the focus is on the response to the different kinds of soils of the seed which has been planted by the sower. In the parable of the tares, the focus is on the command which the landowner gives to his servant. He tells his servant before the final judgment that they are to be patient, and then He gives the command to his servants - the angels at the final judgment are to reap and to separate the tares and the wheat. Notice also that the evil one is at work in both of these parables. (Tares Among the Wheat)

Jesus presented another parable to them, saying - Literally this reads "He (NAS adds the Name "Jesus") put another parable before them" (ESV) The identical introduction occurs again in Mt 13:31 (cf Mt 13:33). Now Jesus **presented** or set the table (paratithemi often used for serving a meal) so to speak with another common picture in this **agrarian** land. The word **another** is allos which means another of the same kind (and is emphasized by first word in the Greek). The indication is that they are the same kind as the parable of the sower. In the parable of the sower all the seed was good and the variable was the soil, but now the problem is not so much from the soil but from the character of the seed sown. Even though Jesus has been explaining the parable of the sower/soils to the disciples in the preceding section, the context makes it clear that the **them** is the Jewish crowd (Mt 13:34, 36), which of course includes His disciples.

The opening phrase **Jesus presented another parable** is resembles one used by Moses when giving the Law to Israel - "Moses came and called the elders of the people, and **set before** (Lxx = paratithemi) them all these words" (Ex 19:7). The patent was also used by Christian teachers in presenting their teaching to the Christian community. Thus Paul wrote "This command I **entrust** [paratithemi] to you" (1 Ti 1:18) and "the things which you have heard from me..**entrust** [paratithemi] these to faithful men." (2 Ti 2:2+).

Presented (3908)(**paratithemi** from **para** = beside + **tithemi** = place; see related noun paratheke) literally means place something beside, to set alongside or place before someone. In Mk 6:41 it is used of Jesus setting food before the people (cf Mk 8:6, Acts 16:34, 1 Cor 10:27), which is a great picture in the parable which was given as spiritual food for those who had an appetite for it! "Jerome carries out the image, comparing the different parables to different articles of food, suited to one guest or another." (Broadus) Figuratively the idea is to set some teaching before someone and so to expound or point out (Mt 13:24, Mt 13:31). In another interesting nuance **paratithemi** was a commercial technical term for giving something to someone in trust for safekeeping, not a bad thought when considering the Words Jesus was giving to the people. The only ones who would truly be able to keep His teachings "safe" (so to speak) would be those who had ears to hear, especially His disciples, who would later pass on these truths as they actively carried out their role as His apostles ("sent ones") proclaiming the Gospel of the Kingdom.

Parable (symbols) (3850) see preceding note on parabole

The kingdom (basileia) **of heaven** (note) **may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field** - **May be compared** is literally "was likened" which is in the past tense (aorist tense) for the **kingdom** had commenced when the King arrived on the scene (cf "the kingdom of heaven is at hand [eggizo in perfect tense = past completed action, ongoing result or impact]" in Mt 3:2+ and Mt 4:17+)! This second parable begins like the first parable in Mt 13:3+ which says "the sower went out to sow." The word **good** (**kalos**) means useful, sound, having desirable or positive qualities, especially suitable for sowing. Thus **Good seed** is seed that is good for planting and from which one could expect the growth of good fruit and as Jesus explains below is good people who spread globally the good news.

UBS Handbook - ***May be compared to*** translates a Semitic formula used to introduce a comparison. The full meaning is “As it is with the kingdom of God, so it is with (the situation described in the following story). In translation it is important to realize that Jesus is not comparing the rule of God to a man, but to the total situation that takes place when the man does such and such.” **William Barclay** translates it "What happens in the Kingdom of Heaven … is like what happened when a man sowed good seed in his field.” (Matthew 13 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible)

David Turner notes that "Jesus’ second parable utilizes the comparison formula “The kingdom of heaven is like….” This or a similar formula appears many times in Matthew. The formula is μοιώθη βασιλεία τ ν ο ραν ν. See also Mt 13:31, 33, 44, 45, 47, 52; 18:23; 20:1; 22:2; 25:1; cf. Mt 7:24, 26; 11:16; Carson 1985." (BECNT-Mt)

R C H Lenski on **a man who sowed** - This aorist (**sowed**), therefore, is not timeless but historical. The sowing which Jesus had made was actually followed by the devil’s sowing. Since the parable presents the kingdom, the likeness here used centers in the King, the man who sows (see Mt 13:19: the Sower is Christ), “the Son of man,” Mt 13:37, and all that happens to his sowing. (ISMG)

May be compared (3666)(**homoioo** from **homoios** = similar, of the same kind, of like disposition, in geometry similar [of figures]) means to make like (active sense). Most of the uses are in the passive sense meaning to become like something or someone (He 2:17). **Homoioo** is used to portray one thing with another in order to compare. To consider something to be like something else. To illustrate by comparison (Mt 7:24, 26, Lk 7:31, 13:20, Mk 4:30). To be like, to resemble, to be similar to (Acts 14:11). In the Gospels (and especially in Matthew) **homoioo** usually serves to introduce parables. Mt 6:8; Mt 7:24; Mt 7:26; Mt 11:16; Mt 13:24; Mt 18:23; Mt 22:2; Mt 25:1; Mk 4:30; Lk 7:31; Lk 13:18; Lk 13:20; Acts 14:11; Ro 9:29; Heb 2:17

Sowed (4687)(**speiro** from **spao** = draw out, pull) literally means to scatter (seed) and the opposite of reaping or gathering. Speiro is used figuratively to describe the sowing of the "seed" of the Word of God, the Gospel (= "the word of the kingdom" - Mt13:19, cp Mk 4:14 15, 16, 18), "the ideas and precepts that have been implanted like seed in their hearts, ie, received in their hearts (Mk 4:18)." (Thayer). Jesus used speiro repeatedly in His parables (Mt 13:3, 18, 24, 31)

Good (2570)(see note below on **kalos**) **Kalos** is a **key word** in Matthew 13 used 8 times - Matt. 13:8; Matt. 13:23; Matt. 13:24; Matt. 13:27; Matt. 13:37; Matt. 13:38; Matt. 13:45; Matt. 13:48

Seed (4690)(**sperma**) refers to seed sown as containing the germ of new fruit, and thus describes the**seed** of plants (Mt 13:24, 27, 32, 37, 38; Mk 4:31; 1Co 15:38; 2Co 9:10 Ge 1:11; Ge 47:23) **Sperma** speaks of "the source from which something is propagated." (BDAG) **Vine** says "the seed signifies the divine principle of life imparted," whether in a plant or in a believer. **Sperma** in Matthew - Matt. 13:24; Matt. 13:27; Matt. 13:32; Matt. 13:37; Matt. 13:38; Matt. 22:25.

Matthew 13:25 "But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away.

NET Matthew 13:25 But while everyone was sleeping, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away.

GNT Matthew 13:25 ν δ τ καθε δειν το ς νθρ πους λθεν α το χθρ ς κα π σπειρεν ζιζ νια ν μ σον το σ του κα π λθεν.

NLT Matthew 13:25 But that night as the workers slept, his enemy came and planted weeds among the wheat, then slipped away.

KJV Matthew 13:25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

ESV Matthew 13:25 but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away.

NIV Matthew 13:25 But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away.

ASV Matthew 13:25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away.

CSB Matthew 13:25 But while people were sleeping, his enemy came, sowed weeds among the wheat, and left.

NKJ Matthew 13:25 "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.

NRS Matthew 13:25 but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away.

YLT Matthew 13:25 and, while men are sleeping, his enemy came and sowed darnel in the midst of the wheat, and went away,

NAB Matthew 13:25 While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off.

NJB Matthew 13:25 While everybody was asleep his enemy came, sowed darnel all among the wheat, and made off.

GWN Matthew 13:25 But while people were asleep, his enemy planted weeds in the wheat field and went away.

BBE Matthew 13:25 But while men were sleeping, one who had hate for him came and put evil seeds among the grain, and went away.

- **men** - Mt 25:5 Isa 56:9,10 Ac 20:30,31 Ga 2:4 2Ti 4:3-5 Heb 12:15 2Pe 2:1 Rev 2:20
- **enemy** - Mt 13:39 2Co 11:13-15 1Pe 5:8 Rev 12:9 13:14
- **tares** - Mt 13:38
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Satan Sows while Saints Sleep

SOWING WHILE SLEEPERS SLEEP

But - Term on contrast. The sowing of good seed in Mt 13:24 offers the prospects of a good harvest, but now we see the introduction of a contrasting scenario.

While his men were sleeping - The men are not accused of negligence in **sleeping**, but simply that they were asleep which is a normal function. The enemy is crafty and surreptitious and evil to act when he cannot be seen. Of course while they **were sleeping** implies that he did this under cover of darkness.

Sleeping (2518)(**katheudo** from **katá** = an intensive + **heúdō** = to sleep) means literally to sleep, fall asleep or

be fast asleep, chiefly used of natural "sleep," and is found most frequently in the Gospels, especially Matthew and Luke.

His enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away - **His enemy** means one who is overtly hostile toward another, a hostility that is deep-seated. **Sowed** is not the same verb (speiro) used above but a different verb epispeiro (see below) meaning to sow in addition or to sow afterward, i.e., after the good seed was sown. The phrase **sowed...among** "in the Greek a strong expression, all through the midst of the wheat—making the separation particularly difficult." (Broadus) See note on **tares** below. **Tares** were the perfect counterfeit for an enemy to sow after the good seed. Why? The best counterfeit looks the most like the original! In fact 2 Cor 11:4 says Satan even has a "counterfeit Jesus", Paul warning of someone who came and preached "**another Jesus** whom we have not preached." The verb **went away** indicates that no one would have known what the enemy had done. He was gone "under cover of darkness" and completely escaped detection. Notice this parable contrasts with the parable of the sower/soils for there the enemy snatched away the good seed, but here the enemy sowed "weed seed" after the good seed was sown.

> **THOUGHT** - Be wary of anyone who comes to you door and preaches another Jesus, like cultists from the Jehovah's Witnesses or the Mormons, both of which are very active and very aggressive at evangelizing their "counterfeit Jesus." These are sons of the evil one who desires to deceive you with their claim "Why yes, I believe in Jesus just like you do." No they don't. Their Jesus is "another Jesus." Beware.

Adrian Rogers quipped that "Too many sermons are like lullaby's to put people to sleep rather than like revelries to wake them up....Therefore it is no great thing if his (the devil's) ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness whose end shall be according to their works." (2 Cor 11:15KJV) The devil has ministers. The devil has them in pulpits across America. And many people look at them and say there is a man of God and a minister of righteousness and he is an agent of the devil. That's what Paul says. And when you're looking for the devil never fail to look in the pulpits of America." (The Case of the Counterfeit Christian scroll down to page 1122)

Broadus on **sowing tares** - This practice of sowing noxious seeds in an enemy's wheat-field is said to be still found in the East, though Thomson has never been able to hear of an instance,—and is not unknown in other countries.

Henry Alford comments on seeding a field with bad seed - "The practice is not unknown even in England at present. Since the publication of the first edition of this commentary, a field belonging to the Editor, at Gaddesby in Leicestershire, was maliciously sown with charlock (sinapis arvensis) over the wheat. An action at law was brought by the tenant, and heavy damages obtained against the offender." (Note on Mt 13:25 Commentary)

MacArthur adds that "It was a common enough crime for the Romans to have had a specific law against it."

Gotquestions - In the agricultural society of Christ's time, many farmers depended on the quality of their crops. An enemy sowing weeds would have sabotaged a business.

> **Enemy** (hostile) (2190)(**echthros** from **échthos** = hatred, enmity; noun = **echthra** = enmity, hostility) is an adjective which pertains to manifesting hostility or being at enmity with another, where enmity is a deep seated animosity or hatred which may be open or concealed or a "deep-rooted hatred." In the active sense **echthros** means to be hateful, hostile toward, at enmity with or adversary of someone. In the passive sense **echthros** pertains to being subjected to hostility, to be hated or to be regarded as an enemy. **Echthros** is one who has the extreme negative attitude that is the opposite of love and friendship. An enemy is one that is antagonistic to another; especially seeking to injure, overthrow, or confound the opponent. Scripture often uses **echthros** as a noun describing "the adversary", Satan! Like father like son!
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> **Sowed** (1986)(**epispeiro** from **epi** = upon + **speiro** = to sow) means to sow afterward; sow in or among a previous sowing, to sow upon or on top of another crop.
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> **Tares** (2215)(**zizanion**) describes a troublesome weed in grainfields and is nearly indistinguishable from wheat until the ear appears. Zizanion most likely refers to "bearded darnel." This specie closely resembles wheat or rye, but its seeds can be harmful or even fatal if ingested. When the wheat is full grown it is easier to distinguish from darnel, hence it is usually separated carefully at harvest time. It is credited among the Jews with being degenerate wheat. The rabbis called it "bastard." **Wikipedia** adds "***Lolium temulentum***, typically known as **darnel**, **poison darnel**, **darnel ryegrass** or **cockle**...**Darnel** usually grows in the same production zones as wheat and was a serious weed of cultivation until modern sorting machinery enabled darnel seeds to be separated efficiently from seed wheat.[1] The similarity between these two plants is so great that in some regions, darnel is referred to as "false wheat".[2] It bears a close resemblance to wheat until the ear appears."

Broadus - The word rendered **tares** has been the subject of much discussion, but it is pretty generally agreed that it denotes darnel, a plant of the same family as wheat, and not readily distinguished from it in the early stages. Jerome, who lived in Palestine A. D. 385–420, states that it was quite difficult to distinguish them until the head of the wheat appeared. Robinson, journeying in Galilee in April, 1852, says, “Our path now lay through fields of wheat of the most luxuriant growth; finer than which I had not before seen in this or any other country. Among these splendid fields of grain are still found the tares spoken of in the New Testament. As described to me, they are not to be distinguished from the wheat until the ear appears. The seed resembles wheat in form; but is smaller and black. In Beirut poultry are fed upon this seed; and it is kept for sale for that purpose. When this is not separated from the wheat, bread made from the flour often causes dizziness to those who eat of it. All this corresponds with the lolium temulentum, or bearded darnel.” So the seeds of the tares were not merely useless for human food, but noxious, which fact (Plumptre) adds to the point of the parable. Thomson, 2., p. 395, says that often “the roots of the two plants are so intertwined that it is impossible to separate them without plucking up both.” ” The notion that the tares were a degenerate wheat, and by cultivation could be made to become wheat again, has been very pleasing to some minds, because it corresponds to the fact that wicked men are fallen and may be restored. Such a notion as to darnel appears in the Talmud, and is entertained by some persons in Palestine now; and also by some American wheat-growers as to what they call “cheat.” But (Thomson) it is not supported by adequate evidence, and the fancy may be abandoned without regret, for it would introduce an idea quite apart from the design of the parable.

M'Clintock - **Tares** (ζιζάνια; Vulg. zizania). There can be little doubt that the ζιζάνια of the parable (Matt. 13:25) denote the weed called “darnel” (**Lolium temulentum**), a widely distributed grass, and the only species of the order that has deleterious properties. The word used by the evangelist is an Oriental, and not a Greek, term (the native Greek word seems to be α ρα, Dioscor. ii, 91). It is the Arabic zawân, the Syriac zizána, and the zonîn (זוֹנִין) of the Talmud (Mishna, i, 109; see Buxtorf, Lex. Talm. s. v.). The derivation of the Arabic word from zân, “nausea,” is well suited to the character of the plant, the grains of which produce vomiting and purging, convulsions, and even death. Volney (Trav. ii, 306) experienced the ill effects of eating its seeds; and “the whole of the inmates of the Sheffield workhouse were attacked some years ago with symptoms supposed to be produced by their oatmeal having been accidentally adulterated with lolium” (Engl. Cyclop. s. v. “Lolium”). The darnel before it comes into ear is very similar in appearance to wheat; hence the command that the zizania should be left to the harvest, lest while men plucked up the tares “they should root up also the wheat with them.” Prof. Stanley, however (Sinai and Palest. p. 426), speaks of women and children picking out from the wheat in the cornfields of Samaria the tall green stalks, still called by the Arabs zuwân. “These stalks,” he continues, “if sown designedly throughout the fields, would be inseparable from the wheat, from which, even when growing naturally and by chance, they are at first sight hardly distinguishable.” See also Thomson (Land and Book, ii, 111): “The grain is just in the proper stage to illustrate the parable. In those parts where the grain has headed out, the tares have done the same, and then a child cannot mistake them for wheat or barley; but where both are less developed, the closest scrutiny will often fail to detect them. Even the farmers, who in this country generally weed their fields, do not attempt to separate the one from the other.” The grain-growers in Palestine believe that the zuwân is merely a degenerate wheat; that in wet seasons the wheat turns to tares. Dr. Thomson asserts that this is their fixed opinion. It is curious to observe the retention of the fallacy through many ages. “Wheat and zunin,” says Lightfoot (Hor. Heb. on Matt. 13:25), quoting from the Talmud, “are not seeds of different kinds.” See also Buxtorf (Lex. Talm. s. v. זונין): “Zizania, species tritici degeneris, sic dicti, quod scortando cum bono tritico, in pejorem naturam degenerat.” The Roman writers (comp. “Infelix lolium,” Virgil, Georg. i, 154) appear to have entertained a similar opinion with respect to some of the cereals. Thus Pliny (Hist. Nat. xviii, 17), borrowing probably from Theophrastus, asserts that “barley will degenerate into the oat.” The notion that the zizania of the parable are merely diseased or degenerate wheat has been defended by Brederod (see his letter to Schultetus in Exercit. Evang. ii, 65), and strangely adopted by Trench, who (Notes on the Parables, p. 91, 4th ed.) regards the distinction of these two plants to be “a falsely assumed fact.” If the zizania of the parable denote the darnel, and there cannot be any reasonable doubt about it, the plants are certainly distinct, and the L. temulentum has as much right to specific distinction as any other kind of grass.—Smith. On the route from Beirût to Akka (1852), Dr. Robinson describes fields of wheat “of the most luxuriant growth, finer than which I had not before seen in this or any other country. Among these splendid fields of grain are still found the tares spoken of in the New Test. As described to me, they are not to be distinguished from the wheat until the ear appears. The seed resembles wheat in form, but is smaller and black. In Beirût, poultry are fed upon

this seed, and it is kept for sale for that purpose. When not separated from the wheat, bread made from the flour often causes dizziness to those who eat of it" (Bibl. Res. iii, 55). The bearded darnel has the bad reputation of yielding the only deleterious grain among all the countless grasses. We are not aware that any injurious quality has been detected in the seeds of its own congeners, Lolium urvense, L. perenne, the rye-grasses so familiar to British husbandry; but if mixed with bread, L. temulentum occasions giddiness, nausea, difficulty of articulation, and other symptoms ranging from intoxication to paralysis, and instances are on record where mortification of the extremities, or even death, has ensued (see Burnett, Plantæ Utiliores, vol. iii). Hence the French have named it ivraie, or "tipsy-grass," a word from which the English have dropped the first syllable, and bestowed it on those unoffending "ray" or "rye grasses," by which the darnel is represented in our hay-fields. Thus understood, "how well do these 'tares' represent those who make a false profession; who appear among God's people; who draw near with their mouth, and honor God with their lips, but their heart is far from him (Isa. 29:13; Matt. 15:8; Mark 7:6)! Both grow together, and at first may seem alike. Man cannot accurately distinguish between the true and the false; but at the great harvestday the Lord will separate them. He will gather the wheat into his garner, while the tares shall be consumed" (Balfour, Bot. and Relig. p. 251).—Fairbairn. See Kitto, Pict. Bible, ad loc.; Hackett, Illustr. of Script. p. 130; Calcott [Lady], Script. Herbal, p. 475 sq.; Tristram, Nat. Hist. of the Bible, p. 486; Bochelius, De Zizaniis in Eccles. Dei Disseminatis (Arg. 1661). (Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature)

Related Resources:

- American Tract Society Tares
- Easton's Bible Dictionary Tares
- Fausset Bible Dictionary Tares
- Holman Bible Dictionary Tares
- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Tares
- Hastings' Dictionary of the NT Tares
- Hawker's Poor Man's Dictionary Tares
- Smith Bible Dictionary Tares
- Vines' Expository Dictionary Tares
- Whyte's Bible Characters The man which sowed good seed in his field but his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat
- Wilson's Bible Types Tares
- Watson's Theological Dictionary Tare
- International Standard Bible Encyclopedia Tares
- Kitto Biblical Cyclopedia Tares
- McClintock and Strong's Bible Encyclopedia Tares

Matthew 13:26 "But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also.

- Mk 4:26-29
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Heads of Wheat and Weed

Notice that Mk 4:26-29 is listed as a cross reference (from Treasury of Scriptural Knowledge), and while they may be some similarities, these are distinct, different parables with different primary teachings.

But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also- The fruit of wheat is distinguishable from the weed but only when the wheat shows **grain**. Notice how this parable in some ways parallels the parable of the soils, for it was only the fourth soil, genuine believers, who "**sprouted and bore grain.**" In other words, the supernatural fruit they bore was evidence that they now had a supernatural Source, the Spirit of Christ, living inside of their mortal bodies. **Became evident** means the "fruit" of the wheat (believers) and the weed (non-believers) was now obvious.

Here we see the similarity with the parable of the sower in which Jesus taught that there will be a mixed response to the Gospel seed, while the parable of the tares reminds us that the kingdom of Heaven will be a mixed constituency, so to speak. In other words, there will be no perfectly pure and righteous expression of the kingdom of God on earth until the Son of Man returns.

Instead, there will be wheat and tares side by side.

> **THOUGHT** - Given that it will take some time to see the character/quality of the fruit, it is clear that some works of non-believers which now have the appearance of "good works" will in the final analysis be shown to be what they really are - "rotten fruit!" Woe! The point is that appearances can be deceiving and only time will allow distinction between the evil from the good!
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> **Sprouted** (985)(**blastano** from **blastos** = germ) means to germinate, to put forth. Transitively, it describes the soil producing or yielding (James 5:18+, cf Lxx - Ge 1:11, Nu 17:8). Intransitively, it is used to describe the beginning of growth (plants, trees) and thus means to spring up, put forth (leaves), bud, sprout. Only 4x in NT - Matt. 13:26; Mk. 4:27+; Heb. 9:4+; Jas. 5:18+. Septuagint uses - Ge 1:11 = "Let the earth sprout vegetation"; Nu 17:8 twice = "the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi had **sprouted** and put forth buds and produced blossoms, and it **bore** ripe almonds."; Jdg. 16:22 = "hair of his head**began** to **grow**"; 2 Sa 23:5 = "will He not indeed **make** it **grow**"; Eccl. 2:6 = "**growing** trees"; Isa. 27:6; Joel 2:22+
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> > **Gilbrant** comments that **blastano** speaks of "the (HUMAN) life to which the news of the kingdom of God has come. The life has allowed the message to "germinate" and now responds appropriately by bursting forth and producing fruit “worthy of repentance,” (Mt 3:8, Lk 3:8) despite the obstacles and attempts of the enemy to thwart such growth." (Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary)
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> **Tares** (2215) see zizanion
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> **Became evident** (5316)(**phaino**) means to bring to light, to cause to appear. It is interesting that this same verb is used to describe Jesus in John 1:5 ("The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend [OVERCOME] it.", cf Rev 1:16) and Jesus' disciples in Php 2:15 (" blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you **appear** [SHINE] as lights in the world"). In 2 Pe 1:19 it describes "the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp **shining** in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts."

Matthew 13:27 “The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’

- **The slaves of the landowner** - 1Co 3:5-9 12:28,29 16:10 2Co 5:18-20 6:1,4 Eph 4:11,12
- whence - Ro 16:17 1Co 1:11-13 15:12-34 Ga 3:1-3 Jas 3:15,16 4:4
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares (Mt 13:38+)**?** - The NLT has "The farmer's workers went to him and said, 'Sir, the field where you planted that good seed is full of weeds! Where did they come from?" This is an picturesque paraphrase but the literal Greek does not actually state that the field was "full of weeds." Nevertheless, it was evident to the the slaves knew the master had sown good seed and yet now there were weeds mixed with the wheat

> **Slaves** (1401)(**doulos** from **deo** = to bind) was an individual bound to another in servitude and conveys the idea of the slave's close, binding ties with his master, belonging to him, obligated to and desiring to do his will and in a permanent relation of servitude. In sum, the will of the **doulos** is consumed in the will of the master.
>
> **Landowner** (3617)(**oikodespotes** from **oikos** = house + **despotes** = lord, master) means the master of the house, the head of a family. It denotes one who is empowered to rule over a household. Also in Mt 13:52.
>
> **Sir** (2962) (**kurios** from **kuros** = might or power, related to kuroo = to give authority) primarily means the possessor, owner, master, the supreme one, one who is sovereign (used this way of Roman emperors - Act 25:26) and possesses absolute authority, absolute ownership and uncontested power. Kurios is used of the one to whom a person or thing belonged, over which he has the power of deciding, the one who is the master or disposer of a thing.
>
> **Tares** (2215) see zizanion

Matthew 13:28 “And he said to them, ‘An enemy has done this!’ The slaves said to him, ‘Do you want us, then, to go and

gather them up?'

- Wilt - Lu 9:49-54 1Co 5:3-7 2Co 2:6-11 1Th 5:14 Jude 1:22,23
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And he said to them, 'An enemy (Mt 13:39+) **has done this!'** - And we learn later that the **enemy** is Satan.

> **Enemy** (hostile) (2190) see preceding note on echthros

The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?' - The slaves thought they had the solution. They made the false assumption that they could discern the real from the counterfeit. They thought they had the skill necessary to remove the weeds without harming the wheat. Their heart was right, but their reasoning was wrong as was their method. The Master had another plan, a "master plan" if you will! v They needed to hear and heed the Master's voice, as do all His disciples.

> **Gather up** (4816) see sullego

Ian Paisley - The Work of the Devil "He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?" Matthew 13:28

The Sowing of the Tares Was Devilish Work

> The Lord Jesus in His interpretation of the parable stated plainly "The enemy which sowed them is the devil" (verse 39). Satan's aim is to produce a race of human beings activated by a hatred of God and all that God stands for. The Lord Jesus tells us that the tares are "the children of the wicked one".

The Sowing of the Tares Was Devious Work

> It was not done openly but with the serpent's cunning of the devil. It was when light was extinguished and men slept that the sowing took place.

The Sowing of the Tares Was Deceptive Work

> While growing, the tares can hardly be distinguished from the pure wheat. It is only as the tares come to full growth their ears are longer than wheat, and their grains almost black and very poisonous.

The Sowing of the Tares Was Defeated Work

> The sowing of the deceptive, devious, devilish tares was defeated. In the time of harvest the clear cut distinction is so evident that the tares can be separated from the wheat and then burned with fire. In contrast the good wheat is barned (see Matthew 13:30). (from A Text A Day Keeps the Devil Away)

Matthew 13:29 "But he *said, 'No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them.

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But he said, 'No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them - The roots of **tares** would also wrap around the roots of wheat, making it difficult to separate one from the other. In addition, some of the **good seed** would not mature as quickly and so the danger would be that in pulling up the weeds, some of the good crop that had not yet matured would be mistaken for tares becaus e there was no mature grain to allow distinction.

> **Gathering up** (4816) see sullego

> **Tares** (2215) see zizanion

Hindson - The implication seems to be that too much criticism of people's genuineness of faith may damage the saved before the lost are exposed.

MacArthur points out that "Every time the church has presumed to do that it has produced an ungodly bloodbath. When the fourth-century Roman emperor **Constantine** required every person to make a profession of faith in Christ on pain of death, he succeeded in killing many true believers who refused to submit to his spurious brand of Christianity. During the **Crusades of the Middle Ages**, unbelievable brutality was committed against non-Christians, especially Muslims and Jews, in the name of the Prince of Peace. During the **inquisitions** in reaction to the **Protestant Reformation**, countless thousands of Christians who did not submit to the

dogma and authority of Roman Catholicism were imprisoned, tortured, and executed.....In the present age, believers are not God's instruments of judgment and destruction but of truth and grace. Toward unbelievers we are not to have hearts of condemnation but of compassion. The church is called to preach and teach against sin and all unrighteousness, but, in doing that, its purpose is not to judge but to win souls, not to punish but to convert sons of the evil one into sons of the kingdom." (MNTC-Mt)

Matthew 13:30 'Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

- **Allow both to grow together** - Mt 13:39 3:12 22:10-14 25:6-13,32 Mal 3:18 1Co 4:5
- **to the** - Mt 13:39-43 1Ti 5:24
- **First gather up the tares and bind them**- 1Sa 25:29
- **in bundles to burn** - Mt 25:41 Isa 27:10,11 Eze 15:4-7 Mal 4:1 Joh 15:6
- **but gather the wheat into my barn** - Mt 3:12 Lu 3:17
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Allow both to grow together - **Both** refers to the **good seed** and the **tares**.

Until the harvest - The word **until** is an expression of time and specifically means something will continue to happen up to a point and then it will not happen. In this context there will come a day when the good seed and the tares will no longer grow together, because they will one day be supernaturally, eternally separated as Jesus explains in Mt 13:39-43.

Grant Osborne - The idea of deferring judgment to God and to that final day has already been introduced in Mt 7:1–2 ("Do not judge") and will be emphasized in Jesus' final parable (Mt 25:31–46). (Teach the Text Commentary Series – Matthew)

And in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers- Notice that Jesus is the Master of the harvest as indicated by the phrase **I will say**.

> **Harvest** (2326) see below on therismos

First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up- Notice the order is **first** remove the bad, then gather the good. Jesus explains the meaning in Mt 13:36-43.

> **Gather up** (4816) see sullego

But - A striking, frightening term of contrast!

Hindson comments - Note that the tares are gathered, bound, and burned first, whereas the wheat is gathered into "my barn" (probably the millennial kingdom). The same progression of judgment then blessing follows in Revelation 19-22. (Ibid)

This passage recalls Mt 3:12 "His winnowing fork is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clear His threshing floor; and He will gather His wheat into the barn, but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

Gather the wheat into My barn - Notice again Jesus personalizes this referring to **My barn**!

This picture recalls the "threshing" and separation described in Psalm 1:4-6+

> The wicked are not so (NOT BLESSED), But they are like (term of comparison, specifically a simile) chaff which the wind drives away. 5 Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. 6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous (GOOD SEED), But the way of the wicked (TARES) will perish.

David Turner comments that "the developing dualism between landowner and enemy, good seed/wheat and weeds, and barn and fire already offers a glimpse of an ominous battle between the cosmic forces of good and evil." (See Matthew Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)

Matthew 13:31 He presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field;

- **He presented another parable** - Mt 13:24 Lu 19:11 20:9

- **The kingdom** - Mk 4:30-32 Lu 13:18,19
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passages:

> Lk 13:18-19+ So He was saying, “What is the kingdom of God like, and to what shall I compare it? 19 “It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and threw into his own garden; and it grew and became a tree, and THE BIRDS OF THE AIR NESTED IN ITS BRANCHES.”
>
> Mark 4:30-32+ And He said, “How shall we picture the kingdom of God, or by what parable shall we present it? 31 “It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the soil, though it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil, 32 yet when it is sown, it grows up and becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches; so that THE BIRDS OF THE AIR can NEST UNDER ITS SHADE.”

Tiny Mustard Seeds

This is the third consecutive parable that speaks of sowing seed (Mt 13:3–9, Mt 13:18–23. Mt 13:24-30) and one explanation follows (Mt 13:36–39). Notice that Mark's version begins the parable with two questions to draw in the audience - **How shall we picture the kingdom of God or by what parable shall we present it?**

It is also important as **John Phillips** says "Of the seven parables in the series in Mt 13:3-50, five are left unexplained. The parable of the mustard seed is the first of those that the Lord did not interpret. All seven parables relate to the mysteries of the kingdom of Heaven and all seven are in the process of fulfillment today, for this is the age when the kingdom is in its mystery or hidden form. The Old Testament prophets had a clear vision of the future millennial kingdom of Christ. They saw the kingdom in manifestation. They saw it as it will be one of these days: a glorious worldwide empire stretching from Jerusalem to earth's remotest bounds; a kingdom from which the curse will have been largely removed so that the lion will lie down with the lamb, the desert will blossom as the rose, and men will dwell together in peace. Those Old Testament prophets, however, never saw the kingdom in mystery. They never saw the gospel age.That is why Paul called the gospel "the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints" (Colossians 1:26+). And that is why the Lord Jesus referred His disciples to Psalm 78 when in explaining the mystery parables He said: "I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world" (Matthew 13:35)." (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

He presented another parable to them, saying - **Them** refers to the multitudes that had been attracted by this "Wonder Worker." And as explained, because they had rejected the plain truth, now Jesus had begun to speak only parabolic truth (see further explanation below). Recall the context includes Jesus parable of the soils which described only one in four soils as fruit producing. It would be natural for the disciples to be a bit disheartened by this parable wondering how the Kingdom of God could grow or even survive which such poor odds. Not to mention that this small group of 12 men would be facing a nation that had largely rejected Jesus' claims as the Messiah. And so it may have been that Jesus gave this parable to address the unspoken concern of His disciples.

> **Presented** (3908) (**paratithemi** from **para** = beside + **tithemi** = place) (see also study of related noun **paratheke**) literally means to place something beside, to set alongside or place before someone. In Mk 6:41 it is used of Jesus setting food before the people. Figuratively the idea is to set some teaching before someone and so to expound or point out (Mt 13:24, Mt 13:31). In another interesting nuance it was a commercial technical term for giving something to someone in trust for safekeeping, not a bad thought when considering the Words Jesus was giving to the people. The only ones would truly be able to keep it safe (so to speak) would be those who had ears to hear, like His disciples, who later would pass on these truths as they actively carried out their role as His apostles ("sent ones").
>
> **Parable** (symbols) (3850) see preceding note on **parabole.** See also interesting article by Bob Utley - Parables, How to Interpret

The kingdom (basileia) **of heaven** (note) **is like a mustard seed** - **Like** is a term of comparison, specifically known as a simile. **The kingdom of heaven is like** is a key phrase in Matthew 13 where is used 6 times to introduce a parable (Mt 13:31, 33, 44, 45, 47, 52). These parables 6 parables communicate the kingdom's hiddenness and seeming insignificance in the present, its future consummation at “the end of the age,” and its supreme value.

A **mustard seed** is a small round **seed** usually about 1-2 mm diameter and yellowish white to black. (see problem of mustard seed). Notice Jesus does not refer to a large number of seeds like in the picture above, but refers to a **seed** singular which gives a vivid contrast with the resulting large plant. The question is what does the **mustard seed** represent or did Jesus intend it to be

specific? Most writers don't comment on the identity of the mustard seed. Some however suggest that what is sown is God's people in the world which is a consideration, but what do God's people in turn possess that they sow but the Word. **William Lane** says the seed "is the Word of God proclaimed by Christ." (NICNT-Mk) That seems to be a reasonable interpretation or otherwise how would the Kingdom of God grow except by proclamation of the Gospel "seed"? One writer suggests the seed represents the sowing of service for God.

> Now place yourself in the sandals of a Jewish person in Jesus' day, a person who was suppressed by foreign rule, subjected to the oppressive Roman government. In this historical context, the Jews were looking for a Messiah Who would defeat the Romans and set up His Kingdom in their day. They expected Jesus liberate them by use of military force. Instead God sent Jesus to save the Jews from a far more deadly and oppressive enemy, their own sin! In this parable of the mustard seed, the Kingdom clearly was not one that would immediately destroy all the other plants and take over the garden (so to speak). To the contrary, it was a Kingdom that would grow and grow and grow over time and, yes, one day it would be the greatest Kingdom in the world. But that would take time and that is the picture that Jesus is depicting in this parable.
>
> As we have noted even His disciples to whom He explained the meaning of all the parables (Mk 4:34), failed to fully comprehend this critical truth. And so we see that even after His triumph over the greatest enemy, Death, and then attending a "40 day seminar" on the Kingdom of God (Acts 1:3+), the disciples were still asking Him “Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” (Acts 1:6+). One could paraphrase it "Is it time for the mustard plant to take over the garden?" They were still thinking He would defeat the Romans and set up His Kingdom He did not say "No" but answered "It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.” (Acts 1:7-8+) In other words, the King gave them their marching orders regarding their role to sow the Gospel seed which would result in the progressive growth of His Kingdom. And that is still the "job description" of every one of His disciples.
>
> > **THOUGHT** - Are you actively participating in the growth of His Kingdom - praying for souls, supporting missionaries, sowing the Gospel seed in your sphere of influence?

Like (same)(3664)(**homoios** from **homos** = one and the same) means *like* when referring to objects and *of the same status* when referring to individuals. It denotes a correspondence in feature, property or nature. Used repeatedly to introduce the parables - Matt. 11:16; Matt. 13:31; Matt. 13:33; Matt. 13:44; Matt. 13:45; Matt. 13:47; Matt. 13:52; Matt. 20:1; Matt. 22:39

Mustard (4615)(**sinapi**) refers to the mustard plant, an herb or shrub with extremely small pungent seeds. BDAG says "The precise species cannot be determined, and some may grow to a height of three or more meters." (some reports up to 15 feet tall!) Several writers feel the plant Jesus describes is **Sinapis nigra** (aka Brassica nigra) but we cannot be dogmatic and we really do not need to know in order to understand the main point of the parable. The expression ***kókkon sinápeōs*** (kókkon = grain), **a grain of mustard seed**, is a proverbial phrase meaning the least, the smallest particle (referring to "small" faith = Mt. 17:20; Lk 17:6+).

> **TDNT** - The parable of the grain of mustard seed also comes in different versions. The Marcan version stresses the fact of the contrast between the small seed and the plentiful growth, Lk. 13:18-19 pays more attention to the process, and Mt. 13:31-32 combines the two emphases. Behind the parable is the teaching that the kingdom is already present in Jesus but in hidden and inconspicuous form. This form should not be an offense but a ground of confidence, for in the concealment of God's present work lies the promise of his victorious rule. Having made a beginning, God will carry through his cause to the end.
>
> **Sinapi** - 5x three of the uses in in the related parable of the mustard seed = Mk. 4:31; Lk. 13:19 Mt. 13:31. Then twice to describe faith = Mt. 17:20+ = "if you have faith the size of a mustard seed" and Lk. 17:6+ = "If you had faith like a mustard seed". No uses in the Septuagint.
>
> **Mustard** has long been a widely-used herb throughout much of the world, and in modern times it has found additional commercial value in the manufacture of film. Amazingly, years ago it was discovered that cows whose feed was supplemented with mustard seed developed bones that had a superior quality for use in making the silver compounds used in photographic film. (MacArthur)

Seed (grain) (2848)(**kokkus**) refers to a seed or kernel of various plants. It was also used of the “berry” from which scarlet dye was prepared for clothing (see kokkinos). Jesus used kokkus figuratively to speaks of the Kingdom of heaven (begins small, grows big), of faith (small but real faith is a still able to "move mountains" metaphorically speaking), and as an allusion to His death, burial (grain) and resurrection (it bears much fruit - Jn 12:24). Paul compares the "sowing" of the mortal body (i.e., when

it dies - 1Cor 15:36) to sowing a bare grain, emphasizing that the "fruit" of that body (the resurrected body) is distinct and much better (1Cor 15:37, see 1Cor 15:42-44). All NT uses Matt. 13:31; Matt. 17:20; Mk. 4:31; Lk. 13:19; Lk. 17:6; Jn. 12:24; 1 Co. 15:37

John Phillips makes an interesting comment of how the disciples may have reacted to the kingdom beginning as a**mustard seed** - Imagine the astonishment of the disciples when they heard that! The Lord was about to describe the kingdom of God. They had visions of a global empire. They doubtless pictured an ivory palace, a majestic throne, a glittering court, ambassadors from earth's remotest bounds waiting in long lines for an audience, and an invincible army at the command of a powerful, magnificent king. They waited eagerly for the Lord's description of such a kingdom, one in which they would be high ministers of state. Then came the shock. "The kingdom of God," He said, "is like a grain of mustard seed." They must have stared blankly at Him in astonishment. A grain of mustard seed? Why, that was nothing! You could hardly see it; it was so small and insignificant. Ah! But it had life! It would grow! The point of the parable lies in the contrast between the size of the seed when it is sown and the size of the plant when it is grown. In each case, the Lord used hyperbole for emphasis. The kingdom of God seems small and insignificant in men's eyes. In the Lord's day, such was the people's contempt for it that they murdered its King. But when it is fully grown, when it reaches its full potential, they will be awed by it then! (Exploring the Gospel of Mark)

Which a man took and sowed in his field - Jesus continues the picture of the sower sowing seeds. In this case He does not tell us who the sower is or what the seed it, but in context the sower is surely first Jesus, then His first disciples and then His future disciples (you and I).

Related Resources
Kingdom of God/Heaven

- Expectation of the Jews Regarding the Kingdom of God
- What is the difference between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven?
- In depth comments on Kingdom of God in Lk 17:20-21
- In depth comments on the Kingdom of God in Luke 19:11
- What did Jesus mean when He said, “The kingdom of God is within you” (Luke 17:21, KJV)?
- Luke 17:20-37 The Present and Future Kingdom - Steven Cole
- Luke 17:20-21 The Invisible Kingdom of God, Part 1 - John MacArthur
- Luke 17:20-21 The Invisible Kingdom of God, Part 2 - John MacArthur
- The Theocratic Kingdom - Part 1 George N H Peters
- The Theocratic Kingdom - Part 2 George N H Peters
- The Theocratic Kingdom - Part 3 George N H Peters

Question: "What is the kingdom of God?" (from Gotquestions.org)

Answer: The kingdom of God is referenced often in the gospels (e.g., Mark 1:15; 10:15; 15:43; Luke 17:20) and other places in the New Testament (e.g., Acts 28:31; Romans 14:17; 1 Corinthians 15:50). The kingdom of God is synonymous with the kingdom of heaven. The concept of the kingdom of God takes on various shades of meaning in different passages of Scripture. Broadly speaking, the kingdom of God is the rule of an eternal, sovereign God over all the universe. Several passages of Scripture show that God is the undeniable Monarch of all creation: “The LORD has established his throne in heaven, and his kingdom rules over all” (Psalm 103:19). And, as King Nebuchadnezzar declared, “His kingdom is an eternal kingdom” (Daniel 4:3). Every authority that exists has been established by God (Romans 13:1). So, in one sense, the kingdom of God incorporates everything that is.

More narrowly, the kingdom of God is a spiritual rule over the hearts and lives of those who willingly submit to God’s authority. Those who defy God’s authority and refuse to submit to Him are not part of the kingdom of God; in contrast, those who acknowledge the lordship of Christ and gladly surrender to God’s rule in their hearts are part of the kingdom of God. In this sense, the kingdom of God is spiritual—Jesus said His kingdom was not of this world (John 18:36), and He preached that repentance is necessary to be a part of the kingdom of God (Matthew 4:17). That the kingdom of God can be equated with the sphere of salvation is evident in John 3:5–7, where Jesus says the kingdom of God must be entered into by being born again. See also 1 Corinthians 6:9.

There is another sense in which the kingdom of God is used in Scripture: the literal rule of Christ on the earth during the millennium. Daniel said that “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed” (Daniel 2:44; cf. Da 7:13–14), and many of the other prophets predicted the same thing (e.g., Obadiah 1:21; Habakkuk 2:14; Micah 4:2; Zechariah 14:9). Some theologians

refer to the future, open manifestation of the kingdom of God as the “kingdom of glory” and the present, hidden manifestation of the kingdom of God as the “kingdom of grace.” But both manifestations are connected; Christ has set up His spiritual reign in the church on earth, and He will one day set up His physical reign in Jerusalem.

The kingdom of God has several aspects. The Lord is the Sovereign of the universe, and so in that sense His kingdom is universal (1 Timothy 6:15). At the same time, the kingdom of God involves repentance and the new birth, as God rules in the hearts of His children in this world in preparation for the next. The work begun on earth will find its consummation in heaven (see Philippians 1:6). (What is the kingdom of God?)

For those who literally interpret Rev 20:1-10+ here is a proposed schematic...

KINGDOM OF GOD PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE
FROM BIBLE.ORG

Matthew 13:32 and this is smaller than all other seeds, but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that THE BIRDS OF THE AIR come and NEST IN ITS BRANCHES.”

- **this is smaller than all other seeds** - Ps 72:16-19 Isa 2:2-4 Eze 47:1-5 Da 2:34,35,44,45 Mic 4:1-3 Zec 4:10 8:20-23 14:7-10 Ac 1:15 21:20 *Gr: Ro 15:18,19 Rev 11:15
- **so that THE BIRDS OF THE AIR** - Eze 17:23,24 31:6 Da 4:12
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A LARGE MUSTARD PLANT

THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
SMALL BEGINNINGS - LARGE ENDING

And this is smaller than all other seeds (sperma) - Mark 4:31 says "**it is smaller than all the seeds that are upon the soil**" See note below regarding Biblical critics trying to show that Jesus was inaccurate and that the Scripture was notinerrant. Something small and insignificant becomes large and significant.

This parable is a good example of the fallacy of attaching insignificance to things that seem small!

MacArthur - Jesus’ referring to the mustard seed as being smaller than all other seeds has often been cited as proof that Scripture is errant—that Jesus was either fallible and made a mistake or that He accommodated His teaching to the ignorance of His hearers and knowingly distorted the truth. (See Matthew Commentary) (**ED**: See note below).

> **Smaller** (3396)(**mikros**) has the basic meaning "small, little, translated according to the context.

But - Contrast between small size of seed (**mikros**) and large size of the subsequent plant (**megas**). Although it might not look like it to His disciples at the moment, this parable shows that God is in sovereign control of history and the Kingdom of Heaven will be **consummated** in the future, **when the harvest has come** (Mk 4:29+). Matthew describes the consummation of the kingdom...

> “But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. 30“And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. 31 “And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other. (Mt 24:29-31)
>
> **‘It’s not how you start, it’s how you finish.’**

When it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants and becomes a tree - See depiction of a large mustard plant above. While Mark says it "becomes larger than all the garden plants and forms large branches" (Mk 4:32+), Matthew and Luke refer to it as a **tree** (Lk 13:19+) Critics have argued that Jesus was exaggerating regarding the size of the mustard plant, but as noted above it has been well-documented that some mustard plants grew as tall as 15 feet high! Imagine a plant up to 10-15 feet tall and 6 feet wide, all the result of this one tiny seed! Now that is one powerful seed! The point is that the growth to which Jesus refers is not natural, but unnatural, yea, even **supernatural**! So just as the mustard plant surpasses the other garden plants in size, so too will the **Kingdom of God** surpass the size of all earthly kingdoms of men (see note on prophecy in Daniel 2).

Bruce on **tree** - “Not in nature but in size; an excusable exaggeration in a popular discourse … it serves admirably to express the thought of a **growth beyond expectation**. Who would expect so tiny a seed to produce such a large herb, a monster in the garden?”

> **Grown** (837)(**auxano**; Eng = augment, auxiliary) means to grow or cause to increase. Notice that growth presupposes the germ of life in the seed put there by God. A dried splinter will not grow into a tree like a seed. Surely this is the glorious Gospel, which has the inherent power (dunamis) of God (Ro 1:16+) Zodhiates adds "The verb auxánō presupposes the God-given potential possessed by a seed or sperm. For all their scientific ingenuity, people cannot create the tiniest seeds because they cannot infuse life (zōḗ). In one sense, God has restricted humans to lifeless inventions."
>
> **Albert Barnes** has an interesting note - The plant here described was very different from that which is known among us. It was several years before it bore fruit and became properly a tree. Mustard, with us, is an annual plant: it is always small, and is properly an herb. The Hebrew writers speak of the mustard-tree as one on which they could climb, as on a fig-tree. Its size was much owing to the climate. All plants of that nature grow much larger in a warm climate, like that of Palestine, than in colder regions....“*I have seen*,” says Dr. Thomson, “*this plant on the rich plain of Akkar as tall as the horse and his rider....It may have been perennial, and have grown to a considerable tree; and there are traditions in the country of such so large that a man could climb into them; and after having seen red pepper bushes grow on year after year, into tall shrubs, and the castor-bean line the brooks about Damascus like the willows and the poplars, I can readily credit the existence of mustard-trees large enough to meet all the demands of our Lord’s parable.*”—The Land and the Book, vol. ii. p. 101. (Barnes Notes)
>
> **Thomson** - With the help of my guide, I uprooted a veritable mustard-tree which was more than twelve feet high. In the presence of such stout bushes, which overtop all surrounding “herbs,” one feels that there was no exaggeration in the parable about “the mustard-seed:”....We have along our path abundant evidence of the extraordinary productiveness of this plain. The thistles are higher than our heads, even on horseback, and so thorny that the horses hesitate to pass through them. Wild mustard grows equally tall; and I saw little birds, mostly finches, “lodge in the branches thereof.” (The Land and the Book)
>
> **Marvin Vincent** - One of the Talmudists describes the mustard-plant as a**tree**, of which the wood was sufficient to cover a potter’s shed. Another says that he was wont to climb into it as men climb into a fig-tree. Professor Hackett says that on the plain of Akka, toward Carmel, he found a collection of mustard-plants from six to nine feet high, with branches from each side of a trunk an inch or more in thickness. Dr. Thomson relates that near the bank of the Jordan he found a mustard-tree more than twelve feet high.(WSNT)

Darrell Bock - Whatever (specific species of) tree is meant, Jesus is saying that **the kingdom will start out small but end up big**....The point is that the kingdom will end up with significant stature and will be a place where people of all races can reside comfortably....Jesus makes the point that the kingdom comes in a surprising form, not the one anticipated. That is why Matt. 13 has this parable in his “mystery” section. But the surprising humble form of the kingdom’s coming should not deceive anyone. The kingdom will still end up being a place of comfort and shelter under the protective shade of the Almighty. In fact, the shrub shall transform itself into a tree. This point is important: Jewish expectation had been of the magnificent arrival of a grand kingdom all at once (this is why the disciples wondered what role they would have in ruling). Jesus says that the kingdom comes now, but it starts out small and will gradually assume the grand scale they expected. That is why the parallels speak of the mystery of the kingdom in such texts. It is still kingdom truth, but it is a fresh element added alongside the OT picture. (BECNT- Luke)

W A Criswell - The parable of the mustard seed illustrates the unexpected and previously undisclosed nature of the coming of God's kingly reign. The kingdom has come (Lk 17:21+), but, like a mustard seed, it begins as something small and humble; it does not come in the expected form of a glorious manifestation that would usher in the age to come. Only gradually does the kingdom develop, and then from so small an inception. (Believer's Study Bible)

So that (hoste) introduces a purpose clause

THE BIRDS OF THE AIR come and NEST IN ITS BRANCHES - **Nest** (kataskenoo) is in the present tense and literally could be read "are continually tenting down" or "are continually pitching their tents." The implication of this verb is that they did not just sit on the branches but actually make their nests on the branches. This fact that the branches could support the weight of birds serves to emphasize the substantial size of the mustard plant. Jesus does not explain the meaning of this parable, but clearly it reflects the growth of the Kingdom of God which one day will surpass the size of the kingdoms of men.

Broadus - No interpretation of this parable is given, but its application is plain from the nature of the case. It represents the growth

of Christianity in the world, from small beginnings, to vast dimensions at last. Some understand it as representing also the gradual progress of piety in the individual; but the use of the phrase 'kingdom of heaven' throughout this series of parables, and in the Gospels at large, appears to confine the view to the former thought. The disciples and other Jews, clinging to the notion of a vast and splendid earthly kingdom, would think it very strange that Messiah's reign should begin so quietly, and on so small a scale; and in this parable, and that of the Leaven, our Lord wishes to impress it upon them that though small in its beginnings, the Messianic kingdom was destined to attain a vast extent If the disciples were discouraged by the blasphemous accusation of that morning, and by the parables of the Sower and the Tares, which indicated that but few would become subjects of Christ's reign, these other two would reassure them. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

MEANING OF THE BIRDS?

The mustard seed parable and specifically the meaning of the birds is open to the danger of allegorical interpretation.**Roy Zuck** writes that "**Allegorizing** is searching for a **hidden or secret meaning** underlying but remote from and unrelated in reality to **the more obvious meaning** of a text. In other words the literal reading is a sort of code, which needs to be deciphered to determine the more significant and hidden meaning. In this approach the literal is superficial, the allegorical is the true meaning." In summary, using **allegorical interpretation**, makes it possible to "find" all manner of meanings beyond the plain sense of the text.

David Turner adds that "Both church history and Christian experience testify to the prevalence of imaginative interpretations of Jesus's parables. Multitudes of such "heavenly meanings" have been superimposed upon the "earthly stories" of the parables. The patristic transformation of the parable of the good Samaritan into the story of Adam's fall and redemption (Kissinger 1979: 2–4, 18, 26–27) may be the most notorious example of this allegorizing approach, which atomizes the parables and tends to ignore their historical and literary contexts." (See Matthew Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)

That said, there are three common interpretations of the **birds**:

1. The fact that they can nest on the mustard plant emphasizes its substantial size and incredible growth
2. Represent Gentiles/nations who come into and contribute to the growth of the Kingdom of God
3. Represent evil forces that come into the Kingdom of God, infiltrating the Church

#1 - **Broadus** writes "Nor are we to find any distinct spiritual meaning in the birds lodging in the branches, which simply shows in a vivid way how large and strong the plant becomes. Several passages of the Old Test., represent an extensive kingdom by a great tree, with the birds dwelling among its branches. Ezek. 17:22–24; 31:3–14; Dan. 4:10 ff." (Matthew 13 Commentary)

#2 - Other commentators (e.g., John MacArthur) interpret the **birds** as representative of "nations" or Gentiles (#2). In the interpretation of the **birds** as nations or Gentiles, the birds would represent believers who by grace through faith come into the Kingdom of God. There is support for this interpretation in at least two ways:

> (1) Gentiles coming into the Kingdom of God contribute to the growth of that Kingdom In the book of Acts the spread of the Kingdom of God from "Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." (Acts 1:8+), a spread which begin primarily with Jewish believers but soon included Gentile believers as the Gospel spread throughout the Roman Empire.
>
> (2) There are OT passages that equate birds with Gentles. For example Ezekiel writes "On the high mountain of Israel I will plant it, that it may bring forth boughs and bear fruit and become a stately cedar. And birds of every kind will nest under it; they will nest in the shade of its branches." (Ezekiel 17:23)

#3 - Some commentators say the **birds** are "representatives of Satan" (#3 above) (Ironside) based on Mk 4:15+, but places great weight on interpreting the figure of birds in the same way it was interpreted in the parable of the soils. However there is nothing in the context of the mustard seed parable which dogmatically supports this interpretation. MacArthur agrees writing that "Some interpreters have held that the birds of the air represent demons or other evil forces, as they do in the parable of the sower (Matt. 13:19). But there is no reason to expect a given figure to always represent the same thing, and the idea of evil is alien to the context of this parable."

I favor **#1** as most obvious but can see how **#2** is a reasonable interpretation. While **#3** is true of the church over the last 2000 years, that interpretation is less appealing as it would not be very encouraging to Jesus' disciples. And why would Jesus intend this interpretation in the parable of the mustard seed, when He clearly presents the truth in the parable of the tares?

In the final analysis, you will have to make your own decision whether you think Jesus used the picture of **birds** to picture Gentiles. Either interpretation does not detract from the main point of the parable which is that of a small beginning of the Kingdom of God consummating in the large Kingdom of God. Jesus does not tell us when the "time" of growth ends but it is fair to say that the

Kingdom growth will not be seen as largest of all until the King of that Kingdom returns at the **Second Coming**. (See note)

Hendriksen - In the fall of the year, when its branches have become rigid, birds of many kinds find here a shelter from the storm, rest from weariness, and shade from the heat of the sun, all in all a wonderful place to go tenting! (Borrow Exposition of the gospel according to Matthew)

Barclay writes that "it was a common sight to see such mustard bushes or trees surrounded with a cloud of birds, for the birds love the little black seeds of the tree, and settle on the tree to eat them." (Matthew 13 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible)

Cornerstone Bible Commentary shows the divergent interpretations of this parable - The birds nesting in the mustard tree are unbelievers (Walvoord 1974:101); Toussaint (1980:181) disagrees, viewing the mustard tree as portraying the Kingdom positively. (**ED**: BOTH OF THESE MEN WERE RESPECTED PROFESSORS AT DALLAS THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY BUT HELD DIAMETRICALLY OPPOSING VIEWS.) (See The Gospel of Matthew - The Gospel of Mark or here)

Adam Clarke "Both these parables (MUSTARD AND LEAVEN) are prophetic, and were intended to show, principally, how, from very small beginnings, the Gospel of Christ should pervade all the nations of the world, and fill them with righteousness and true holiness." Of course this will not be consummated until Christ returns for only then the prophecy be fulfilled that "the earth will be filled With the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, As the waters cover the sea." (Hab 2:14+)

Daniel tells us that the kingdom of men will be totally demolished when Jesus returns as King of kings and Lord of Lords (Rev 19:11-21+) to set up His Kingdom. Daniel writes...

> "You (DANIEL DESCRIBING TO NEBUCHADNEZZAR THE DETAILS OF HIS DREAM) continued looking until a **Stone** (CHRIST) was cut out without hands (SUPERNATURAL ORIGIN ~ VIRGIN BIRTH), and it struck the statue (REPRESENTING ALL THE KINGDOMS OF MEN OPPOSED TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD) on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. 35 "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time (IN A MOMENT, THE MOMENT JESUS RETURNS TO TRIUMPH OVER ALL HIS ENEMIES) and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found (GONE FOREVER - GREECE, ROME, ETC. ALL THE GREAT BUT PREDOMINANTLY GODLESS CIVILIZATIONS AND THEIR UNGODLY INFLUENCES). But the **Stone** (CHRIST) that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (COMPARE THIS WITH JESUS' DESCRIPTION OF THE MUSTARD SEED BECOMING "A TREE"). (Da 2:34-35+)
>
> "In the days of those kings (THE TOE STAGE ~ TEN KINGDOMS IN A LOOSE CONFEDERACY IN THE END TIMES - Da 2:42+) the God of heaven will set up a kingdom (cf MUSTARD PLANT!) which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. 45 "Inasmuch as you saw that a STONE (CHRIST) was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future (THIS PROPHECY IS YET TO BE FULFILLED! BUT IT WILL BE WHEN CHRIST RETURNS! WHY? BECAUSE IT "IS TRUE!"); so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy." (Da 2:44-45+)
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> > **Spurgeon** - Some may think that the mustard seed parable has been fulfilled, and to these we grant that, compared with its beginning, the gospel is a great tree; but I cannot feel that we have reached at all to the satisfactory fulfilment of the prophetic parable as yet. There are birds of the air yet to come and build their nests in the branches of it. Though little at the beginning, the gospel kingdom is to be far greater than any of us have dreamed. The beloved disciple, I think, learned the future aright, when in the visions of God at Patmos, he heard a voice, which said—"The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ." (Rev 11:15+) That is yet to be, and for it we hopefully and joyfully look.
> >
> > **Small Beginnings** - 'For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea' (Hab. 2:14+). It is the principle of growth from small beginnings that is important. All necessary potential for growth is there in the twelve apostles, the gospel and the future working of the Holy Spirit.

Note that not all commentators interpret these parables as portraying "the effective growth of the church and the authentic transforming power of Christ's Gospel." There are several writers (Warren Wiersbe, W E Vine, J M Boice, G Morgan Campbell, et al) who believe "that because wickedness will increase (2 Ti 3:12, 13) and human government will fail, bringing in anarchy and chaos and, in the end time, the universal kingdom of the beast (Rev 13:2-8), teach that these two parables (ED: MUSTARD AND LEAVEN) describe the introduction of evil into the professing kingdom." (Crawford) However other writers (these seem to be in the majority, but this is a somewhat subjective assessment) including John MacArthur, Darrell Bock, William Hendriksen, C H Spurgeon, Kent

Hughes, et al, favor these two parables as portraying **growth of the Kingdom of God in the positive sense**.

MacArthur writes that "The point of this parable is that viewed from an external, visible perspective, the eventually large size of the **kingdom** was not perceivable at the start...at this point there were only a small number of people who followed Jesus. The **kingdom** was obscure; it was not distinguished by any majesty, power, or public display. Those things will mark its consummation, not its beginning. Most of the Jewish people were unaware of it (Luke 17:20–21+), since its present form was not Messiah's earthly reign, but the sphere of salvation where God reigns in the hearts of His people. The Lord's illustration is also a powerful prophecy. The **kingdom** will steadily grow until its consummation, which will be amazingly out of proportion to its beginning. That will happen when the Lord Jesus Christ returns in glory (Rev. 19:11–15+) and "the **kingdom of the world** [becomes] the **kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ**; and He will reign forever and ever" (Rev 11:15+). (See Luke Commentary)

> **Nest** (2681)(**kataskenoo** from **kata** = down, intensifies meaning of + **skenoo** = to pitch one's tent, to dwell) literally means "to pitch one's tent" and hence to settle permanently.To find shelter as under a tent. **Zodhiates** - In the NT generally to sojourn or to dwell, spoken of birds as nesting in the branches (Matt. 13:32; Luke 13:19), or under the shadow (Mark 4:32; Sept.: Ps. 104:12; Dan. 4:12). With the meaning of to rest, remain (Acts 2:26 quoting Ps. 16:9). (Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament) **Liddell-Scott** - to pitch one's camp or tent, take up one's quarters, encamp, Xen.; generally, to rest, lodge, settle,

While none of the synoptic accounts give an explanation by Jesus to the disciples of the meaning of the Parable of the Mustard Seed, Mark does make a statement that would suggest that He did explain this parable to the twelve. Mark 4:34+ records that "**He did not speak to them without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples.**" To reiterate the main point of the Parable of the Mustard seed Jesus' point clearly was that the kingdom of heaven which was very small during His ministry and seemingly insignificant, would one day grow into a large Kingdom. "Jesus' point is that, in spite of great opposition, represented by the three bad soils and the tares, His kingdom will start small and spread in power and influence to become victorious." (MacArthur)

Alan Carr recounts the **small beginnings of the Kingdom of Heaven** (note) - While the mustard seed is not the smallest seed known to man, it was the smallest seed planted in the gardens of Jesus' day. The mustard seed itself is very tiny. It takes about 750 of them to make up a single gram. There are 28 grams in an ounce. Thus, there some 21,000 mustard seeds in an ounce. It is a tiny seed, but it produces a very large plant. Let's consider the facts.

- ·Jesus was born in the tiny town of Bethlehem in abject poverty. (Micah 5:2+)
- ·He was reared in Galilee, and no one believed that a man of God could come from there, John 7:52.
- ·He was raised in a Nazareth. The inhabitants of that city were considered to be wicked and worldly by the Jews.
- ·He had no family connections. He had no money. He had no support from the religious leaders of the day.
- ·Jesus was considered to be a nobody from nowhere Who would amount to nothing! (Isa 53:1-2+)
- ·His parentage was questioned, John 8:41 by His enemies.
- ·His followers were, for the most part, the dregs of society.
- ·His Own people rejected Him.
- ·He was despised and rejected by men. (Isa 53:3+)
- ·The Romans eventually nailed Him to a cross and buried Him in a tomb.
- ·His followers preached His resurrection, but most people ignored their message and considered them fools for following a dead man.
- ·Even the Lord's message was hard to swallow. For some it still is! After all, Jesus said to get you have to give away what you have. He told people to love their enemies. He counseled men to turn the other cheek. He spoke of walking the second mile; succeeding through serving and denying self.

There is no question that the Kingdom of our Lord was just like that tiny, insignificant mustard seed in the beginning. No one could see what the tiny seed Jesus was sowing would become! (See his excellent Sermon)

THE PROBLEM OF THE MUSTARD SEED - As alluded to above Luke does not emphasize the small size of the mustard seed as does Mt 13:31-32+ ("this is smaller than all other seeds"), and so opponents of the **inerrancy** and **infallibility of the Scripture**, take Jesus' statement on the size of the mustard seed as CLEARLY ERRONEOUS. It is amazing the lengths to which godless men will go to in their futile attempts to obliterate all evidence of God from our world (really "His world" for He created it!) Given that attack below is an excerpt from an article that addresses this issue of seed size.

> "In this article the author seeks to demonstrate exegetically and botanically that our Lord Jesus Christ was not merely using the language of accommodation or even proverbial language, necessarily, when he referred to the mustard seed as the "least" of all seeds. The author appeals to the language of the text, the context, and

to expert testimony in the field of botany to show that the mustard seed was indeed the smallest garden-variety seed known to man in Bible times."

John Sproule quotes botanist Dr. L. H. Shinners regarding the '**size**" of the Mustard seed writing that "The mustard seed would indeed have been the smallest of those likely to have been noticed by the people at the time of Christ. The principal field crops (such as barley, wheat, lentils, beans) have much larger seeds, as do vetches and other plants which might have been present as weeds (the biblical tares) among grain.… There are various weeds and wild flowers belonging to the mustard, amaranth, pigweed, and chickweed families with seeds as small or smaller than mustard itself, but they would not have been particularly known or noticed by the inhabitants....The only modern crop plant of importance with smaller seeds than mustard is tobacco, but this plant is of American origin and was not grown in the Old World until the 16th century and later (Read the entire article - The Problem of the Mustard Seed," Grace Theological Journal Spring 1980) (See also William Thomson's 19th century comment in the classic "The Land and the Book")

MacArthur adds this note regarding the mustard seed problem - Dr. L. H. Shinners, director of the herbarium at Southern Methodist University in Dallas and lecturer at the Smithsonian Institution, stated in a conversation that "the mustard seed would indeed have been the smallest of those to have been noticed by the people at the time of Christ. The principal field crops (barley, wheat, lentils, and beans) have much larger seeds, as do other plants which might have been present as weeds and so forth. There are various weeds and wild flowers belonging to the mustard, amaranth, pigweed, or chickweed families with seeds that are as small as or smaller than mustard; but they would not have been known or noticed by the inhabitants. They are wild and they certainly would not have been planted as a crop.… The only modern crop plant in existence with smaller seeds than mustard is tobacco, and this plant of American origin was not grown in the old world until the sixteenth century or later." (MNTC-Mt)

Question: "What is the meaning of the Parable of the Mustard Seed?"

Answer: As with all parables, the purpose of the Parable of the Mustard Seed is to teach a concept or “big idea” using various narrative elements or details that are common, easily recognized, and usually representational of something else. While the elements themselves do have importance, an overemphasis on the details or literal focus on an element usually leads to interpretive errors and missing the main point of the parable.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed is a short one: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches” (Matthew 13:31–32).

One of the possible practical reasons that Jesus used parables such as this is that, by depicting concepts in word pictures, the message is not readily lost to changes in word usage, technology, cultural context, or the passage of time. Literal, detailed narratives are more susceptible to becoming archaic or obsolescent. Two thousand years later, the imagery is still vivid. We can still understand the concept of a growing seed. Jesus’ parables are brilliant in their simplicity. This storytelling approach also promotes practicing principles rather than inflexible adherence to laws.

The Parable of the Mustard Seed is contained in all three of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 13:31–32; Mark 4:30–32; Luke 13:18–19). In this parable, Jesus predicts the amazing growth of the kingdom of heaven. The mustard seed is quite small, but it grows into a large shrub—up to ten feet in height—and Jesus says this is a picture of kingdom growth. The point of the Parable of the Mustard Seed is that something big and blessed—the kingdom of God—had humble beginnings. How significant could the short ministry of Christ be? He had but a handful of followers, He was a man of no rank and without means, and He lived in what everyone considered a backwater region of the world. The life and death of Christ did not catch the world’s attention any more than a mustard seed would lying on the ground by the road. But this was a work of God. What seemed inconsequential at first grew into a movement of worldwide influence, and no one could stop it (see Acts 5:38–39). The influence of the kingdom in this world would be such that everyone associated with it would find a benefit—pictured as the birds perched on the branches of the mature mustard plant.

Elsewhere in Scripture, the kingdom of God is also pictured as a tree. A passage in Ezekiel, for example, parallels the Parable of the Mustard Seed in many ways. In this prophecy, the Lord God promises to plant a shoot “on a high and lofty mountain” (Ezekiel 17:22). This small sprig “will produce branches and bear fruit and become a splendid cedar. Birds of every kind will nest in it; they will find shelter in the shade of its branches” (Ezekiel 17:23). This messianic prophecy foretells the growth of Christ’s kingdom from very small beginnings to a sizable, sheltering place.

Some have wondered why, in the Parable of the Mustard Seed, Jesus calls the mustard seed the “smallest” of seeds and the mature mustard plant the “largest” of plants in the garden, when there were smaller seeds and larger plants. The answer is that Jesus is using rhetorical hyperbole—an exaggeration to make a point. He is not speaking botanically but proverbially. Jesus’ emphasis is on

the change of size—from small to large—and the surprising nature of the growth.

The history of the church has shown Jesus' Parable of the Mustard Seed to be true. The church has experienced an explosive rate of growth through the centuries. It is found worldwide and is a source of sustenance and shelter for all who seek its blessing. In spite of persecution and repeated attempts to stamp it out, the church has flourished. And it's only a small picture of the ultimate manifestation of the kingdom of God, when Jesus returns to earth to rule and reign from Zion. (Gotquestions)

Craig Keener applies the principles of the parable of the mustard seed and the leaven - We Christians sound foolish to those outside Jesus' circle when we speak of a final judgment and living for a future kingdom; what does that have to do with the troubles of daily life in the present? But those who have pressed into Jesus' circle today, like those who did so two thousand years ago, know who Jesus really is. Despite the magnitude of the task before us, we dare not despise the "smallness" of our own works, for God's entire program long ago came hidden in a small package. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

Spurgeon's Application - The kingdom of heaven is just like that in this world; wherever it comes, it comes to grow. And it is just like that in our hearts. Oh, how small is the first sign of grace in the soul! Perhaps it is only a single thought. The life divine may begin with but a wish, or with one painful conviction of error; but if it be the true and living seed of God, it will grow. And there is no telling how great will be its growth till, in that soul where all was darkness, many graces, like sweet song-birds, shall come and sing, and make joy and gladness there. Oh, that you and I might experimentally know the meaning of the parable of the mustard seed !

John Legg on the application of the truth of this parable - This encouragement is needed now, as often before. This is 'the day of small things' (Zech. 4:10). It is easy to despise such days and believe that nothing good can ever happen, that the work of God can never make real progress. Such an attitude cuts the nerve of our resolve and weakens our determination to preach the gospel. Jesus calls upon us to hear his parable and be encouraged. Although unbelievers will continue, and persecution and opposition will go on until the end of the age, we can expect growth and progress in the kingdom. This parable promises nothing about the conversion of the world as such, but it does encourage us to go on preaching the gospel, sowing the seed, in confidence that the kingdom is like a mustard seed. (The King and His Kingdom)

Grant Osborne - The growth of the kingdom is under God's control. One of the problems of modern ministry (and a sign of the secularization of the church) is the feeling that the church almost belongs to the senior pastor. People often speak of "Pastor So-and-So's church," and both the responsibility and the glory belong to the pastor. A friend of mine was told by a publisher that he would be published only if he was the pastor of a megachurch or was a television personality. Quality has been replaced by fame, and the glory all too seldom goes to the only one who deserves it, God. Throughout Scripture God chose the weak and the outcast through whom to bring greatness. It was not the great king Saul but a small shepherd boy, David, who defeated Goliath and the Philistines. The Twelve were a band of societal misfits. As Paul says, "I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses," because God's "power is made perfect in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:9). We need not worry about our inadequacies. We simply do our best and rely entirely on God, for he superintends our work and makes of us more than we can be in ourselves. We are part of God's kingdom work, and the progress and greatness of his kingdom and of our ministry are under his sovereign control. (Teach the Text Commentary Series – Mark)

ILLUSTRATION - Small Beginnings - When Laura Price, a roaring twenties flapper, converted to Christianity one summer, she had no idea what she was getting herself into. She simply gave herself to Jesus, and her lifestyle turned around. A few years later she was married to Carl Woll and en route to Kenya as one of the first Gospel Furthering Fellowship missionaries. She spent the bulk of her adult life living in Kenya, singing, ministering, and sharing the love of Jesus for African people in Swahili. **Big things have small beginnings.** The parable of the mustard seed is a parable of big things with small beginnings. What the seed is and what it becomes do not resemble each other. The seed is buried, hidden, and apparently inconsequential; but it grows into a tree. As in the parallel parable of the yeast, nothing appears to be happening, but in hidden places roots delve and bread expands. These parables illustrate the spiritual principle of slow and hidden growth.

ILLUSTRATION - When **Matthew Henry** was a child he received much impression from a sermon on the parable of the "mustard-seed." On returning home, he said to his child sister, "I think I have received a grain of grace." It was the seed of the Commentary "cast upon the waters."

ILLUSTRATION OF SMALL THINGS WITH LARGE RESULTS - Western music is commonly composed of only twelve notes—the seven basic notes and their five sharps/flats. Every symphony, hymn, love song, oratorio, and other piece of music is made up of various combinations and octaves of those same few notes. Similarly, every poem, essay, novel, letter, and other piece of English

literature is composed of combinations of the same twenty-six letters. Lord Kelvin once suspended a large piece of metal from a cord in his laboratory. He then proceeded to wad up small pieces of paper into balls about the size of a pea and systematically throw them at the metal weight. At first the almost imperceptible impact of paper hitting metal seemed to have no effect. But eventually the steel weight was swaying rhythmically back and forth due to the cumulative force patiently applied against it. In an immeasurably more dramatic and important way, God would demonstrate through the church how a handful of believers, totally weak and inept in themselves, would in His power turn the world upside down. The kingdom of heaven would grow and prosper in spite of Satan's opposition and would ultimately permeate and influence the whole world in Jesus' name. (MacArthur)

ILLUSTRATION - We heard a presentation on Thursday by Dr. Henry Cloud where he told a story from his own life. He was facing having to write his doctoral thesis, something that seemed totally overwhelming to him. He couldn't fathom being able to put together a project so huge. But he felt God speaking to him through the scripture that says, "Consider the ant". He wasn't sure what that was all about, but he went out and bought an ant farm. After setting it up, he watched the ants. They actually didn't do much at all. An ant would take a grain of sand and walk it over to the side of the ant farm, then go take another grain and move it to the other side of the farm. It seemed pretty pointless. He went away for a couple of days and when he came back he was amazed. The ant farm had been transformed into tunnels, mounds, and cities. He realized that all the ants had done was to move one grain of sand at a time. When it came to writing his doctoral thesis, he realized that all he needed to do was just do one little thing at a time, a grain at a time. Be faithful in the little things. Move that grain. Plant seeds. Water seeds. You don't know what might happen as a result. (Rich Cathers)

Dr. Ralph Winter of the U.S. Center for World Mission has shown that in 1430 A.D., the total number of Bible-believing Christians proportionate to the total world population was only one percent. But by 1993, that number had progressively increased to ten percent. He says that the kingdom of Christ is currently expanding at a rate of over three times the rate of world population growth ("Mission Frontiers," May/June, 1994, p. 5)

ILLUSTRATION - Within forty years of the Resurrection, there were churches in every major city of the Roman Empire. Within two and a half centuries, the entire Roman Empire was Christianized, not by a sword like Islam did it, but by the grace of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Today we see the last remaining 6000 people groups on earth which have been unengaged with gospel contact being prayed for, strategically chosen, and engaged with the Good News. (Gene Brooks)

ILLUSTRATION OF Martha Berry. - She was born just outside the town of Rome, GA in 1866. She was born into a wealthy family that owned a vast estate in that area. She asked for a playhouse and her father had a cabin built for her. One Sunday as she was studying her Bible in the cabin, Martha Berry heard the voices of children outside. She went out and saw some of the poor children from nearby Possum Trot playing. Miss Berry was a teenager by this time and she called the children to her and began to tell them stories from the Bible. Her Bible classes met each week in her playhouse. She taught children that would never have had the opportunity to go to school. She taught them how to read and write. She taught them arithmetic and other lessons. Then, in 1902, she had the idea to start a boy's school on nearby Lavender Mountain. She deeded land, raised funds and opened the doors to students, and The Berry Industrial School for Boys was formed. The school continued to grow, adding a program for girls. If you visit Rome, GA today, you can still visit the house Martha Berry lived in until she died. You can also see the cabin playhouse where she taught poor children about the love of God. If you visit Rome, GA you can also see what her little mustard seed school has become. Today, Berry College sits on 28,000 beautiful acres of Georgia real estate. There are 38 major buildings and well over 2,000 students. Berry College is widely recognized as one of the outstanding comprehensive colleges in the southern United States. A school that had very humble beginnings has been a blessing to tens of thousands of Americans. (Alan Carr)

Hughes adds that "These growth parables...have been subject to over interpretation. This was especially true in the nineteenth century when it was commonly taught that the gospel would keep spreading until the world was Christianized and the kingdom was ushered in. For example, toward the end of that century Sidney Gulick wrote a book entitled The Growth of the Kingdom of God. The book's argument was that Christianity is inexorably spreading and will ultimately take over the world—so why not convert now?...Those who imagine that the kingdom can be brought in by the preaching of the gospel neglect the teaching of the mystery parables of Matthew 13, such as "the sower" (Mt 13:3–23) and "the weeds" (Mt 13:24–30), which demonstrate that the church and its rule will be neither universal nor perfect. What really put an end to such un-Biblical (though noble) dreams were the great wars—and sins—of the so-called "Christian nations."...The Biblical realism in these two parables does not teach triumphalism (the view that one religion will displace all others), but rather the effective growth of the church and the authentic transforming power of Christ's Gospel. (PTW-Lk)

Matthew 13:33 He spoke another parable to them, "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened."

- **another parable**- Mk 13:20
- **like leaven** - Lu 13:21 1Co 5:6,7 Ga 5:9
- **until it was all leavened** - Job 17:9 Pr 4:18 Ho 6:3 Joh 15:2 16:12,13 Php 1:6,9 2:13-15 1 Th 5:23,24 2 Pe 3:18
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Adding Leaven to the Flour

THE PARABLE OF LEAVEN

This parable like the parable of the mustard seed has two markedly divergent interpretations, one that the leaven represents evil permeating the Kingdom of Heaven or the other that the leaven represents the gradual, pervasive, penetrating growth of the Kingdom of Heaven. I strongly favor the latter, but be aware that there are excellent commentators and expositors (Walvoord, Guzik, Wiersbe, G C Morgan, etc) who favor the former view. This latter view would hardly be one that would encourage the disciples, which I believe was one of Jesus' main purposes for giving these "growth parables."

He spoke another parable (parabole) **to them** - Jesus was speaking to the Jewish multitudes who would keep on hearing, but would not understand (cf Mt 13:14-15+). One would think that a few would at least have some sense of what this parable suggested sense they knew the effect that leaven had in dough. Their problem was that they did not understand what Jesus meant by the Kingdom of Heaven/God. Recall that even His own disciples after having heard all of His kingdom parables were still somewhat perplexed after His resurrection asking Jesus "Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6+) They were still expecting that now Jesus would establish His Messianic Kingdom, because they did not comprehend the interval of the Church Age which would begin in Acts 2 on the Day of Pentecost.

Keep in mind that in these parables there is an implicit declaration that the Kingdom has arrived in some sense as a result of Jesus' ministry. Most would describe this as the "invisible" aspect of the Kingdom, being manifest in the hearts of those who had believed His Gospel.

The kingdom (basileia) **of heaven** (note) **is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened** - What is **leaven** (literally)? **Leaven** is "any one of a number of substances used in doughs and batters that cause a foaming action (gas bubbles) that lightens and softens the mixture." (Wikipedia) Imagine yourself as a disciple and your first reaction to hearing the Kingdom of Heaven compared to leaven and flour. What a humble beginning to drive home the point to His disciples as He explains how the Kingdom of Heaven works from the inside out.

Ligon Duncan applies this truth to believers - This reminds us, friends, that we don't have to draw attention to ourselves in doing the work of the kingdom. The gospel does not brag. The kingdom does not advertise itself. The kingdom does not draw attention to itself as it works. It works slowly and surely and it is impressive in spiritual even if it's insignificant in the eyes of men. But the kingdom works and it doesn't draw attention to itself. (Sermon)

> **Like** (same)(3664)(**homoios** from **homos** = one and the same) means *like* when referring to objects and *of the same status* when referring to individuals. It denotes a correspondence in feature, property or nature. Uses in Matthew - note concentration in Matthew 13 - Matt. 11:16; Matt. 13:31; Matt. 13:33; Matt. 13:44; Matt. 13:45; Matt. 13:47; Matt. 13:52; Matt. 20:1; Matt. 22:39.
>
> The phrase **kingdom of Heaven is like** is used 7x by Matthew with 6 uses in Matthew 13 - Matt. 13:31; Matt. 13:33; Matt. 13:44; Matt. 13:45; Matt. 13:47; Matt. 13:52; Matt. 20:1.

The main truth about leaven is its ability to pervasively permeate.

Which a woman took and hid in three pecks of flour until it was all leavened - Jesus could have just said "a large quantity of flour" but by specifying the amount, He brought out the striking contrast more vividly. **Three pecks of flour** is roughly the equivalent of a modern bushel or from 20-45 liters, enough to feed 100 people. The point is that this is a very large amount of flour when compared to the small amount of leaven. Notice Jesus' use of the verb **hid** (egkrupto) used only here in NT (Lxx uses - Jos 7:21, 22; Pr 19:24; Ezek 4:12; Hos 13:12; Amos 9:3) which conveys the idea of to conceal and so put out of sight. This meaning gives us a good sense of what Jesus was saying by using this illustration. The verb **hid** emphasizes the idea that even though the Kingdom was out of sight, it is still very much at work. The picture of the Kingdom would be that it was, in a sense, initially hidden , concealed, out of sight, certainly to those who did not have eyes to see or ears to hear and were not members of the Kingdom by virtue of belief

in the King. A slight distinction has been pointed out between this parable and that of the Grain of Mustard. The mustard parable represents the expansion of the Christian community into vast dimensions, while the leaven parable represents the diffusion of Christianity through the vast mass of humanity; the one is extensive, the other intensive, the former more external, the latter more internal.

Broadus points out how "dangerous" parabolic interpretation can be - To find a special spiritual meaning in the number three, would seem to us ridiculous; yet some great men among the Fathers, and some fanciful modern expositors, have actually made it signify Jews, Greeks, and Samaritans; or Asia, Europe, and Africa (how about America, now?); or the three sons of Noah; or body, soul, and spirit, etc. So with the attempts to give separate significance to the woman, when it was a matter of course to speak of a woman, and not of a man, making up bread. If the woman here denotes "the church," what is denoted by the man in v. 31? The general meaning of this parable is the same as that of the preceding. A small bit of leaven, completely hidden from view in the great mass of dough, would finally leaven the whole; and so Christianity, with its small and obscure beginnings, would pervade the whole race of mankind. There is a like gradual progress of piety in the individual, but that does not seem to be the point here in view...Because **leaven** is frequently used in Scripture as the symbol of things corrupting and pernicious (Mt 16:6; Luke 12:1; Gal. 5:6; 1 Cor. 5:6; and often in OT), and nowhere but here used in a good sense, some have strangely tried to interpret it here as denoting the corruptions which should arise in connection with Christianity. But can there be only one possible figurative use of an object? The lion represents Satan, and also the Saviour; but no one would fancy in the same sense. (Cp. Mt 3:11) (Matthew 13 Commentary)

David Turner feels that "The yeast also portrays the subtle though real influence of the kingdom in permeating the world." (BECNT-Mt)

John MacArthur adds that "To take this **leaven** as representing evil that permeates the kingdom is to twist the obvious meaning and construction of words—whether in the Greek or English texts. Nor does that interpretation fit Jesus' development of this group of parables, in which this one parallels that of the mustard seed. They both illustrate the power of the kingdom to overcome the resistance and opposition illustrated in the parables of the sower and of the wheat and tares.

Craig Blomberg agrees noting that "Yeast can be a positive symbol (e.g., Lev 7:13–14; 23:17) and, with all the parables dealing with the growth of plants and seeds in this chapter having the positive referent of the growth of the kingdom, the parable of the yeast must almost certainly be taken this way too." (NAC-Mt)

> **Leaven** (yeast)(2219)(**zume** probably from zeo = to heat, as occurs in fermentation of dough when leaven is mixed in) was literally a small portion of dough that was retained in order to start a new batch of dough (literal uses - Mt 13:33, 16:12; Lk 13:21; 1 Cor 5:6; Gal 5:9). In ancient times, when bread was about to be baked, a small piece of dough was pulled off and saved. That leaven or yeast would then be allowed to ferment in water, and later kneaded into the next batch of fresh dough to make it rise. **Zume** was used proverbially to demonstrate great effect from little causes (Gal 5:9). **Zume** is used figuratively to depict corruption of thought and conduct, which Jesus termed hypocrisy here in Lk 12:1. **Zume** was used figuratively to describe teachings based on unspiritual value systems (Mt 16.12). Finally, **zume** was a metaphor for sin within a believing community, and was identified as wicked ways (1Cor 5.8). The first use of **zume** in the Septuagint (Ex. 12:15; 12:19) is associated with the Passover, where the Jews were instructed to eat bread without leaven for seven days.
>
> **Parable** (symbols) (3850) see preceding note on **parabole**

Grant Osborne - The analogy indicates that the kingdom, though now small and seemingly insignificant, will have an influence beyond expectations. In the end, the kingdom will be clearly and fully revealed. Matthew introduces the motif of hiddenness in this parable by using the verb enkryptō (NIV: "mixed"; RSV: "hid"), which indicates something becoming concealed by being mixed in with something else. This motif is explicit at 13:35, 44. (Teach the Text Commentary Series – Matthew)

As with the parable of the mustard seed, Jesus gives no recorded interpretation (although He presumably explained the meaning to His disciples - Mk 4:33). And as you might surmise, the result is that there are a number of interpretations which are widely divergent. And so some commentators (Walvoord, et al) interpret the **leaven** (as they do the **birds** in Mt 13:32) as indicative of evil permeating the kingdom. For example, **Warren Wiersbe** (who I greatly respect) makes a fairly dogmatic statement that "The mustard seed illustrates the false outward expansion of the kingdom, while the leaven illustrates the inward development of false doctrine and false living. Throughout the Bible, leaven is a symbol of evil." (Bible Exposition Commentary)

While it is true that **leaven** is used to symbolize evil or sin in other contexts, there is nothing in the present parable which would strongly support that interpretation. As **Turner** says "**Birds** or **yeast** need not always be viewed as symbols of evil, since a lion may signify Satan in one context and Jesus in another (1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 5:5). These parables both speak of the deceptively subtle yet dramatically significant growth of God's kingdom." (BECNT-Mt)

In my humble opinion to see the parable of leaven as evil is an incorrect interpretation and totally misses Jesus' point to the disciples. After seeing their leader accused of being demon possessed and after the "poor yield" of the Gospel seed in the parable of the soils, the disciples had to be wondering about the future of the Kingdom of God. Therefore it would not be encouraging to hear that the Kingdom was going to be infiltrated and corrupted by Satanically inspired, sinful people who would profess to be Christians. It seems far more likely that He was giving His disciples the parable of the unstoppable growth of the mustard seed and penetrating influence of the leaven to encourage His men.

And so I am much more in agreement with interpretations like **John MacArthur** who writes "**The first point** in this parable is that small things can have great influence, in the way that a small piece of leavened dough can permeate a large piece of unleavened dough to make it rise. The power of the kingdom of heaven is great, far greater than its initial size and appearance would suggest. The smallest part of the kingdom that is placed in the world is sure to have influence, because it contains the power of God's own Spirit. The influence of the kingdom is the influence of the King, of His Word, and of His faithful people. **The second point of the parable is that the influence is positive.** Leavened bread has always been considered tastier and more enjoyable than unleavened. To symbolize the break with their former life in Egypt, God commanded His people to eat only unleavened bread during the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, which began on Passover evening. They were not even allowed to have leaven of any sort in the house during the seven days of the feast (Ex. 12:15, 18–19). But the bread they ate the rest of the year was leavened and perfectly acceptable to the Lord. To the average person of Jesus' day, Jew or Gentile, there is no evidence that leaven carried any connotation of evil or corruption. **The ancient rabbis often referred to leaven in a favorable way.** One of them wrote, "Great is peace, in that peace is to the earth as leaven is to the dough." When a Jewish girl was married, her mother would give her a small piece of leavened dough from a batch baked just before the wedding. From that gift of leaven the bride would bake bread for her own household throughout her married life. That gift, simple as it was, was among the most cherished that the bride received, because it represented the love and blessedness of the household in which she grew up and that would be carried into the household she was about to establish. (MNTC-Mt) (**For more background discussion on leaven see Dr MacArthur's companion sermon** The Power and Influence of Christ's Kingdom 2)

Blomberg - Neither parable (Mustard Seed and Leaven) depicts the culmination of the kingdom so impressively as to justify grandiose dreams of Christianizing the earth, but each does caution against a defeatism or siege mentality when Christian witness seems temporarily ineffective. One day God's causes will triumph (**Ed**: see note).

Constable - Some interpreters have understood yeast as a metaphorical reference to evil. However not all uses of yeast in the Old Testament carry this symbolic meaning (e.g., Lev. 7:13; 23:15–18). This parable stresses the hidden internal change taking place in the kingdom between its inception in Jesus' ministry and its final form when the kingdom will cover the earth in the Millennium. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

Steven Cole on **leaven...hid in three pecks of flour** - The size of the task proportionate to the smallness of the force is not a hindrance to Jesus' ultimate triumph. The woman's three measures of flour were equal to about 39 liters or 50 pounds of flour, a large amount. The point is that just a small amount of leaven was all that was needed to permeate this large mass of dough....Since **leaven** is often used in the Bible as a symbol for sin, some commentators understand this parable to be referring to the spread of false doctrine in the church. **But this is to overturn the obvious contextual flow of thought**. Sometimes in the Bible, leaven is not a symbol for evil (Lev 7:13+; Lev 23:15-18+), and it can be argued that Jesus is using a somewhat different meaning to grab His hearers attention and to give the parable a provocative twist. **So the meaning here is parallel to the meaning of the small mustard seed**. The smallness of the pinch of leaven is not a problem even though the lump is large. The smallness of Jesus and His ragtag band of followers is no problem with regard to the worldwide spread of the gospel. The power does not depend on Jesus' followers, but on the power of God through the Gospel (Ro 1:16+). The leaven must come in contact with the dough for the power to be unleashed. We've already seen the same point with regard to the seed. Here there may be the nuance that once the contact is made, the power works from the inside out. That is how the gospel works as God transforms the hearts of sinners. (Luke 13:18-21 Why You Want To Be On Jesus' Side)

GotQuestions is similar to MacArthur and has an excellent answer to the question **What is the meaning of the Parable of the Leaven?**

> Jesus' Parable of the Leaven is found in two of the Gospels. It is a very simple story—a snapshot of life, really: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough" (Matthew 13:33; cf. Luke 13:20-21).
>
> Jesus uses this story as an object lesson to illustrate the kingdom of heaven. A woman takes yeast (leaven) and mixes it into dough. Eventually, the whole of the dough is leavened. What does it mean?
>
> First, it's important to define "kingdom of heaven." By this, Jesus is referring to His domain as the Messiah. In

the current age, the kingdom of heaven is spiritual, existing within the hearts of believers (Luke 17:21). Later, the kingdom will be manifest physically, when the Lord Jesus establishes His throne on this earth (Revelation 11:15).

In the Parable of the Leaven, we learn several things about the working of the kingdom in our present age. Each of these lessons stems from the nature of yeast.

First, the kingdom of God may have small beginnings, but it will increase Yeast is microscopic in size, and only a little is kneaded into the dough. Yet, given time, the yeast will spread through all the dough. In the same way, Jesus' domain started with twelve men in an obscure corner of Galilee, but it has spread throughout the world. The gospel makes progress.

Second, the kingdom of God exerts its influence from within, not from without. Yeast makes dough rise from within. God first changes the heart of a person, and that internal change has external manifestations. The gospel influence in a culture works the same way: Christians within a culture act as agents of change, slowly transforming that culture from within.

Third, 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 (Psalm 72:19; Daniel 2:35). "The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk 2:14).

Fourth, although the kingdom of God works invisibly, its effect is evident to all. Yeast does its job slowly, secretly and silently, but no one can deny its effect on bread. The same is true of the work of grace in our hearts.

The nature of yeast is to grow and to change whatever it contacts. When we accept Christ, His grace grows in our hearts and changes us from the inside out. As the gospel transforms lives, it exerts a pervasive influence in the world at large. As we "reflect the Lord's glory, [we] are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18).

Bailey offers several practical applications of this parable - "Practical applications of this parable to present readers can include the following. First, believers should depend on what God is doing through His Spirit in the present age. Second, Christians should be suspicious of any man-made, externally influenced institutional structures that say they are the manifestation of God's kingdom, Third, believers must be cautious about setting dates and presuming the arrival of the kingdom since the parable gives no hint as to when the permeation ends. Fourth, Jesus' followers can be confident that regardless of any current perspectives, the kingdom of God has a glorious future.

Matthew 13:34 All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables, and He did not speak to them without a parable.

- Mt 13:13 Mk 4:33,34
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passage:

Mark 4:33; 34+ With many such parables He was speaking the word to them, so far as they were able to hear it; 34 and He did not speak to them without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples.

RIDDLES
TO OUTSIDERS

Robert Mounce - The parables in chapter 13 divide into two sections. Up to this point Jesus has spoken his parables to the crowds. From here on, he addresses the disciples. Mt 13:34–35 are a summary statement indicating that in fulfillment of Scripture Jesus spoke to the crowds only in parables. (UBCS-Mt)

Mt 13:33-34 provides a transition from Jesus' parables to the crowd, spoken from the boat (Mt 13:2–33), to His parables to His disciples, spoken in the house (Mt 13:36–50).

All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds(cf Mt 13:2+) **in parables** (parabole)**, and He did not speak to them without a**

parable (parabole)(Mk 4:34+) - **All these things** refers to the preceding parabolic teaching on the Kingdom of Heaven. So Jesus spoke the preceding parables not just to His disciples but to the Jewish **crowds**. Here Matthew describes the general way which Jesus taught. **He did not speak** is in the imperfect tense indicating He was speaking this way over and over, pointing to the habitual mode of His teaching. This was His practice. Matthew is not saying that Jesus never taught in any other way than by using parables. Of course He spoke without parables. Recall that earlier Jesus explained "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand." (Mt 13:13+, Mk 4:33; 34+). The point is that to those outside the Kingdom of Heaven these parables were like riddles which would only convey their "hidden" revelation to true followers of Jesus. (See similar idea in 1 Cor 2:7-10; Col 2:2-3) Of course Jesus also taught without parables (cf Mk 1:15; Mk 3:28; Mk 6:10,11; Mk 8:34–38; Mk 9:33–50; Mk 10:18,19, 24–31, 42–45; Mk 12:13–44; Mk 13:5–37; etc). Matthew's description here recalls a similar truth described in the Gospel of Mark where He had declared to His own disciples "to you has been given the mystery of the Kingdom of God but those outside get everything in parables." (See Mk 4:10-11+)

Hendriksen reminds us that Jesus' "twofold reason for employing this story method, namely, revealing the truths concerning salvation to those who were willing to accept them, and concealing them from those whose hardened hearts rejected them, has already been discussed (Mt 13:10–17). By the inspiration of the Spirit, Matthew sees in this use of parables a fulfilment of prophecy, once again focusing the attention upon Jesus as being indeed the Messiah who was to come." (Borrow Exposition of the gospel according to Matthew)

> **Parable** (symbols) (3850) see preceding note on **parabole** - **Leon Morris** comments that "The crowds could so easily understand plain teaching on the kingdom in a political sense, but parables made this much more difficult." (BORROW The Gospel according to Matthew)
>
> **Tasker** - Jesus deliberately adopted the parabolic method of teaching at a particular stage in His ministry for the purpose of withholding further truth about Himself and the kingdom of heaven from the crowds, who had proved themselves to be deaf to His claims and irresponsive to His demands. Hitherto, He had used parables as illustrations, whose meaning was self-evident from the context in which they were spoken (e.g., Mt 6:24–27). From now onwards, when addressing the unbelieving multitude he speaks only in parables (34), which He interprets to His disciples in private." (Quoted by Constable)

B B Warfield helps us understand why Jesus began teaching the crowds in **parables** - He teaches in parables in order that He may teach; not in order that He may not teach (**ED**: WHAT DOES WARFIELD MEAN? RECALL THE TIME HE TAUGHT OPENLY IN NAZARETH AND IT AROUSED SUCH OPPOSITION THAT THEY TRIED TO KILL HIM - Lk 4:24-29+. OPPOSITION TO HIS TEACHING WAS BEGINNING TO "CRESCENDO" AS EMPHASIZED BY THE MOST RECENT BLASPHEMOUS ACCUSATION OF HIS BEING IN LEAGUE WITH **BEELZEBUL** OR SATAN! See Mt 12:27+, Mk 3:22+). This method of veiled teaching, in a word, is **forced on Him by the conditions under which He is teaching** and arises from the state of mind of His hearers (**ED**: MOST OF WHOM REJECTED HIS TRUTH); it is not chosen by Him in order to conceal His meaning, but in order to convey it to those for whom it is intended (**ED**: GOOD SOILS - THOSE WHO HAVE EARS TO HEAR - IN THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT = HIS DISCIPLES - see Mk 4:34+). It is with Him either to teach thus or not to teach at all; and He consequently teaches thus (IN PARABLES).**This is the fundamental doctrine of parabolic teaching.** I do not say it is the whole account to be given of it; we may see in the sequel that there is more to say, and that **the adoption of parabolic teaching has a punitive side** (**ED**: SEE Mark 4:12+, cf NOTES ON SIMILAR TEACHING IN Mt 13:14-15+)—as, indeed, it could not fail to have—**with reference to those who could and would not endure sound doctrine; whom it puzzled, therefore, rather than instructed**. But this is the fundamental account of it. (Faith and Life)

> **Robert Stein** echoes Warfield's analysis writing Jesus "could teach about the coming of the **kingdom of God**, a most **incendiary** subject for Pilate and Rome, only through the riddle-like nature of his parables. For Herod and Pilate, Jesus' parabolic teachings concerning the **kingdom of God** and its coming were not revolutionary. For them, they were simply incomprehensible. Thus they would not interfere with Jesus's ministry until in God's time "the hour had come" (cf. Mk 14:41)." (BECNT-Mk)

It is worth noting that at the conclusion of the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7 Jesus presented what was essentially a parable or at least certainly a simple story but in this case He gave them the clear explanation, because it was a solemn warning (after one of the most frightening declarations of judgment in the entire Bible in Mt 7:21+, Mt 7:22-23+) and He did not conceal this truth from the people which was an act of His grace (undeserved favor) and mercy! Read this parabolic warning:

> "Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and **acts on them**, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 "And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. 26 "Everyone who hears these words of Mine and **does not act on them**, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. 27 "The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell–and great was

its fall." (Mt 7:24-27+) (**COULD JESUS HAVE BEEN ANY CLEARER? AND YET MOST JEWS REFUSED TO ACT ON HIS WORDS!**)

The Great Storyteller

Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them. —Matthew 13:34

Today's Scripture: Luke 15:11-24

In his book Teacher Man, Pulitzer Prize-winner Frank McCourt reflects on his 30 years as a teacher in New York City high schools. He used a variety of techniques in his English and creative writing classes, but one that seemed to surface again and again was the power of a compelling story to capture attention and encourage learning.

This method of instruction was used by the greatest Teacher of all—the Lord Jesus Christ. The scholarly religious leader Nicodemus said to Jesus, "We know that You are a teacher come from God" (John 3:2). Yet when Jesus addressed the crowds that followed Him, He didn't recite great truths of the Talmud. Rather, He spoke with the homespun style of a storyteller.

The parables of Jesus endure because they showcase matters of the heart. Through the story of the Pharisee and tax collector (Luke 18), we learn about God's grace and forgiveness. And the story of the prodigal son (Luke 15) showcases God's love for repentant sinners.

The inspired parables of Jesus teach us about Him and the life He wants us to lead. We too can use our faith-stories to point others to the ultimate Storyteller and Teacher, whose own life is the greatest story ever told. By: Dennis Fisher (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Take control of my words today,
May they tell of Your great love;
And may the story of Your grace
Turn some heart to You above.
—Sees

A good way to learn God's truth is to teach it to others.

Matthew 13:35 This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: "I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN PARABLES; I WILL UTTER THINGS HIDDEN SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD."

Psalm 77:2 νο ξω ν παραβολα ς τ στ μα μου φθ γξομαι προβλ ματα π ρχ ς (Psa 77:2 BGT)

NET Matthew 13:35 This fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will announce what has been hidden from the foundation of the world."

GNT Matthew 13:35 πως πληρωθ τ ηθ ν δι το προφ του λ γοντος, νο ξω ν παραβολα ς τ στ μα μου, ρε ξομαι κεκρυμμ να π καταβολ ς [κ σμου].

NLT Matthew 13:35 This fulfilled what God had spoken through the prophet: "I will speak to you in parables. I will explain things hidden since the creation of the world. "

KJV Matthew 13:35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

ESV Matthew 13:35 This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter what has been hidden since the foundation of the world."

NIV Matthew 13:35 So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world."

ASV Matthew 13:35 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world.

CSB Matthew 13:35 so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled: I will open My mouth in parables; I will declare things kept secret from the foundation of the world.

NKJ Matthew 13:35 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."

NRS Matthew 13:35 This was to fulfill what had been spoken through the prophet: "I will open my mouth to speak in parables; I will proclaim what has been hidden from the foundation of the world."

YLT Matthew 13:35 that it might be fulfilled that was spoken through the prophet, saying, 'I will open in similes my mouth, I will utter things having been hidden from the foundation of the world.'

NAB Matthew 13:35 to fulfill what had been said through the prophet: "I will open my mouth in parables, I will announce what has lain hidden from the foundation (of the world)."

NJB Matthew 13:35 This was to fulfil what was spoken by the prophet: I will speak to you in parables, unfold what has been hidden since the foundation of the world.

GWN Matthew 13:35 So what the prophet had said came true: "I will open my mouth to illustrate points. I will tell what has been hidden since the world was made."

BBE Matthew 13:35 That it might come true which was said by the prophet, Opening my mouth, I will give out stories; I will give knowledge of things kept secret from before all time.

- **This was to fulfill** - Mt 13:14 21:4,5
- **I will open** - Ps 78:2
- **I will utter** - Ps 49:4 Isa 42:9 Am 3:7 Lu 10:14 Ro 16:25,26 1Co 2:7 Eph 3:5,9 Col 1:25,26 2Ti 1:9,10 Tit 1:2,3 Heb 1:1 1Pe 1:11,12
- **from** - Mt 25:34 Joh 17:24 Ac 15:18 1Pe 1:20,21 Rev 13:8 17:8
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Old Testament Quotation:

Psalm 78:2 I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings of old,

Leon Morris - At this point Matthew inserts a characteristic appeal to prophecy. He finds not only individual events in Jesus' life and ministry to be fulfillments of prophecy but also the parabolic method. (BORROW The Gospel according to Matthew)

Mounce writes that "It is "prophetic" in the sense that the entire Old Testament points forward to the coming kingdom (ED: AND I WOULD ADD THE KING OF THAT KINGDOM)." (UBCS-Mt)

This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet - **This** refers to Jesus' speaking in parables. Jesus' purpose was to demonstrate that He fulfill ed the OT prophecies and that He was indeed the Messiah for Whom the OT prophets were looking. The quote is from Psalm 78 which is entitled "A Maskil of Asaph" so clearly **Asaph** was considered a **prophet** by Jesus (cf *seer* in 2 Chr 29:30 where Lxx translates *seer* with prophetes; see also 1 Chr 25:2). **Spoken through the prophet** pictures the prophet as a "vessel" or "conduit" through which the Spirit spoke, using God's inspiration and the prophet's own words (cf 2 Pe 1:21+).

Blomberg explains that "As with several of the quotations in the infancy narrative, this *"fulfillment"* is not an exegesis of the Old Testament text but a typological application. In the original psalm, Asaph was announcing to a new generation God's mighty deeds in Israel's past." (NAC-Mt)

> **To fulfill** (see note below) (4137)(**pleroo**) means to **be** filled (passive voice = saints acted on by outside force). To fulfill a prophecy, promise, etc. (Mt 1:22; 5:17; 13:35; 26:54, 56; Mk 14:49; Lk 9:31; 22:16; Jn 18:9, 32; 19:24, 36; Ro 13:8; Gal 5:14) **Matthew** repeatedly uses fulfill in regard to Old Testament prophecy being **fulfilled** (Mt 1:22+, Mt 2:15, 17, 23+; Mt 8:17+; Mt 12:17+; Mt 13:35+; Mt 21:4; Mt 26:54)
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> **Prophet** (4396)(**prophetes** from **próphemi** = to tell beforehand from **pró** = before + **phemí** = speak) is primarily a forth-teller or one who speaks out God's message, primarily to their own generation, usually always calling the people to God's truth for them at that moment, often using the phrase "Thus saith the Lord." The prophet is one who speaks before in the sense of proclaim, or the one who speaks for, i.e., in the Name of (God). **Prophetes** is someone who is specially endowed or enabled to receive and deliver direct revelation of God's will.

John Broadus - Many of the Psalms are prophetic, and the Psalmist David is expressly called a prophet. (Acts 2:30+.) The writer of this Psalm is given by the heading as Asaph, and he in 2 Chron. 29:30 is called the **seer**, equivalent to prophet. (1 Sa 9:9.) The Psalm relates the history of Israel, and points out its lessons; but Israel was typical of the Messiah (see above on Mt 2:15+), and so the passage might contain a prophetic reference to him, which the inspired Evangelist informs us it did contain. He states it as a part of the divine purpose, in our Lord's adoption of the parabolic method of instruction, that there should be a fulfillment of that prophetic

saying. Unless we can show that there was no such prophetic relation, we must certainly accept the Evangelist's statement. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN PARABLES (parabole) - **I will open** (anoigo) my mouth is similar to the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5:2+) when Jesus "**opened** (anoigo) His mouth and began to teach them, saying." The point is that Jesus' parabolic speech was a fulfillment of what Asaph had prophesied.

David Turner comments on Psalm 78 writing that "In this lengthy psalm, Asaph the seer (1 Chr 25:2; 2 Chr 29:30) recounts the history of Israel for the next generation (Ps. 78:4). The psalm stresses Israel's unbelief (Ps 78:8, 11, 17–22, 32–33, 36–37, 39–42, 56–58), which led to God's discipline (Ps 78:21, 31–34, 59–64). In spite of this, God continues to manifest his faithfulness to Israel through powerful acts (Ps 78:4–7, 12–16, 23–29, 38–39, 42–55) and by choosing David to shepherd them (78:65–72). In Matthew's view, Jesus is the son of David who fulfills the Davidic role as Israel's ultimate shepherd (Mt. 1:1; Mt 9:36). His parables, like those of Asaph, portray Israel's unbelief and God's discipline, but more important, they stress God's ongoing faithfulness to Israel through Jesus's kingdom mission. Matthew 13:35 contains the second biblical-fulfillment citation of this discourse. The first demonstrates that the unbelief of many who see his deeds and hear his words is not unprecedented. The pattern of hard hearts and unbelief from Isaiah's days is recurring in the days of Jesus. Israel" (See Matthew Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)

I WILL UTTER THINGS HIDDEN SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD - **I will utter** means literally to spit or spew out as described below and in context speaks of sudden, emphatic copious speech in which one expresses something forcefully. This picks up the sense of the Hebrew verb "I will utter" in Ps 78:2, for this Hebrew verb (nava'/naba) conveys the sense of something pouring forth (Ps 19:2 = "Day to day **pours forth** speech"). The original Hebrew phrase translated "of old" usually signifies from antiquity, and in regard to the original subject of the Psalm (Israel) referred to the early history of the nation. Matthew quotes the Septuagint which reads "from the beginning."

Hidden is perfect tense meaning hidden in the past and still hidden. What is **hidden**? In context in Mt 13:11+ Jesus declared to His disciples "To you it has been granted to know the **mysteries** (musterion) **of the kingdom of heaven** (note), but to them (cf "**those who are outside**" Mk 4:11+) **it has not been granted** (didomi is in the perfect tense = their state or condition)."

Davies and Allison - Jesus' parabolic manner of speaking is grounded in OT prophecy. Just as Jesus' birth, childhood, ministry, and death are all foretold in the Scriptures, so too does the OT look forward to the Messiah uttering in parables mysteries hidden from the foundation of the world. Secondly, vv. 34f. serves, in a manner reminiscent of vv. 10–17, as a transition which notifies the reader of a switch in audience. Jesus at this juncture speaks not to the crowds and the disciples but to the disciples alone. He is turning away from those who do not understand and turning towards those who do. (ICC-Mt)

> **Technical Note** - The Greek of "**I will open my mouth in parables**" is " νο ξω ν παραβολα ς τ στ μα μου." This is exactly the same as the Greek of the Septuagint of Ps 78:2 = νο ξω ν παραβολα ς τ στ μα μου. The second clause beginning with "**I will utter**..." in Greek is " ρε ξομαι (ereugomai) κεκρυμμ να π καταβολ ς [κ σμου]." This is not the same verb used in the Septuagint version of Ps 78:2 which reads "φθ γξομαι (see **phtheggomai** below) προβλ ματα π ρχ ς." In sum **I will utter** in the Septuagint of Psalm 78:2 is phtheggomai and "I will utter" here in Matthew is ereugomai.
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> > **I will utter** (in Ps 78:2) (5350) (**phtheggomai**) means to sound a tone, speak with focus upon verbal sound rather than upon content. It is putting sounds together to communicate something to someone else. According to Rienecker **phtheggomai** is "especially used of a portentous prophetic utterance." **Hiebert** says this verb "was used chiefly of loud talk." Peter used it to describe Balaam's donkey speaking in the voice of a man (2Pe 2:16+ = "a mute donkey, **speaking** with a voice of a man, restrained the madness of the prophet." How ironic a dumb beast **speaking** to Balaam, a spiritually perverted man.) Also used in Acts 4:18+ ("they commanded them not **to speak** or teach at all in the name of Jesus") and 2 Pe 2:18+ (describing false teachers "**speaking out** arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality....")
>
> **I will utter** (2044)(**ereugomai** - only here) means literally to spit, to spue out, to eject through your mouth, to vomit, of oxen to bellow or roar. To cast forth like a river, gurgle, disgorge, the passion of a prophet. To announce in a sudden and emphatic manner with an implication of `blurting out.' Only used here in the NT. Fives uses in Septuagint (Lxx) - Lev 11:10 = "all the **teeming** life of the water"; Ps 19:2 = "Day to day **pours forth** speech"; Hos 11:10 = "**roar** like a lion"; Amos 3:4 = "Does a lion **roar**"; Amos 3:8 - "A lion has **roared**!". During the Koine period the word **ereugomai** simply meant "to tell, speak," or "proclaim." The earlier usage of the word was, however, much more forceful—"to belch, to vomit," or "to spew out of the mouth" (of an oxen or other animal). In classical Greek, it was used for discharging, emptying, or casting forth, as when the sea casts foam when waves break on a shore. **Vincent** adds that "Homer uses it (**ereugomai**) of the sea

surging against the shore (“Iliad,” xvii., 265). Pindar of the eruption of Aetna (“Pyth.,” i., 40). There seems to lie in the word a sense of full, impassioned utterance, as of a prophet." A close derivative **ek**ereugomai is used in Ps 119:171 = "Let my lips **utter** praise" and Ps 145:7 = "They shall eagerly **utter**"/

Hidden (2928)(**krupto** English = crypt, cryptic) is a verb meaning to cover, to hide, to conceal, to keep secret (either protectively or for selfish reasons). To keep something from being seen. **Krupto** speaks of literal hiding in many Gospel passages, but also of figurative hiding, as in Lk 18:34 (cp Lk 19:42) where the meaning of Jesus' words was "hidden from" the disciples (Cp Webster's definition of "cryptic" = having or seeming to have a hidden or ambiguous meaning). In Jn 19:38, krupto is used adverbially to refer to the “secret” (under cover, in hiding) discipleship of Joseph of Arimathea.

> **Krupto** 18x - Matt. 5:14; Matt. 11:25; Matt. 13:35; Matt. 13:44; Matt. 25:18; Matt. 25:25; Lk. 13:21; Lk. 18:34; Lk. 19:42; Jn. 8:59; Jn. 12:36; Jn. 19:38; Col. 3:3; 1 Tim. 5:25; Heb. 11:23; Rev. 2:17; Rev. 6:15; Rev. 6:16
>
> **Constable** - Asaph wrote that he would explain to his readers aspects of Israel’s history that had been previously unknown. He then proceeded to use Israel’s history to teach the Israelites how consistently rebellious they had been toward God and how just and merciful God had been with them. He taught these lessons by using “parables,” by comparing various things. By comparing various incidents in Israel’s history he revealed things previously unknown. Jesus did the same thing when He taught the multitudes using parables. He revealed to the people some things that they had not previously understood. Jesus was not teaching entirely new things any more than Asaph was in Psalm 78. He put things together that taught the crowds new lessons. Jesus concealed some truth by using parables, but He also revealed some truth to the multitudes with them. This is the point of Matthew’s quotation of Asaph here. Jesus was bringing together pieces of previous revelation about the kingdom and by combining these was teaching the people new things about the kingdom. He was throwing new light on the kingdom with His comparisons (parables).

Foundation (2602)(**katabole** from **kataballo** = to throw down from **kata** = down + **ballo** = throw, cast) is literally a casting down or laying down. The original idea was the laying down of the foundation of a house. Note the phrase *apo kataboles*, **from the foundation**, is used 7x in the NT - Matt. 13:35; Matt. 25:34; Lk. 11:50; Heb. 4:3; Heb. 9:26; Rev. 13:8; Rev. 17:8

O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart;
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.

O give Thine own sweet rest to me,
That I may speak with soothing power
A word in season, as from Thee,
To weary ones in needful hour.
—F. R. Havergal

MacArthur comments in regard to these things being hidden in the past that "The rejection of His messiahship did not catch the Lord by surprise, and the postponement of the kingdom was not a backup plan. The things **hidden since the foundation of the world** pertained to “the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,” which Jesus explained to His disciples but not the unbelieving multitudes and religious leaders (Mt. 13:11–16). To those who rejected Him, He spoke “in parables; because while seeing they [did] not see, and while hearing they [did] not hear, nor [did] they understand” (Mt 13:13). God made no alterations of His plan of redemption. Everything was exactly on schedule and according to the predictions of His Word." (MNTC-Mt)

Alan Carr - This verse tells us that there are some things that have been kept secret from the foundations of the world. There are some things that were “hidden, a mystery” from before the world was ever formed. This “mystery” is spoken of in other passages as well, Ro 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:7-10; Col. 1:25-27. All these verses, plus others, reveal to us the fact that there are some things that have been hidden from eternity. These hidden mysteries have been revealed to the saints of God. God says that we can know these mysteries and be blessed by them.

Robert Mounce - Since they refused to hear him, his message would fall on their ears as difficult and obscure. The truths that Jesus revealed to those who by faith had taken the first step toward understanding were secrets concealed since the beginning of time. Only in fulfillment, and then only to those who have the insight of faith, are the truths of God’s sovereign reign made clear. To outsiders they come as riddles and meaningless sayings. (UBCS-Mt)

Parables (3850) see preceding note on parabole

John Broadus has an interesting note on Matthew's use of the verb **fulfill** - **Fulfill** is the translation of a Greek word (**pleroo**) signifying to 'make full,' to 'fill up.' (So the English fill full or fulfill). It is often used in New Testament, both literally, as to fill a valley, boat, etc., and figuratively, as to fill with gladness, knowledge, etc. In a derivative sense it signifies to 'perform fully,' 'accomplish,' being applied to a work or a duty, and to predictions, as here. This last very important use, to fulfill (a prediction), is found frequently in Matthew (Mt 1:22; 2:15, 17, 23; 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:54, 56; 27:9), and in John (Jn 12:38; 13:18; 15:25; 17:12; 18:9, 31; 19:24, 36); several times in Luke (Lk 1:20; 4:21; 21:22; 24:44), and in Acts (Acts 1:16; 3:18; 13:27); once in Mark (Mk 14:49) and in James (Jas 2:23.) An examination of these passages would show that in general they will admit only the strict sense of **fulfill**, implying a real prediction, and that no one of them requires the quite different meaning attached to the term by some expositors, viz.: that while there was no real prediction, the New Testament occurrence reminded the Evangelist of the Old Testament passage, or so resembled the Old Testament occurrence as to warrant the application to it of the same language. This serious departure from the etymology and regular use of the word is supposed by such expositors to be required by a few passages in which it is difficult for us to see that there exists the strict relation of prediction and fulfillment. But such passages, it will be found, all admit of at least a possible explanation in consistency with the idea of a real fulfillment (see on Mt 2:15, 18), and we have no right to take this or any other word in a sense alien to its origin and use, unless there be found passages in which it cannot possibly have the usual meaning. The strict application of this rule of interpretation is here a matter of importance, as the question involved seriously affects the prophetic relation between the Old and the New Testament.

But two things are to be observed. (1) The New Testament writers sometimes quote Old Testament expressions as applicable to gospel facts or truths, without saying that they are prophecies (e. g., Ro 10:18), and in some cases it is doubtful how they intend the quotation to be regarded. (2) It is often unnecessary, and sometimes impossible, to suppose that the prophet himself had in mind that which the New Testament writer calls a fulfillment of his prediction. Some predictions were even involuntary, as that of Caiaphas. (John 11:50.) Many prophecies received fulfillments which the prophet does not appear to have at all contemplated. But as God's providence often brought about the fulfillment though the human actors were heedless or even ignorant of the predictions they fulfilled (e. g., John 19:24), so God's Spirit often contemplated fulfillments of which the prophet had no conception, but which the Evangelist makes known. And it is of a piece with the general development of revelation that the later inspiration should explain the records of earlier inspiration, and that only after events have occurred should the early predictions of them be fully understood. (Matthew 1 Commentary)

Technical Note on this verse **spoken by the prophet** - A few important manuscripts (a* Q ¦(1, 13)33) identify the prophet as Isaiah, a reading that is significantly harder than the generic "prophet" because the source of this prophecy is not Isaiah but Asaph in Ps 78. Jerome mentioned some MSS that had "Asaph" here, though none are known to exist today. This problem is difficult because of the temptation for scribes to delete the reference to Isaiah in order to clear up a discrepancy. Indeed, the vast majority of witnesses have only "the prophet" here (a(1)B C D L W 0233 0242 Û lat sy co). However, as B. M. Metzger points out, "if no prophet were originally named, more than one scribe might have been prompted to insert the name of the best known prophet - something which has, in fact, happened elsewhere more than once" (TCGNT 27). In light of the paucity of evidence for the reading VHsai?ou, as well as the proclivity of scribes to add his name, it is probably best to consider the shorter reading as authentic. (**NET Note**)

Matthew 13:36 Then He left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

- **Then He left the crowds** - Mt 14:22 15:39 Mk 6:45 8:9
- **Went into** - Mt 13:1 9:28 Mk 4:34
- **Explain** - Mt 13:11 15:15,16 Mk 7:17 Joh 16:17-20
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DISCIPLES REQUEST
EXPLANATION OF THE TARES

Then (**tote**) is an **expression of time** which means "At that time." When used as an adverb **THEN** is always worth pausing to ponder and query asking questions like "What time is it? What happens next? Why does this happen now?, etc". When **then** is used (as determined by the context) to be an **expression of time** or "time phrase", it usually indicates **sequence** and thus marks that which is next in order of time, soon after that, following next after in order of position, narration or enumeration, being next in a series (See English definitions or here).

He left the crowds and went into the house- **Into the house** apparently in Capernaum (Peter's home and home base so to speak for His Galilean ministry - see Mt 8:14, 15+, Mt 12:46-50+, Mt 13:1+). From Mt 13:2+ to this point it is clear that Jesus had been teaching to the "**large crowds** (that) **gathered to Him**." Jesus now moves into a more private setting with His true disciples. Compare Mt 13:11-12 " "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him."

And His disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable (parabole) **of the tares** (zizanion) **of the field."** - Mark 4:34+ says that after the parables (parable of soils, mustard seed, et al) "He did not speak to them (THE CROWDS) without a parable; but He was explaining everything privately to His own disciples." And so here Jesus discloses the meaning of the parables.

Explain (aorist imperative)(1285)(**diasapheo** from **dia** = intensifies + **sapheo** = to manifest from **saphes** = clear) means to make thoroughly clear, fully manifest, told in detail (Mt 18:31 = "reported") and thus explain or clarify something that is obscure. Only 2 NT uses - Mt 13:36, Mt 18:31. Used 2x in the Septuagint --See commentary on use in Dt 1:5 where "Moses undertook to **expound** this law." Da 2:6+ "**declare** the dream (Lxx - diasapheo) and its interpretation (sugkrisis = comparing, interpretation)."

Michael Andrus - Similarities of Parable of the Taresto and difference from the Parable of the Sower. First, the farmer here is identified as the Son of Man, or Jesus, whereas his identity in the previous parable is not stated. The field is not the hearts of people this time, but the world. The seed is not the Word of God here, but the sons of the kingdom, i.e. believers. The enemy is once again the devil, but instead of snatching seed from unresponsive hearts he is now sowing weeds in the world. The weeds are the sons of the evil one or unbelievers. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are the angels.

QUESTION - What is the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares?

ANSWER - The Parable of the Wheat and the Weeds, or Tares, is filled with spiritual significance and truth. But, in spite of the clear explanation of the parable that Jesus gave (Matthew 13:36-43), this parable is very often misinterpreted. Many commentaries and sermons have attempted to use this story as an illustration of the condition of the church, noting that there are both true believers (the wheat) and false professors (the weeds) in both the church at large and individual local churches. While this may be true, Jesus distinctly explains that the field is not the church; it is the world (v. 38).

Even if He hadn't specifically told us the world is the setting of the story, it would still be obvious. The landowner tells the servants not to pull up the weeds in the field, but to leave them until the end of the age. If the field were the church, this command would directly contradict Jesus' teaching in Matthew 18, which tells us how to deal with unrepentant sinners in the church: they are to be put out of the fellowship and treated as unbelievers. Jesus never instructed us to let impenitent sinners remain in our midst until the end of the age. So, Jesus is teaching here about "the kingdom of heaven" (v. 24) in the world.

In the agricultural society of Christ's time, many farmers depended on the quality of their crops. An enemy sowing weeds would have sabotaged a business. The tares in the parable were likely darnel because that weed, until mature, appears as wheat. Without modern weed killers, what would a wise farmer do in such a dilemma? Instead of tearing out the wheat with the tares, the landowner in this parable wisely waited until the harvest. After harvesting the whole field, the tares could be separated and burned. The wheat would be saved in the barn.

In the explanation of parable, Christ declares that He Himself is the sower. He spreads His redeemed seed, true believers, in the field of the world. Through His grace, these Christians bear the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-24). Their presence on earth is the reason the "kingdom of heaven" is like the field of the world. When Jesus said, "The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2; 4:17), He meant the spiritual realm which exists on earth side by side with the realm of the evil one (1 John 5:19). When the kingdom of heaven comes to its fruition, heaven will be a reality and there will be no "weeds" among the "wheat." But for now, both good and bad seeds mature in the world.

The enemy in the parable is Satan. In opposition to Jesus Christ, the devil tries to destroy Christ's work by placing false believers and teachers in the world who lead many astray. One has only to look at the latest televangelist scandal to know the world is filled with professing "Christians" whose ungodly actions bring reproach on the name of Christ. But we are not to pursue such people in an effort to destroy them. For one thing, we don't know if immature and innocent believers might be injured by our efforts. Further, one has only to look at the Spanish Inquisition, the Crusades, and the reign of "Bloody Mary" in England to see the results of men taking upon themselves the responsibility of separating true believers from false, a task reserved for God alone. Instead of requiring these false believers to be rooted out of the world, and possibly hurting immature believers in the process, Christ allows them to remain until His return. At that time, angels will separate the true from false believers.

In addition, we are not to take it upon ourselves to uproot unbelievers because the difference between true and false believers isn't always obvious. Tares, especially in the early stages of growth, resemble wheat. Likewise, a false believer may resemble a true believer. In Matthew 7:22, Jesus warned that many profess faith but do not know Him. Thus, each person should examine his own relationship with Christ (2 Corinthians 13:5). First John is an excellent test of salvation.

Jesus Christ will one day establish true righteousness. After He raptures the true church out of this world, God will pour out His righteous wrath on the world. During that tribulation, He will draw others to saving faith in Jesus Christ. At the end of the tribulation, all unbelievers will be judged for their sin and unbelief; then, they will be removed from God's presence. True followers of Christ will reign with Him. What a glorious hope for the "wheat"! GotQuestions.org

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Matthew 13:37 And He said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man,

- **He said** - Mt 13:24,27
- **the good seed is the Son of Man** - Mt 13:41 Mt 10:40 Mt 16:13-16 Lu 10:16 Joh 13:20 Jn 20:21 Ac 1:8 Ro 15:18 1Co 3:5-7 Heb 1:1 2:3
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SON SOWS
SAINTS

And He said, "The one who sows (speiro) **the good** (kalos) **seed is the Son of Man** - The sower is the **Son of Man** (the name used by Daniel - Da 7:13+), the Lord Jesus. It is interesting that He did not say "and the Son of Man" is Me." In other words, they had come to understand this was His title. This statement (**the one who sows**) implies that the "sowing" began with His earthly ministry as He went "throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the **Gospel of the kingdom**" (Mt 4:23+, cf Mt 9:35+, Lk 4:43, 44+). He sowed directly during His earthly ministry, and has been sowing through His servants (the good seed) in succeeding ages. Who is the **good seed**? The next passage says they are **sons of the kingdom**. These are the regenerate, redeemer believers throughout the world, strategically placed by the Son of Man to be salt and light in the midst of growing spiritual darkness in a crooked and perverse generation, supernaturally enabled by the Spirit to bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23+) and emit a fragrant aroma of Christ. Paul says "But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place (IN THE FIELD, THE WORLD). For we are a fragrance of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; 16 to the one an aroma from death to death, to the other an aroma from life to life. And who is adequate for these things? (2 Cor 2:14-16).

Good seed is an unusual figure of speech that describes human beings planted in the field! But this reminds us of Jesus words in John ""Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." (John 12:24).

One is also reminded of Jesus' words in Luke 10:2+ that "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the **Lord of the harvest** to send out laborers into His harvest." As Lord of the harvest, Christ directs the sowing process, i.e., the missionary mandate of the church. **MacArthur** comments that "The **Lord of the harvest** is the Lord Jesus Christ, to Whom the Father has committed all judgment (Jn 5:22, 27-29; cf. 2 Th 1:5-10). The compassionate Lord seeks to rescue people from His wrath and judgment through the prayers of believers. This is the paradox and wonder of the Gospel. The judge commands His people to pray that more sinners be saved from His judgment; more than that, that more evangels be sent to those sinners, because the Judge and Executioner was Himself executed to save others from being executed by Him!" (MNTC-Lk)

> **Son of Man** is frequently the title Jesus gives to Himself in Matthew - Matt. 8:20; Matt. 9:6; Matt. 10:23; Matt. 11:19; Matt. 12:8; Matt. 12:32; Matt. 12:40; Matt. 13:37; Matt. 13:41; Matt. 16:13; Matt. 16:27; Matt. 16:28; Matt. 17:9; Matt. 17:12; Matt. 17:22; Matt. 18:11; Matt. 19:28; Matt. 20:18; Matt. 20:28; Matt. 24:27; Matt. 24:30; Matt. 24:37; Matt. 24:39; Matt. 24:44; Matt. 25:31; Matt. 26:2; Matt. 26:24; Matt. 26:45; Matt. 26:64;
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> **Son of Man** is the title which "focused on His humility and humanity in the incarnation, it was the title He most commonly used of Himself. It beautifully identified Him as He fully participated in human life as the perfect Man, the second Adam, and the sinless representative of the human race. It was also a title clearly understood by Jews as referring to the Messiah (Luke 22:69; cf. Dan. 7:13). The title is used of Jesus by others only twice in the New Testament, once by Paul (Acts 7:56) and once by John (Re v. 14:14)." (MacArthur)
>
> See also What does it mean that Jesus is the Son of Man?

Wiersbe writes "Jesus is both the sower and the owner of the field, and he plants his people where he wants them to bear fruit. “Most assuredly, I say to you,” said Jesus, “unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much fruit” (John 12:24). The Lord may have planted you in a school, an office, a military camp, a hospital, a store, a quiet home, or a noisy neighborhood, but no matter where he has planted you, be sure you are “rooted and built up in Him” (Col. 2:7) and “rooted and grounded in love” (Eph. 3:17). A friend of mine, now in heaven, had to be in the hospital for several weeks, and during that time led several nurses to faith in Christ. Bloom wherever you are planted!" (New Testament Words)

James Smith - Every seed is a living one, and as closely connected with the Sower as children are to a parent. Each seed is sent forth into the soil of the world to grow and manifest His own hidden life and beauty. To this end it must die. ""“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." (John 12:24). We must die unto sin before we can live unto God. (Handfuls of Purpose)

Outline:

1. Sowing of the tares in the wheat.
2. Similarity of the tares to the wheat
3. Survival of the tares with the wheat
4. Separation of the tares from the wheat

Matthew 13:38 and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one;

- **and the field is the world** - Mt 24:14 28:18-20 Mk 16:15-20 Lu 24:47 Ro 10:18 16:26 Col 1:6 Rev 14:6
- **as for the good seed** - Ps 22:30 Isa 53:10 Ho 2:23 Zec 10:8,9 Joh 1:12,13 12:24 Ro 8:17 Jas 1:18 2:5 1Pe 1:23 1Jn 3:2,9
- **tares are the sons of the evil one** - Mt 13:19 Ge 3:15 Joh 8:44 Ac 13:10 Php 3:18,19 1Jn 3:8,10
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE FIELD IS NOT THE CHURCH BUT THE WORLD!

And the field is the world - To these Jewish men this was a surprise that the field was not Israel but the **world**! **The field** is emphatically **NOT** the church as is so commonly taught by many, which is very surprising because Jesus is crystal clear! The **world** is where the believers (**the good seed**) are spread. Jesus in effect predicts the worldwide missionary effect to spread His Gospel! Now, that said, can we *apply* (emphasize "apply") the principle of this parable to the Church, the Body of Christ worldwide and the Body locally where we attend? I think such an application is reasonable and is seen in the first century church. For example, John alludes to the "tares" writing "They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, so that it would be shown that they all are not of us." (1 Jn 2:19+) So here the "tares" self-separated so to speak!

This is a picture of the church in the world, not of the world in the church.
- John MacArthur

Gotquestions makes another point to emphasize the field is not the church - Even if He hadn’t specifically told us the world is the setting of the story, it would still be obvious. The landowner tells the servants not to pull up the weeds in the field, but to leave them until the end of the age. If the field were the church, this command would directly contradict Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 18:15-17, which tells us how to deal with unrepentant sinners in the church: they are to be put out of the fellowship and treated as unbelievers. Jesus never instructed us to let impenitent (**ED**: better - unrepentant) sinners remain in our midst until the end of the age. So, Jesus is teaching here about “the kingdom of heaven” (Mt 13:24) in the world. (Parable of the Wheat and Tares)

Alexander Maclaren - Whatever view we take of the bearing of this parable on purity of communion in the visible Church, we should not slur over Christ’s own explanation of ‘**the field,**’ lest we miss the lesson that He claims the whole **world** as His, and contemplates the sowing of the seed broadcast over it all. The Kingdom of Heaven is to be developed on, and to spread through, the whole earth. Side by side with the sower’s beneficent work the counter-working of ‘his enemy’ goes on. As the one, by depositing holy truth in the heart, makes men ‘children of the kingdom,’ the other, by putting evil principles therein, makes men ‘children of evil.’...Where the good seed is sown, there the evil is scattered thickest. False Christs and false apostles dog the true like their shadows. Every truth has its counterfeit. Neither institutions, nor principles, nor movements, nor individuals, bear unmingled crops of

good. Not merely creatural imperfection, but hostile adulteration, marks them all. The purest metal oxidises, scum gathers on the most limpid water, every ship's bottom gets foul with weeds. The history of every reformation is the same: radiant hopes darkened, progress retarded, a second generation of dwarfs who are careless or unfaithful guardians of their heritage.

Phil Newton - If the church were meant then the teaching of church discipline that follows later in Matthew 18 would be eliminated since it is only at the end when the evil is removed. What Christ explains is that His rule extends beyond the church. He rules the world! (The Triumph of the Kingdom)

Henry Alford has an interesting thought on **the field is the world** - Its two principal references are, to *the whole history of the world* from beginning to end; the coming of sin into the world by the malice of the devil (Ge 3+), the mixed state of mankind, notwithstanding the development of God's purposes by the dispensations of grace,—and the final separation of the good and evil at the end. The very declaration 'the harvest is the ***end*** of the world' suggests the original sowing as the ***beginning*** of it. Yet this sowing is not in the fact, as in the parable, *one only*, but repeated again and again. (Commentary)

> **World** (2889)(**kosmos** related to **kosmeo** = to order or adorn) means essentially something that is well-arranged, that which has order or something arranged harmoniously. **Kosmos** refers to an ordered system or a system where order prevails. **Kosmos** in many places in the NT takes on a negative shade of meaning. In the present context kosmos is morally neutral in one sense describes "planet earth," but more specifically refers to all human beings for the **good seed** refers to human beings who are sown in the world of human beings.
>
> **The church age is for evangelism, not "eviction."**

And as for the good (kalos) **seed (sperma), these are the sons of the kingdom** (basileia) - In Mt 13:19+, the **good seed** is the Word of the Kingdom (cf Lk 8:11+). In this parable, the good seed is the **Sons of the kingdom** who are sons of the King! These are genuine believers and correspond to the **good soil** in the first parable as described in Mt 13:23+ "And the one on whom seed was sown on the **good soil**, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty." So in the parable of the tares, the **good** (**kalos**) **seed** describes disciples of Jesus who the Master has strategically spread throughout the world, who (empowered by the Spirit) produce **good** (**kalos**) **fruit** (Mt 3:10+) of **good** (**kalos**) **works** which glorify the Father (Mt 5:16+, cf Eph 2:10+). "The Lord plants His people in the world as His witnesses, to grow and become fruitful plants of righteousness....Christians are not left in the world by accident but are placed here on divine assignment from their Lord." (MacArthur) **Sons of the Kingdom** are "those who have a right to the privileges of the Messianic reign." (Broadus - see below)

> **Broadus** on **sons of the kingdom** - By a Hebrew idiom a variety of ideas of intimate relation or close connection are expressed by the use of '**son**' or '**child**'; e.g., in OT 'sons of Belial (wickedness)', as it were born of wickedness, deriving their very nature from wickedness (Dt 13:13KJV, Jdg 19:22KJV, Jdg 20:13KJV, 1 Sa 2:12KJV, 1 Sa 10:27KJV, 2 Sa 23:6KJV, 1 Ki 21:10KJV, 1 Ki 21:13KJV, 2 Chr 13:7KJV). So with 'sons of disobedience' (Eph. 2:2), and 'children of obedience.' (1 Pe 1:14ASV) In 'children of wrath' (Eph. 2:3), 'children of cursing' (2 Pe 2:14ASV.), we have a very strong expression of the idea that these persons are by their very nature objects of wrath, of a curse. 'The sons of this world' (Luke 16:8NKJV) are wholly devoted to this world, as it were with a filial devotion. (See also on 9:15; 11:19; 13:38; 23:15, and comp. 1 Macc. 4:2.) 'The sons of the resurrection' (Luke 20:36) are those who partake of it. And so 'the **sons of the kingdom**' here are the persons who are considered as having a right to its privileges (by reason of the New Birth).

James Smith - While growing together in the field there may be a seeming likeness, but their origin and character are entirely different. Regeneration is the only remedy for the tares (John 3:5+). (Handfuls of Purpose)

Ligon Duncan points out why the central message of this parable was so important to Jesus' little band of disciples Who He had appointed to spread the Gospel seed after He left them. Duncan writes "That message was so important for the disciples because they were expecting Jesus to purge all iniquity from Israel and to establish a perfectly righteous kingdom, and if they had not had the perception corrected, they would have been very, very disappointed by the kingdom that the Lord Jesus was going to set up." (Sermon)

> **Good** (2570)(**kalos**) describes that which is inherently excellent or intrinsically good, providing some special or superior benefit. It is that which is good, beautiful, with a basic meaning healthy, sound, fit, opposite kakos (bad, evil) and aischros (ugly, deformed). In classical usage, kalos was originally descriptive of outward form, beautiful. It was used to describe of usefulness, as a **fair** haven, a **fair** wind. Auspicious, as sacrifices. Morally beautiful, noble; hence virtue is called *to kalon*. The New Testament usage is similar. Outwardly fair, as the stones of the temple (Lu 21:5): well adapted to its purpose, as salt (Mk 9:50): competent for an office, as deacons (1Ti 4:6); a steward (1Pe 4:10); a soldier (2Ti 2:3): expedient, wholesome (Mk 9:43, 45, 47);

conscience (Heb 13:18). The phrase it is good, i.e., a good or proper thing (Ro14:21). In the Septuagint kalos is the most usual word for good as opposed to evil (Ge 2:17; 24:50; Isa 5:20).

> **Kalos** us a key word in Matthew 13 - Matt. 13:8; Matt. 13:23; Matt. 13:24; Matt. 13:27; Matt. 13:37; Matt. 13:38; Matt. 13:45; Matt. 13:48;

Satan has a counterfeit for every divine reality.
- William MacDonald
(Borrow Believer's Bible Commentary)

And the tares (zizanion) are the sons of the evil (poneros) one - **The tares** figuratively refers to unregenerate people as useless "weeds!" Satan "sows the world with those who look like, talk like, and, to some extent, walk like disciples."(MacDonald) But they are not genuine followers of the King.**Sons of** is a Hebraism that speaks of likeness (see note above). These **sons** do not fall far from the evil tree and are completely under his control, even as children are (or should be) to their earthly father. And we all do well to remember that at one time we too were **tares**, before we, by grace through faith, became wheat!**The evil one** is the **devil**. (Mt 13:19+). Because the **evil one** is the avowed enemy with God (and all of God's children!), so too are his "seed," and in one sense their enmity goes back to the Garden of Eden where God declared "And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel." (Ge 3:15+). Paul writes that these **sons of the** devil are those who are dead in their trespasses and sins (Eph 2:1+) adding they walk (live) "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the (EVIL) spirit that is now working (energeo in present tense = continually "energizing" evil) in the sons of disobedience (apeitheia - willful [not ignorant - cf Ro 1:19-20+], obstinate and rebellious disbelief, unwillingness to be persuaded)." (Eph 2:2+), "by nature (Ro 5:12+) children of wrath." (Eph 2:3+). Is it any wonder that the unsaved person is disobedient to God? He is controlled by the world, the flesh, and the devil, the three great enemies of God! And he cannot change his own nature or, of himself, overcome the world and the devil. He needs outside help, and that help can come only from God.

Adam Clarke - Satan has a shoot of iniquity for every shoot of grace; and, when God revives his work, Satan revives his also.

Wiersbe - We must beware of Satan's counterfeits. He has counterfeit Christians (2 Cor. 11:26) who believe a counterfeit Gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). He encourages a counterfeit righteousness (Rom. 10:1-3), and even has a counterfeit church (Rev. 2:9). At the end of the age, he will produce a counterfeit Christ (2 Thes. 2:1-12). ...Our task is not to pull up the false, but to plant the true. (This does not refer to discipline within the local church.) We are not detectives but evangelists! We must oppose Satan and expose his lies. But we must also sow the Word of God and bear fruit in the place where He has planted us. (Bible Exposition Commentary)

> **COMMENT REGARDING "CHILDREN OF GOD"** - There is a common misconception in the unbelieving world (and even among Christians) that everyone born is a "**child of God**." That is a deadly, deceptive dogma, which in fact can even serve to impede one from seeking to actually become a child of God by grace through faith. Everyone born is born in sin, born in Adam and into the kingdom of darkness governed by Satan. Obviously not every believer is an out and out Satan worshiper, but they are in his kingdom and under his authority. Acts 26:18+ contrasts the two kingdoms, Jesus speaking to Paul at his conversion tells him that he is being sent to the Gentiles "to open their (SPIRITUAL) eyes so that they may turn from **darkness** to light and from the **dominion of Satan** to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me." In Col 1:13+ Paul says that God "rescued us from the domain of darkness (DEVIL'S DOMINION), and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son (THE KINGDOM OF LIGHT, OF GOD, OF HEAVEN)." John explains how one in the kingdom of Satan enters the kingdom of the Son writing that "as many as received Him (JESUS), to them He gave the right to become **children of God**, even to those who **believe in His Name**." (John 1:12+). John glories in this truth writing "See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called **children of God**; and such we are. For this reason the world (THOSE IN SATAN'S KINGDOM OF DARKNESS) does not know us, because it did not know Him." (1 Jn 3:1+) John writes that "By this the **children of God** and the **children of the devil** (cf Jn 8:44) are obvious (phanerós): anyone who does not **practice** (present tense as one's general lifestyle) righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother." (1 Jn 3:10+).

> **Evil** (wicked, bad) (4190)(**poneros** from **poneo** = work or toil, cf poneria) means evil including evil, malignant character, pernicious, that which is morally or socially worthless, wicked, base, bad, degenerate. **Poneros** denotes determined, aggressive, and fervent evil that actively opposes what is good. **Poneros** is not just bad in character (like kakos - see below), but bad in effect (injurious)! **Poneros** means not only evil in its nature but viciously evil in its influence and actively harmful. **Poneros** is used to describe Satan (*ho poneros* = "Evil one"), the god of this age, who is corrupting man and dragging him to destruction. This denotes someone who is not content in being corrupt themselves.

> They seek to corrupt others and draw them into the same destruction! **Poneros** in Matthew - Matt. 5:11; Matt. 5:37; Matt. 5:39; Matt. 5:45; Matt. 6:13; Matt. 6:23; Matt. 7:11; Matt. 7:17; Matt. 7:18; Matt. 9:4; Matt. 12:34; Matt. 12:35; Matt. 12:39; Matt. 12:45; Matt. 13:19; Matt. 13:38; Matt. 13:49; Matt. 15:19; Matt. 16:4; Matt. 18:32; Matt. 20:15; Matt. 22:10; Matt. 25:26

Warren Wiersbe - Be alert! Satan is a counterfeiter. Jesus is the Lord of the harvest who plants his people wherever he wants them to bear fruit. Because we are seeds, we have his life within us and he wants us to be fruitful and multiply ourselves as we witness to others. We must be willing to die to sin and the world and surrender ourselves completely to Christ. But wherever Jesus plants a true believer, the devil comes and plants a counterfeit. Just as there are children of God, so there are children of the devil (Matt. 3:7; John 8:44), false Christians who are religious but have never been born again (2 Cor. 11:26; 1 John 3:10–15). Satan has false ministers (2 Cor. 11:13–15) who preach a false gospel (Gal. 1:6–9) that produces a false righteousness (Rom. 10:1–4). He even has a false church (Rev. 2:9; 3:9). God's people must be alert to detect these counterfeits and make sure they don't creep into places of leadership in the church (2 Pet. 2:1). We must stay alert, for it was while the workers slept that the devil planted his counterfeits in the field. To us this means not physical sleep but spiritual lethargy, a careless and casual attitude toward the Christian life. (New Testament Words)

William MacDonald - This parable does not justify, as some mistakenly suppose, the toleration of ungodly people in a local Christian church. Remember that the field is the world, not the church. Local churches are explicitly commanded to put out of their fellowship all who are guilty of certain forms of wickedness (1 Cor. 5:9–13). The parable simply teaches that in its mystery form, the kingdom of heaven will include the real and the imitation, the genuine and the counterfeit, and that this condition will continue until the end of the age. Then God's messengers will separate the false, who will be taken away in judgment, from the true, who will enjoy the glorious reign of Christ on earth. (Borrow Believer's Bible Commentary)

George Brooks - Jesus was conveying the message that the devil also has a work going on that looks a lot like that which Jesus has going on. It is not everyone who knows the difference between the two. The religion of the scribes and the Pharisees might have looked like the kingdom of heaven, but it was not. This parable should remind us that there are a lot of religions in the world that look like the kingdom of heaven but there is only one kingdom of heaven. Those who are in the kingdom of heaven are there by grace plus nothing. Jesus is the only source of entrance into the kingdom of heaven. This is why Jesus is pictured as the sower of the good seed. This parable was a message to the disciples to remember that the movement into which they had been called was sown in the world to produce fruit. However, the devil would be putting forth special effort to trick people into thinking that the false is real. The idea behind the activity of the devil seems to be that of counterfeiting the kingdom of heaven

> **Comment** - All mankind is in one of two families, the family of God (John 1:12) or the family of Satan, children of light or children of darkness.

Louis Barbieri observes that "This condition of the kingdom was never revealed in the Old Testament, which spoke of a kingdom of righteousness in which evil would be overcome." (See The Bible Knowledge Commentary)

Hindson - Unlike the Jewish form of the kingdom in the Old Testament where citizens could be easily recognized, during the Church Age, converts will be made from all over the world and received upon their profession of faith. Thus it will be easier to slip in some counterfeits who profess what they do not possess. The kingdom of heaven must refer to the church, the mystery form of the kingdom, which is the subject of these parables. The wheat sprang up and bore grain, emphasizing that true converts produce fruitful lives. By contrast, false (professing) converts produce no lasting fruit. It should be noted that a "fruit" is something that God must produce in us by His power (cf. Gal. 5:22ff), whereas, a "work" is something we can do by our own efforts. False converts may produce outstanding works but no real fruit. (Matthew-Twenty-First Century)

Even such an excellent expositor as **Adrian Rogers** seems to miss Jesus' clear teaching on the meaning of the **field** -- Now, what is the meaning of this parable? Well, wheat, you know, is that which makes bread and sustenance, and God's children are represented as wheat. And then the tares or weeds that look like wheat, and they're placed there by the enemy. The one who sows the wheat, the children of God, is the Son of Man, Jesus, verse 37. The good seed, according to verse 38, are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. The enemy who sows the weeds among the wheat is the devil, verse 39. The harvest is the end of the age when God separates the wheat from the tares. Now, what is the lesson here? Expect there to be hypocrites in the church. The devil is at work, and every church has them, and it's not our job to go through in Christendom and try to separate the wheat from the tares.

> **COMMENT** - I HIGHLY ESTEEM DR ROGERS AND HIS PREACHING AND HERE HE IGNORES THE MEANING OF THE FIELD. NOW IN A SENSE THE CHURCH IS IN THE FIELD, IN THE WORLD, AND IN THAT SENSE HAS WHEAT AND TARES AND CLEARLY THAT IS AN APPLICATION. THIS IS NOT A PARABLE GIVING INSTRUCTION AS TO HOW THE CHURCH SHOULD FUNCTION. IN OTHER WORDS IF YOU SIT IN BIBLE CLASS AND YOU HEAR FALSE TEACHING AGAIN AND AGAIN, CLEARLY THIS MUST BE ADDRESSED BY THE ELDERS AND THE FALSE TEACHER MUST BE "PLUCKED UP" AND CAST OUT

OF THE BODY OF CHRIST INTO THE FIELD OF THE WORLD.

Matthew 13:39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels.

NET Matthew 13:39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.

GNT Matthew 13:39 δ χθρ ς σπε ρας α τ στιν δι βολος, δ θερισμ ς συντ λεια α ν ς στιν, ο δ θεριστα γγελο ε σιν.

NLT Matthew 13:39 The enemy who planted the weeds among the wheat is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world, and the harvesters are the angels.

KJV Matthew 13:39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.

ESV Matthew 13:39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.

NIV Matthew 13:39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

ASV Matthew 13:39 and the enemy that sowed them is the devil: and the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are angels.

CSB Matthew 13:39 and the enemy who sowed them is the Devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

NKJ Matthew 13:39 "The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

NRS Matthew 13:39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels.

YLT Matthew 13:39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is a full end of the age, and the reapers are messengers.

NAB Matthew 13:39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

NJB Matthew 13:39 the enemy who sowed it, the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; the reapers are the angels.

GWN Matthew 13:39 The enemy who planted them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the world. The workers are angels.

BBE Matthew 13:39 And he who put them in the earth is Satan; and the getting in of the grain is the end of the world; and those who get it in are the angels.

- **and the enemy who sowed them is the devil** - Mt 13:25,28 2Co 2:17 11:3,13-15 Eph 2:2 6:11,12 2Th 2:8-11 1Pe 5:8 Rev 12:9 13:14 19:20 20:2,3,7-10
- **the harvest is the end of the age** - Mt 13:49 Mt 24:3 Joel 3:13 Rev 14:15-19
- **the reapers are angels** - Mt 25:31 Da 7:10 2Th 1:7-10 Jude 1:14
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SATAN SOWS
HIS SONS

And the enemy (echthros) who sowed them is the devil - **The enemy** indicates the one adamantly opposed to everything God is doing and for example will do anything to keep the Gospel of Jesus to be proclaimed with power! And keep in mind that the **devil** is very adept at sowing deception for that is how he tripped up Eve (Ge 3:1-5+).

MacArthur makes an interesting point on **the enemy who sowed them** - As is evident from the wording of the parable itself (see v.

25), sowed here carries the idea of thoroughness. Throughout history the tares have outnumbered the wheat by enormous percentages; and some parts of the world seem to be totally sown with the seed of the **enemy**." (See Matthew Commentary)

Satan works by imitating or counterfeiting the truth. Luther says he is "God's ape," meaning that he mimics the Word of God. Like our slang saying "Monkey see, monkey do." So here the **devil** is the "false farmer," imitating the "real farmer," the Son of Man. What does this teach us about the devil? He is not against "religion," but uses "religion" to deceive. And the worst kind of deception is religious deception. The Pharisees were "religious" but acted as the Satan's henchmen to see that the Son of Man was murdered.

> **Devil** (1228)(**diabolos** from **diá** = through, between + **ballo** = to cast, throw) means a **false accuser**, **slanderer** (one who utters false charges or misrepresentations which defame and damage another's reputation), **backbiting** (malicious comment about one not present), one given to malicious gossip or a **calumniator** (one who utters maliciously false statements, charges, or imputations about, this term imputes malice to the speaker and falsity to the assertions). Notice how the root words (**diá** = through + **bállō** = throw) picture what the devil does. He constantly throws between seeking to divide whether it be between a husband and wife, a child and parent, a church, etc. Resist his divisive, condemnatory accusations firm in your faith.

Gotquestions - The enemy in the parable is Satan. In opposition to Jesus Christ, the devil tries to destroy Christ's work by placing false believers and teachers in the world who lead many astray. One has only to look at the latest televangelist scandal to know the world is filled with professing "Christians" whose ungodly actions bring reproach on the name of Christ. But we are not to pursue such people in an effort to destroy them. For one thing, we don't know if immature and innocent believers might be injured by our efforts. **Further, one has only to look at the Spanish Inquisition, the Crusades, and the reign of "Bloody Mary" in England to see the results of men taking upon themselves the responsibility of separating true believers from false, a task reserved for God alone**. Instead of requiring these false believers to be rooted out of the world, and possibly hurting immature believers in the process, Christ allows them to remain until His return. At that time, angels will separate the true from false believers. In addition, we are not to take it upon ourselves to uproot unbelievers because the difference between true and false believers isn't always obvious. Tares, especially in the early stages of growth, resemble wheat. Likewise, a false believer may resemble a true believer. In Matthew 7:22+, Jesus warned that many profess faith but do not know Him. Thus, each person should examine his own relationship with Christ (2 Corinthians 13:5+). First John is an excellent test of salvation. (Parable of the Wheat and Tares)

Michael Andrus - Even the great Protestant Reformer John Calvin engaged in the execution of heretics in his hometown of Geneva, Switzerland. And in our own country we have the Salem witch trials to our shame, as well as the settlers' horrendous treatment of native American populations–often using religious justification (they were pagans!).i In our own lifetimes we have seen Protestants murdering Catholics (and vice versa) in Ireland and militant Christians killing abortion doctors here. I believe these are all examples of weed pulling that Christ would disapprove. God has not assigned us the job of Kingdom cops but rather ambassadors and witnesses. Now to be very frank, at this particular time in history and at this point in our culture, the more common problem we face, at least in the Church in America, is probably not the attempt to eradicate evil or evil people, but rather the temptation to compromise our morality and tolerate unimaginable evil. We are more likely to cohabit with the enemy than to exterminate him. I think we need a new call to hate sin but love the sinner. That may sound trite, but it's not. It may sound impossible, but it's not. There's one pe rson we do this with constantly; we hate our own sin but love ourselves. God never calls us to think of evil as anything but heinous and inexcusable, but at the same time He calls us to exercise grace and mercy to sinful people, just as He has always done.

Wiersbe - Be aware! As Christians, we live on a battleground, not a playground, because we have an enemy who is out to defeat us and destroy the work of the Lord. Caricatures of Satan show up in comic strips and cartoons, but he is definitely not a scarlet-horned creature with a pointed tail and a pitchfork. Ponder some of his names and titles and you will have to take the devil seriously. He is Abaddon and Apollyon, the destroyer (Rev. 9:11), the accuser (12:10), the adversary (1 Pet. 5:8), the god of this age (2 Cor. 4:4), the liar and murderer (John 8:44), and the prince of this world (14:30), to cite but a few of his titles. Jesus met Satan in the wilderness and soundly defeated him there (Matt. 4:1–11), but our Lord's definitive victory over him was at the cross (Col. 2:13–15). Every Christian shares in both of these victories if they will follow Christ's example and claim his victory by faith. (New Testament Words)

Spurgeon - "Magistrates and churches may remove the openly wicked from their society; the outwardly good who are inwardly worthless they must leave; for the judging of hearts is beyond their sphere."

And the harvest is the end of the age- Jesus is explaining Matthew 13:30 where He said to "Allow both (WHEAT AND TARES) to grow together until the **harvest**," which marks the end of the mystery phase of the Kingdom (but see**end of age** below). **End** (see sunteleia below) refers to the consummation or completion of this present**age.** It will be a "dead end" for some (tares) but a "live end" for others (wheat)!

When is **the end of the age**? This is not as easy to answer as it might seem. On one hand some think this refers to this present**age**

(see aion), the church age which will indeed come to consummation when the King returns. **Barbieri** writes ""The end of the Age" represents the conclusion of the present Age before Christ establishes the messianic kingdom." (See Bible Knowledge Commentary) I favor this interpretation but it has some problems because the final judgment does not follow until 1000 years later (if you believe in the **Millennium**) However the fact that the wicked are "harvested" and thrown into **Hades** or **Sheol** which is also "hot" (cf Lk 16:24+) would be compatible with the previous interpretation of the harvest when Christ returns. And then at the end of the "**Messianic Age**" the wicked will be cast into another "fiery furnace" the **Lake of fire**. At the end of the **Millennium**, there will be another rebellion of wicked, non-believers (in spite of Jesus bodily reigning on earth Rev 20:4+! Amazing!) but they are not described as being "*harvested*" but as being **devoured** (Rev 20:8-9+). Following this event is the **Great White Throne Judgment** (Rev 20:11-15+), at which all unbelievers will stand and be judged and then be cast into the **Lake of fire** which is **the second death**. **John MacArthur** offers a somewhat similar comment pointing out that with the phrase **the end of the age** (Mt 13:39 and Mt 13:49+) "Jesus is not giving a full description of the last days, but is concentrating on the judgment of unbelievers. He is speaking of judgment in general, with special focus on what is referred to as the final judgment at the **Great White Throne** (Rev. 20:11–15+). There "the dead, the great and the small" will be "judged, everyone of them" (Rev 20:12–13+)." (See Matthew Commentary) (See also What is the difference between Sheol, Hades, Hell, the lake of fire, Paradise, and Abraham's bosom?)

In the beginning of the **Olivet Discourse**, Jesus' disciples ask what would be the sign of His coming and **the end of the age**? (Mt 24:3+).

> **Tony Garland** commenting on this passage writes "Jesus responded in Mt 24:4-8 by describing general characteristics of the inter-advent age, and emphasized that these were not reliable indicators of His coming or the end of the age. Jesus calls this period, "the beginning of sorrows." In Mt 24:9-11, Jesus describes what conditions will be like at the end of the age. In Mt 24:15-22, Jesus tells us the **sure sign** of the end of the age: the **Abomination of Desolation**, which has relevance for all Jews and Christians, especially those living in Israel at that time."
>
> **Mark Hitchcock** writes "The appearance of the abomination of desolation will serve as the sign to those living in the end times that the end of the age is near. Times of unimaginable danger and persecution will be at hand. Therefore, Jesus issues a sober warning to those living in Judea at that time....Times of almost unbelievable difficulty are on the horizon. Jesus said that the end of the age will be a totally unique time of terror. Nothing in all of world history will even compare to what is coming. Jesus made it crystal clear.....The Second Coming of Christ will bring this present age to a screeching halt. Truly, it will be the "end of the age."" (BORROW What Jesus Says About Earth's Final Days)
>
> **Fruchtenbaum** explains that the disciples "asked for a third sign, and that was: "*What will be the sign that the end of this age has begun*?" In rabbinic theology of that day, the rabbis spoke of two ages: ***this age***, in which we now live; and ***the age to come***, the Messianic Age. The question is: "What is the sign that the last days of ***this age*** have begun and that will lead to ***the Messianic Age***? (The Footsteps of the Messiah- A Study of the Sequence of Prophetic Events)

ESV Study Bible (borrow) on **the end of the age** - The judgment that will follow the Son of Man's return at the close of the age to establish his kingdom in its fully realized form.

As an aside, in Jesus' explanation of this parable He does not give any detail of the wheat being gathered but in Mt 13:30 Jesus issues the command to "**gather** (aorist imperative) the wheat into My barn" which clearly implies that wheat/believers will be safely "harvested" and that their location is safely in "**My** (Jesus') barn." Jesus does not give any detail on His barn, but clearly this implies in His presence (cf Jude 1:24+). In sum, the explanation of the parable focuses primarily on the tares being gathered in.

The disciples undoubtedly wanted to put the sickle to the harvest immediately as suggested by Jesus' description in Mt 13:29+. We are reminded of the attitude of the "Sons of Thunder," (Mk 3:17+) described in Luke "When His disciples James and John saw this (UNBELIEVING SAMARITANS - Lk 9:52-53+), they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" (Lk 9:54+).

Gilbrant - Jesus compared the end of the world to the **harvest** (cf. Joel 3:13; Revelation 14:15, 16). The **harvest** holds both positive and negative implications (cf. Mt 13:40, 43; Mt 9:37). Now is the time to prepare for it. (Complete Biblical Library – Matthew)

> Joel 3:13+ Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.
>
> Revelation 14:15-19+ And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, (FIRST HARVEST) "Put in your sickle and reap, for the hour to reap has come, because **the harvest of the earth is ripe**." 16 Then He who sat on the cloud swung His sickle over the earth, and the earth

was reaped. 17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and **he also had a sharp sickle**. 18 Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, (SECOND HARVEST) "Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe." 19 So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. (SEE GARLAND'S DISCUSSION OF THESE 2 HARVESTS IN Rev 14:15-19)

Harvest (2326)(**therismos** from **therízo** = harvest, reap in turn from theros = summer which is harvest time) means the process of harvesting or reaping (Jn 4:35; Lxx = Ge 8:22, 30:14), but most NT uses are figurative - harvest of converts or saved souls (Mt 9:37, 38, Lk 10:2), the time of future judgment (Mt 13:30, Rev 14:15 because their iniquity is "ripe"). In the Septuagint the Feast of Harvest (First Fruits, Pentecost) (Ex 23:16). Therismos - 9x in NT - Matt. 9:37; Matt. 9:38; Matt. 13:30; Matt. 13:39; Mk. 4:29; Lk. 10:2; Jn. 4:35; Rev. 14:15

Garland adds that "The **harvest** is used throughout the Scriptures to symbolize the final gathering and separation of that which is desirable and productive (wheat) from that which is useless and for the fire (tares, chaff). The judgment attending the harvest is often represented by the threshing floor where the grain is separated from the outer husk (2Sa 24:16; 1Chr. 21:15; Jer. 51:33; Dan. 2:35; Mic. 4:12).....The long age so central to Jesus' teaching concerning the "**kingdom of heaven**" (Mt. 13:24, 31, 33, 44-45, 47, 52) has now drawn to a close. (See **The Arrival of God's Kingdom**.) It is now the time of the harvest. "But when the grain ripens, immediately he puts in the sickle, because the harvest has come" (Mark 4:29). At the harvest at the **end of the age**, there are both wheat and tares. The harvest includes a reaping of both and their separation. The wheat is gathered and preserved, the tares are gathered and destroyed. (Mt 13:26-30)

And the reapers are angels (aggelos/angelos) - These angels are God's messengers (meaning of aggelos) supernatural beings created by God and ever ready to do His will and to move at His command, in this case to reap the tares (cf angels used in divine judgment in the past - 2 Chr 32:21). Of course another place angels will play a pivotal role in God's judgment in in the sounding of the seven trumpets of judgment (Rev 8:1-2ff) and the pouring out the bowls of judgment in the Revelation during the Great Tribulation (Rev 16:1).

Spurgeon - This casts special scorn upon the great evil angel. He sows the tares, and tries to destroy the harvest; and, therefore, the good angels are brought in to celebrate his defeat, and to rejoice together with their Lord in the success of the divine husbandry.

Paul writes that the angels will deal "out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power." (2 Th 1:8-9)

Matthew 16:27 For the **Son of Man** is going to come in the glory of His Father with **His angels,** and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

Matthew 24:31+ And **He will send forth His angels** with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.

Comment - Notice here the angels gather the elect.

Gilbrant comments that "it is a good thing that the **angels** are going to make this final separation of the wheat and tares. They know who is really born again, for they rejoice when a sinner repents (Luke 15:7, 10+). They have been sent to believers to help, serve, and protect them; and they carry believers to paradise (Hebrews 1:14; Psalm 91:11, 12; Luke 16:22+). (Complete Biblical Library – Matthew)

Broadus makes an interesting comment - Observe that our Lord's interpretation takes no account of the men who slept (really meaning people in general, and not implying blame, Mt 13:25+), nor of the servants who reported what had happened; many commentators are not content with this, and propose various interpretations, which cannot be expected to reward attention.

Question: "What does the Bible mean when it refers to the end of the age?"

Answer: The **end of the age** ("end of the world" in the KJV) refers to the end of this present era and the commencement of the next dispensation. It is the period that precedes the Second coming of the Son of Man as the Righteous Judge. The end of the age includes the rapture, the tribulation, the second coming, and the judgment of the nations, all of which help usher in the age to come.

Jesus refers to "the end of the age" a couple times in Matthew 13, as He explains the meaning of some parables. In the parable of

the wheat and the tares, Jesus warns of a judgment to come in which “the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire” (Matthew 13:40). This will happen, Jesus says, “at the end of the age” (verses 39–40). Later, Jesus likens the kingdom of heaven to a dragnet that brings up all sorts of fish. Then the sorting comes: “They sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. This is how it will be at the end of the age” (verses 48–49). In both parables, the end of the age is associated with a separation, a sorting, and a burning fire (verses 40 and 50). Jesus used the phrase the end of the age to refer to that time in the future when the kingdom of God is established, true justice reigns, and the wicked are judged.

In Matthew 24, Jesus’ disciples come to Him with a question about the end of the age: “What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?” (Matthew 24:3). What follows is the Olivet Discourse, Jesus’ summary of end times’ events as they relate to Israel. The disciples thus understood the end of the age to mean “the final judgment that accompanies Jesus’ second coming.” The end of the age will be a great calamity for those who persist in their rejection of Christ. Judgment will fall swiftly and with finality. For the children of God alive during that time, the end of the age will be a time of salvation and fulfilled hope.

One “age” or era leads to another. Jesus spoke of both “this age” and “the age to come” (Matthew 12:32). The current age, the one in which we live, is the age of grace, which we also call the church age. In this dispensation, all mankind is called to repent of their sin and turn to Christ for salvation. This age has lasted for 2,000 years because God “is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). But this age must eventually come to an end. At the end of the age (literally, the consummation of the age), the age of grace will be complete, and a far more glorious age will be ushered in. Until then, “now is the time of God’s favor, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2)—repentance should not be delayed.

Christians have the Lord’s promise that He will never forsake us in this world, no matter what happens: “Surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:20).

John Piper - A wartime mindset must include shrewd knowledge of enemy tactics. Ephesians 5:11, “Take no part in unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them.” Christianity stands or falls with the reality of Satan and demons. Why? Because Jesus spent his whole ministry fighting them. If they are not real he is reduced to a comic figure.

What is Satan’s aim and his strategies?

1. He is the father of lies. (John 8:44) His nature is falsehood! He only speaks the truth in order to deceive.
2. Therefore, his chief enemy is truth—he opposes God’s word. (Genesis 3:1–5.)
3. He casts doubt on God’s goodness. (Genesis 3:1–5) He destroys the obedience of faith. He opposes the truth reaching and converting people.
4. He hinders missions strategy. (1 Thessalonians 2:18)
5. He distorts and prevents effective gospel message. (Acts 13:8–9)
6. He avoids inner need by removing external trouble. (1 John 3:12)
7. He uses the fear of death to hold men in bondage. (Hebrews 2:15) It doesn’t lead them to God because it leads them to get as many kicks here as possible.
8. He causes people to stumble over bad Christian attitudes. (2 Timothy 2:24–26)
9. He blinds the minds of unbelievers. (2 Corinthians 4:4)
10. He exploits a lack of understanding. (Matthew 13:19)
11. He suggests ways that don’t involve suffering. (Matthew 16:23; Matthew 4:1–11)
12. He imitates religious roles. (2 Corinthians 11:14–15; Matthew 13:28, 30; Revelation 2:9)
13. He misuses Scripture. (Matthew 4:6)
14. He imitates signs and wonders. (2 Thessalonians 2:9; Mark 13:22)
15. He offers exotic occult alternatives. (Revelation 2:19–24

He attacks faith to destroy believers:

16. attacks faith. (1 Thessalonians 3:5; 2 Corinthians 11:3)
17. brings persecution. (Revelation 2:9; 1 Peter 5:8; Luke 22:31)
18. brings sickness. (Job 1:11; 2:5; Luke 13:16)
19. dissension over doctrine and causes rifts. (Romans 16:17–20)
20. sexual allurements. (1 Corinthians 7:5; 1 Timothy 5:15)
21. unresolved anger. (2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 4:27)
22. pride. (1 Timothy 3:6)

We began with liar and end with pride. Connection: the truth is that God is God and we are not. It is humbling. The only way to rebel against the lowliness of creaturehood is to be a liar. Humility under God is the great devil resistance (James 4:6–7). (A Wartime Strategy)

Matthew 13:40 “So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age.

NET Matthew 13:40 As the weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be at the end of the age.

GNT Matthew 13:40 σπερ ο ν συλλ γεται τ ζιζ νια κα πυρ [κατα]κα εται, ο τως σται ν τ συντελε το α νος·

NLT Matthew 13:40 "Just as the weeds are sorted out and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the world.

KJV Matthew 13:40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.

ESV Matthew 13:40 Just as the weeds are gathered and burned with fire, so will it be at the end of the age.

NIV Matthew 13:40 "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age.

ASV Matthew 13:40 As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the end of the world.

CSB Matthew 13:40 Therefore, just as the weeds are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age.

NKJ Matthew 13:40 "Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.

NRS Matthew 13:40 Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age.

YLT Matthew 13:40 'As, then, the darnel is gathered up, and is burned with fire, so shall it be in the full end of this age,

NAB Matthew 13:40 Just as weeds are collected and burned (up) with fire, so will it be at the end of the age.

NJB Matthew 13:40 Well then, just as the darnel is gathered up and burnt in the fire, so it will be at the end of time.

GWN Matthew 13:40 Just as weeds are gathered and burned, so it will be at the end of time.

BBE Matthew 13:40 As then the evil plants are got together and burned with fire, so will it be in the end of the world.

- Mt 13:30
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Do not miss the fact that in Mt 13:40-43 Jesus spoke more of judgment. He wanted to make sure those who had ears would hear this clear warning of their eternal destiny if they rejection His offer of salvation.

MacArthur observes that "In the parable we are told that “the wheat sprang up and bore grain, [and] the tares became evident also” (v. 26). Jesus does not elaborate on that statement, but in light of His other parable explanations, that aspect of the parable would seem to teach that most true believers can be identified by their spiritual and practical fruit (grain) and unbelievers by their lack of it." (See Matthew Commentary)

Lockyer - Pluck away hypocrites, and you will pluck up formal Christians who are not hypocrites along with them. Pluck up those "unsound" in doctrine, and you will pluck up some Christians who are travelling by paths of sincerest inquiry to the grandest views of truth.

So (oun) could be translated **therefore** and indicates that Jesus is now presenting the consequence of the harvest just described.

First comes the bundling; afterward the burning.
-- John Phillips

Just as the tares (zizanion) **are gathered up** (sullego) **and burned with fire** - Jesus continues the comparison to the weeds in the field in the original story which were gathered up and burned in the fire ("First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up" - Mt 13:30). **Tares** are the evil workers of the devil and they will pay a painful price for having yoked themselves to Satan! **Fire** causes some of the greatest pain known, which is probably why the martyrs likeWilliam Tyndale (see part of his amazing,

courageous story in "How We Got the KJV Bible") were often burned at the stake by evil **tares** rather than being beheaded or hanged on a gallows. Jesus explains in the next verse that it is His angels who will gather up the tares. **Burned** is in the present tense which depicts continually being **burned** (but not annihilated as when they burned magic paraphernalia in Acts 19:19+ which was totally consumed)! The passive voice is clearly a "divine passive." Is this **fire** literal or just symbolic? Frankly, either way, the point is that the nature of this punishment is simply unimaginable to our finite minds! It is bad! It is forever! So let me ask you "how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" (Heb 2:3+).

Spurgeon - The fate of these ungodly ones will be *fire*, the most terrible of punishments; but this will not annihilate them; for they shall exhibit the surest tokens of a living woe – '*wailing and gnashing of teeth*.'"

> **Burned** (2618)(**katakaio** rom **kata** = intensifies meaning of verb + **kaio** = to burn) means to burn up, to consume or destroy by fire. The word denotes a violent consuming heat. It means to burn utterly as of chaff (Mt 3:17+, Lk 3:17+), tares (Mt 13:30,40), magic paraphernalia after citizens of Ephesus had been saved (Ac 19:19), works believers do in their own strength, for their own glory (1Cor 3:15), earth (2 Pe 3:10+), trees and grass (Rev 8:7+), the rebuilt city of Babylon (Rev 17:16+, Re 18:8+)
>
> **Fire** (4442)(**pur**) refers to literal fire (Mt 13:40; 17:15; Mk 9:22, Lk 17:29; Acts 2:3; Acts 7:30; Acts 28:5; 1 Cor 3:15; Jas 5:3; Heb 12:18; 2 Pet 3:7; Rev 1:14; 4:5; 8:7; 17:16; 19:20. **Pur** is used figuratively of God inflicting punishment (Heb 12:29), of disunion (Lk 12:49), of the tongue that kindles strife and discord (James 3:5-6), of trials (1 Pe 1:7, Rev 3:18), at Pentecost (Acts 2:3 = " tongues as of fire "), of burning up useless works (1 Cor 3:10-15), as a description of doing something with great difficult in Jude 1:23 ("snatching them out of the fire"). **Fire** in the context of judgment, the eternal fire, the place of punishment (Mt. 13:42, 50; Mt. 5:22; 18:9; Mk 9:4 Mt. 18:8; 25:41; Jude 1:7 Rev. 14:10); the lake of fire (Rev. 19:20; Rev 20:10, 14, 15; Rev 21:8).

Notice that Jesus does not say "like fire," but **fire** which sounds like literal fire, but it is fire that does not destroy. Furthermore, while we know that fire can purify (cf saints in 1 Pe 4:12), Jesus says absolutely nothing about this fire purging impurities or cleansing one of sin. Fire is for retributive punishment, not remedial punishment! **Fire** is repeatedly used to describe Hell, and is described as **eternal** (Mt 18:8). Some commentators have questioned whether hell is eternal, but in so doing they are in effect questioning the words of the Lord Jesus Christ Who declared "And these will go away into **eternal** punishment, but the righteous into **eternal** life." Notice the clear contrast of destinies with both described by Jesus as eternal. Hell is eternal. The fire of Hell is eternal. I do not like this doctrine, as I have friends and relatives who as best I can tell refused to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior before the passed on to the next life. So I find an eternal fiery Hell a very grievous thought. See study of Eternal Punishment.

> Matthew 25:41 "Then He will also say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the **eternal fire** which has been prepared for the devil and his angels;
>
> Mark 9:43 "If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life crippled, than, having your two hands, to go into **hell**, into **the unquenchable fire** (KJV is more literal - "the fire that never shall be quenched."),
>
> Revelation 19:20+ And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the **lake of fire which burns with brimstone**.
>
> Revelation 20:10+ And the devil who deceived them was thrown into **the lake of fire and brimstone**, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and **they will be tormented day and night forever and ever**.

So shall it be at the end of the age- **So shall it be**, in other words just like the weeds were burned in the fire, so too would tares be burned. The end of the age begs the question "What age?" Presumably this refers to the present age which will end when Jesus returns. Unbelievers will be separated from believers at that time and only believers will enter the Millennial Kingdom. At the end of the Millennial Kingdom John records another separation...

> When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them (Revelation 20:7-9+)
>
> **End** (Consummation) (4930)(**sunteleia** from **sun** = together or an intensifier + **teleo** = to finish) describes the bringing of something to a successful finish. In a word the noun **sunteleia** means completion, conclusion, close, end, consummation. It is used 5 times by Jesus Himself in the phrase the "**end** of the age." **Sunteleia** is used much more frequently in the Lxx than in NT. Study especially the uses (see Lxx uses below) in the

apocalyptic or prophetic portions of Daniel (Da 8:19+, Da 9:25+, Da 9:26+, Da 9:27+, Da 12:4, 6, 7, 13+) . **Sunteleia** is clearly an "eschatologically rich" term both the Old and the New Testaments apply to the **end of the age**.

Age (165)(**aion**) generally means an extended period of time and has various meanings depending on the context. Age, referring to an age or time in contrast to kósmos, referring to people or space. Denotes duration or continuance of time, but with great variety. Aion in Matthew - Matt. 6:13; Matt. 12:32; Matt. 13:22; Matt. 13:39; Matt. 13:40; Matt. 13:49; Matt. 21:19; Matt. 24:3; Matt. 28:20 "lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the **age**.""

Zodhiates - There is no supposition in this phrase (Mt 13:40), only certainty, but we can thank God that in the present age of grace, people still have the opportunity to believe before they die (Heb. 9:27). (Exegetical Commentary on Matthew)

Jesus' disciples later asked for more detail about **the end of the age** in the beginning of His Olivet Discourse, Matthew recording "As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, “Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and **of the end of the age**?"" (Mt 24:3+)

Dave Roper - Wheat And Tares: Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43 Let both grow together until the harvest. Matthew 13:30
We can, on the basis of this parable, divide the world into two classes—those who are genuinely born of God and those who are genuinely bogus.
We can also conclude that the two classes are initially indistinguishable. Very often it’s impossible to see any difference at all between an emerging son of God and a good old boy who belongs to the devil.

Furthermore, you can be assured that the differences will become apparent as the plants grow old. We’ll know others by the perfecting of their fruit: God’s men and women will get to be more and more like their Father as they age. And likewise for the devil’s.

But it seems to me that among all possible applications, Jesus was surely making one: Don’t be a tare-upper! There’s a great danger in damning others. “Christ knoweth,” John Woolman wrote, “what is in need of purging.” We should rather get on with the business of helping the Son of Man sow and leave the final judgments to Him.

Certainly there are occasions when we must vigorously “contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints” (Jude 3), and “refute those who oppose it” (Titus 1:9), but we should not be preoccupied with contention. (And woe to us if we welcome it.)

How much time we’ve wasted and how much harm we’ve done because we have not ears to hear! I think of the early disciples who, with Elijah-like fury, wanted Jesus to rain down fire and brimstone on the infidels of that day, and I recall His stern rebuke (Luke 9:54). And I think of my friend nearby who has made it his life’s work to hassle local heretics. I admire his passion, but I’m uneasy about his priorities.

Let them be. “Let them both grow . . . until the harvest.” As Jesus’ promised, “Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. Leave them . . . ” (Matthew 15:13).

Matthew 13:41 “The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness,

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NET Matthew 13:41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather from his kingdom everything that causes sin as well as all lawbreakers.

GNT Matthew 13:41 ποστελε υ ς το νθρ που το ς γγ λους α το , κα συλλ ξουσιν κ τ ς βασιλε ας α το π ντα τ σκ νδαλα κα το ς ποιο ντας τ ν νομ αν

NLT Matthew 13:41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will remove from his Kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil.

KJV Matthew 13:41 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;

ESV Matthew 13:41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law-breakers,

NIV Matthew 13:41 The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil.

ASV Matthew 13:41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity,

CSB Matthew 13:41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather from His kingdom everything that causes sin and those guilty of lawlessness.

NKJ Matthew 13:41 "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,

NRS Matthew 13:41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers,

YLT Matthew 13:41 the Son of Man shall send forth his messengers, and they shall gather up out of his kingdom all the stumbling-blocks, and those doing the unlawlessness,

NAB Matthew 13:41 The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will collect out of his kingdom all who cause others to sin and all evildoers.

NJB Matthew 13:41 The Son of man will send his angels and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of falling and all who do evil,

GWN Matthew 13:41 The Son of Man will send his angels. They will gather everything in his kingdom that causes people to sin and everyone who does evil.

BBE Matthew 13:41 The Son of man will send out his angels, and they will take out of his kingdom everything which is a cause of error, and all those who do wrong,

- **The Son of Man** - Mt 24:31 Mk 13:27 Heb 1:6,7,14 Rev 5:11,12
- **and they will gather out of His kingdom** - Mt 13:49 18:7 Ro 16:17,18 2Pe 2:1,2
- **and those who commit lawlessness** - Mt 7:22,23 Lu 13:26,27 Ro 2:8,9,16 Rev 21:27
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ANGELS GATHER
STUMBLING BLOCKS AND SINNERS

The Son of Man will send forth His angels (aggelos/angelos) - Notice Who is in charge of the **angels** - the **Son of Man** (see note) the Lord Jesus Christ. The once despised **Son of Man** is now the King, but still calls Himself **Son of Man**! **Will send forth** is **apostello**, the same verb used to describe the 12 disciples **Jesus sent out** (Mt 10:5). The Bible makes it clear that angels will be the agents of God's judgment (Mt. 24:31; Mt 25:31; Rev. 14:18-19).

Notice that the Son of Man is in control of this separating judgment, as Jesus Himself explained in John's Gospel...

> "For not even the Father judges anyone, but **He has given all judgment to the Son,** 23 so that all will honor the Son even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. 24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. 25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 "**For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself;** 27 **and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man**. (Jn 5:22-27)

This verse is the follow-up of Mt 13:30 to "Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "**First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up**; but gather the wheat into my barn."

Broadus - The **angels** (aggelos/angelos), who now desire to look into the things of salvation (1 Pet. 1:12), who rejoice over one sinner that repententh (Luke 15:7), who are all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of those who are to inherit salvation (Heb. 1:14), will then have assigned them the solemn task of separating the wicked from among the just, and consigning them to destruction. (Cf Mt 25:31.)...(Broadus feels that) No spiritual meaning is to be derived from '**gather up first**' in Mt 13:30, as if showing that the righteous are to witness the destruction of the wicked. Our Lord does not introduce the word 'first' into v. 41, and in the similar allusion of Mt 13:48 the order is reversed, simply following, in each case, the obvious propriety of the figure.

And they will gather out of His kingdom (basileia) **all stumbling blocks** - Notice the phrase **out of His Kingdom** indicates that at this time **His Kingdom** (Messiah's Kingdom the same as the Kingdom of God and Kingdom of Heaven - see Mt 16:28, Mt 20:21) is present on the earth, but it will not be consummated until the King returns (Rev 11:15+, Rev 19:11-16+) This is the Kingdom about

which Daniel had written predicting that "the Stone (JESUS CHRIST) that struck the statue became a great mountain (KINGDOM) and filled the whole earth." (Da 2:35+). **All stumbling blocks** refers to the tares, the sons of the evil one, this specific designation (stumbling blocks) describing their actions as trying to cause others to stumble and fall spiritually.

> **Gather out** (4816)(**sullego** from **sun** = with + **lego** = to say, call) means to gather (in), to collect, to gather by plucking or picking (as of fruit picking - Mt 7:16) or pulling out weeds (Mt 13:28). To assemble together.
>
> > **Sullego** - Matt. 7:16; Matt. 13:28; Matt. 13:29; Matt. 13:30; Matt. 13:40; Matt. 13:41; Matt. 13:48; Lk. 6:44
> >
> > **Sullego** in the Septuagint - Gen. 31:46; Exod. 5:11; Exod. 16:4; Exod. 16:16; Exod. 16:17; Exod. 16:18; Exod. 16:21; Exod. 16:22; Exod. 16:26; Exod. 16:27; Lev. 19:9; Lev. 19:10; Lev. 23:22; Num. 11:8; Num. 15:32; Num. 15:33; Deut. 23:25; Jdg. 1:7; Jdg. 11:3; Ruth 2:3; Ruth 2:7; Ruth 2:8; Ruth 2:15; Ruth 2:16; Ruth 2:17; Ruth 2:18; Ruth 2:19; Ruth 2:23; 1 Ki. 17:10; 1 Ki. 17:12; 2 Ki. 4:39; Ps. 104:28; Ps. 129:7; Cant. 6:2; Jer. 7:18 In the Septuagint this word usually translates the Hebrew verb lāqaṭ, “to gather, pick up” or even “to glean” (see Ge 31:46; Ru 2:8).
>
> **Stumbling blocks** (4625)(**skandalon** from a root meaning jump up, snap shut) was originally the piece of wood that kept open a trap for animals. Outside the Bible it is not used metaphorically, though its derivative skandalethron (e.g. a trap set through questions) is so used. The English word **scandal** is derived from the noun via the Lat. **scandalum**. Thus **skandalon** was literally, that movable part of a trap on which the bait was laid, and when touched caused the trap to close on its prey. **Skandalon** thus came to mean any entanglement of the foot. Figuratively, as used most often in Scripture, **skandalon** refers to any person or thing by which one is drawn into error or sin. 17 NT uses - Mt 13:41; Mt 16:23; Mt 18:7; Lk 17:1; Ro 9:33; Ro 11:9; Ro 14:13; Ro 16:17; 1 Co. 1:23; Gal 5:11; 1 Pe 2:8; 1 Jn 2:10; Rev 2:14
>
> > **Broadus** adds this note on **skandalon** - "several figurative uses, as to moral and religious objects: (a) A stumbling-block, as causing one to fall into sin. (Mt. 13:41; Mt 18:7; Luke 17:1; Ro 14:13; 1 Jn 2:10; Rev 2:14.) (b) An obstacle which men strike against and stop, an occasion of disbelief. (Rom. 9:32 f.; 16:17; 1 Cor. 1:23; 1 Peter 2:8.) (c) An object which one strikes against and is hurt or repelled, so as to be displeased with it, an “offence” in the present English sense of that word. (Matt. 16:23; Gal. 5:11.) (By further derivation comes our English use of scandal, which word is borrowed from the Greek, but conveys a meaning no where found in Greek use.) In some cases two of these senses may be united, as the second and third in 1 Cor. 1:23. (In Rom. 11:9, the reference is probably not to a stumbling-block, but to the primary sense of a trap-stick or trigger, as a figure for a means of destruction). In like manner the verb (skandalizo) is used figuratively in three corresponding senses: (a) To make one stumble and fall, to cause to sin. (Matt. 5:29 f.; 18:6–9; Luke 17:2; Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 8:13; 2 Cor. 11:29.) (b) To obstruct one’s path or make him stop, to cause one to disbelieve and reject or forsake. (Matt. 11:6; 13:21, 57; 15:12; 24:10; 26:31, 33; John 16:1.) (c) To pain or displease, to offend in our modern sense of the word, (Matt. 17:27; John. 6:61.) (And from this by further derivation comes our peculiar English use of the borrowed word “scandalize.”)

And those who commit lawlessness - **Commit** (poieo) is in the present tense indicating that **lawlessness** is the habitual practice of these individuals. Even believers are lawless from time to time, but genuine believers are not continually lawless. Jesus has a similar description of the "**many**" (cf "many" in Mt 7:13+) who profess to know Him and even claim to have carried out supernatural works (Mt 7:22+) "And then I will declare to them, ‘I never (AT ANY POINT IN TIME) knew you (INTIMATELY, IN COVENANT ONENESS); **DEPART** (aorist imperative) FROM ME, YOU WHO **PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS** (poieo in present tense).'" (Mt 7:23+, cf Lk 13:27+) The phrase "**practice lawlessness**" is identical to the phrase **commit lawlessness** here in Mt 13:41.

> **Lawlessness** (458)(**anomia** from **a** = negates what follows + **nomos** = law) literally describes that which is without the law and signifies, not merely the abstract idea, but disregard for and/or actual breach of the law of God. **Anomia** means in essence “no law,” and emphasizes the godless attitude of disregard the tares have for the statutes of God, living as if there were no law. A person who rejects God’s authority doesn’t care what God thinks about his habits. **Lawlessness** is living as though your own ideas are superior to God's. **Lawlessness** says, "God may demand it but I don't prefer it." **Lawlessness** says, "God may promise it but I don't want it." **Lawlessness** replaces God's law with my contrary desires. I become a law to myself. **Lawlessness** is rebellion against the right of God to make laws and govern His creatures. **Lawlessness** signifies everything that is contrary to the will and law of God and is more intentional and flagrant sin. It is direct and open rebellion against God and His ways. **Lawlessness** describes one who has the quality of not being regulated by, restrained by or controlled by law. It is one who is not governed by nor obedient to laws and who is thus unbridled and uncontrolled in general. Some close synonyms include the

quality of a person that manifests lawlessness include words such as --anarchy, rebellion, insurgence, insubordination, chaos, disorderliness, mutiny, recklessness, sedition, unruliness (that's enough for starters!) Finally, to sum it up 1 John 3:4+ says "sin is lawlessness." Anomia - Matt. 7:23; Matt. 13:41; Matt. 23:28; Matt. 24:12; Rom. 4:7; Rom. 6:19; 2 Co. 6:14; 2 Thess. 2:3; 2 Thess. 2:7; Tit. 2:14; Heb. 1:9; Heb. 10:17; 1 Jn. 3:4

Matthew 13:42 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

NET Matthew 13:42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

GNT Matthew 13:42 κα βαλο σιν α το ς ε ς τ ν κ μινον το πυρ ς· κε σται κλαυθμ ς κα βρυγμ ς τ ν δ ντων.

NLT Matthew 13:42 And the angels will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

KJV Matthew 13:42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

ESV Matthew 13:42 and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

NIV Matthew 13:42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

ASV Matthew 13:42 and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

CSB Matthew 13:42 They will throw them into the blazing furnace where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

NKJ Matthew 13:42 "and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

NRS Matthew 13:42 and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

YLT Matthew 13:42 and shall cast them to the furnace of the fire; there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth.

NAB Matthew 13:42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

NJB Matthew 13:42 and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

GWN Matthew 13:42 The angels will throw them into a blazing furnace. People will cry and be in extreme pain there.

BBE Matthew 13:42 And will put them into the fire; there will be weeping and cries of sorrow.

- **and will throw them into the furnace of fire** - Mt 3:12 Mt 25:41 Ps 21:9 Da 3:6,15-17,21,22 Mk 9:43-49 Lu 16:23,24 Rev 14:10 19:20 20:10,14,15 21:8
- **in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth** - Mt 13:50 8:12 22:13 Lu 13:28
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Tares Thrown into Fire

TARES TOSSED INTO ETERNAL TORMENT

And will throw them into the furnace of fire (pur**)** - **Furnace of fire** is a description of the horror of hell. In no uncertain terms, Jesus is describing a place of torment. If you have ever burned your hand on a hot stove, you knew temporary "torment." It is notable that fire, darkness, lamenting (weeping) were descriptions even first century Jews used for Hell, so they would have been very familiar with Jesus' teaching. "A modern traveler speaks of **furnaces** for punishment in Persia." (Broadus) **Zodhiates** adds that

furnace of fire "provides terrible visual imagery for both the place and type of punishment for the wicked."

The Bible's most frequent description of hell is that of**fire** - Ps 11:6, Isa 26:11, Isa 30:33, Isa 33:14, Isa 66:24, Nah 1:6, Mal 4:1, Mt 3:12, Mt 5:22, Mt 13:40-42, Mt 13:50, Mt 18:8-9, Mt 25:41, Heb 10:27, Jude 1:7 (cf Ge 19:24), Rev 14:10, Rev 19:20, Rev 20:10, Rev 20:14, Rev 20:15, Rev 21:8

John Phillips - Both Heaven and Hell are realities. But in the four Gospels the Lord Jesus, the kindest and most compassionate One who ever lived on earth, the all-knowing Son of the living God, spoke more about Hell than He did about Heaven. The Bible tells us that the ultimate destiny of the lost is the lake of fire. Again and again Scripture reveals that anguish beyond anything we can conceive is to be the final and conscious condition of those who reject Christ. Our minds cannot visualize what Hell will be like. Poets like Milton and Dante have tried to depict the torment, as have artists and preachers. Much of the result is grotesque and unreal, but the fact remains that the Word of God repeatedly warns about fire. (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

Alexander Maclaren - The furnace,' as it is emphatically called by eminence, burns up the bundles. We may freely admit that the fire is part of the parable, but yet let us not forget that it occurs not only in the parable, but in the interpretation; and let us learn that the prose reality of 'everlasting destruction,' which Christ here solemnly announces, is awful and complete. For a moment He passes beyond the limits of that parable, to add that terrible clause about 'weeping and gnashing of teeth,' the tokens of despair and rage. So spoke the most loving and truthful lips. Do we believe His warnings as well as His promises? (Sermon)

In the original story tares would be burned up and disappear forever, but this is not what Jesus now describes for the human tares as He "departs from the image of consuming the tares, to introduce another thought of horror, and heighten the terrible picture." (Broadus)

S Lewis Johnson - I want you to notice two things. First of all, the fire is in the parable, and it is in the interpretation. In other words, the fire is fire. It just so happens that it's a kind of fire that's even more terrible than the kind of fire that I can make when I strike a match. It's the kind of fire that is able to torment and torture a spiritual body, for remember, everyone shall have a resurrected body. Some shall have a resurrected body like the Lord Jesus Christ's own glorious body, the saints. But others shall have a resurrection body, too – one in which they are able to suffer eternal punishment. It is the resurrection of the damned. Now, the fire that the Bible speaks about is the kind of fire that is able to torment that kind of body. So it is figurative, that's true. But it's even more terrible than the reality. Everlasting punishment. The world does not like that doctrine. (The Tares and the Wheat, or Satan in the Kingdom)

MacArthur - During an interview I saw recently on television, a reporter asked a girl involved in punk rock, "What are you looking forward to?" She said, "I'm looking forward to death." The reporter asked her why. She said, "I want to die so I can go to hell and have fun!" What deception! Hell is not fun. One writer said, "There is no way to describe hell. Nothing on earth can compare with it. No living person has any real idea of it. No madman in wildest flights of insanity ever beheld its horror. No man in delirium ever pictured a place so utterly terrible as this. No nightmare racing across a fevered mind ever produces a terror to match that of the mildest hell. No murder scene with splashed blood and oozing wound ever suggested a revulsion that could touch the border lands of hell. Let the most gifted writer exhaust his skill in describing this roaring cavern of unending flame, and he would not even brush in fancy the nearest edge of hell." (Study Guide)

Henry Morris on **furnace of fire** - It is sobering to realize that many who appear to be in the kingdom are really "tares," destined for hell (see also Matthew 25:41-46). To such people, Christ warns that He "shall cut [them] asunder [with the reaping instruments, thereby separating them from the wheat], and appoint [them their] portion with the hypocrites: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matthew 24:51).(Borrow The Defender's Study Bible)

> **Furnace** (2575) (**kamino**) literally oven, furnace, kiln, for baking, smelting metals, for burning bricks, especially in the Septuagint of the furnace Shadrach, etl were thrown into (Da 3:19-23+, Rev 1.15); figuratively, of hell described as a fiery furnace (Mt 13.42, 50), of the awesome holiness of God (Ex 19:18).
>
> **Kamino** - 4v - Matt. 13:42; Matt. 13:50; Rev. 1:15; Rev. 9:2
>
> **Kamino** - Septuagint - Ge 19:28 (Of Sodom and Gomorrah - "behold, the smoke of the land ascended like the smoke of a **furnace**"); Ex 19:18 (figuratively of Mt Sinai = "like the smoke of a**furnace**"); Nu 25:8; Dt. 4:20 (figuratively of slavery = "But the LORD has taken you and brought you out of the iron **furnace**, from Egypt, to be a people for His own possession, as today.", cf similar sense in Jer 11:4); Job 41:20; Pr. 16:30; Pr. 17:3 ("The refining pot is for silver and the **furnace** for gold, But the LORD tests hearts."); Isa. 48:10 (figuratively of affliction = "'Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tested you in the furnace of affliction."); Jer. 11:4; Ezek. 22:20; Ezek. 22:22 (figuratively of God's wrath on Israel = "As silver is melted in the furnace, so you will be melted in the midst of it; and you will know that I, the LORD, have poured out My wrath on you.'"); Dan. 3:6; Dan. 3:11; Dan. 3:15; Dan. 3:17; Dan. 3:19; Dan. 3:20; Dan. 3:21; Dan. 3:22; Dan. 3:23; Dan. 3:26;

In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth - **In that place** means of course in hell. **Weeping** (wailing) speaks of emotional distress and **gnashing of teeth** speaks to physical distress. Have you ever wept uncontrollably? Have you ever gritted your teeth in pain or torment? Tares, ultimately every soul that rejects Jesus' gracious offer of forgiveness, will experience **weeping and gnashing** forever and ever in a place of a bottomless pit (abussos) (have you ever had a dream you were falling and could not stop falling? If you have that is the reality of all in hell forever!) and utter darkness. There will be no parties in hell because there will be no socializing. Tares will experience torment alone...forever. Do not these thoughts make you want to share the Gospel with those in your sphere of influence? They should, for you may have the only clear Gospel presentation those persons ever have a chance to hear! Are you shy? I am too! Let me encourage you to at least buy good Gospel tracts and hand them out and/or strategically place them (list of tracts). Note also that Jesus' words indicate that eternal punishment is a place of conscious sorrow for the unconscious would not weep. Clearly Hell is not a place to joke about as so many do today.

As **John MacArthur** says "Hell will have no friendships, no fellowship, no camaraderie, no comfort. It will not even have the debauched pleasures in which the ungodly love to revel on earth. There will be no pleasure in hell of any kind or degree—only torment, "day and night forever and ever" (Rev. 20:10+)." (See Matthew Commentary)

The descriptions Jesus gives of Hell must be understood as representing something real and terrible to experience. This is tragic beyond our most vivid imagination. Let us mourn at the thought of even a single person who has to suffer such a fate and let us preach the gospel without compromise and without ceasing for the day comes when no one can work the works of the Father. Redeem every opportunity for the glory of the Lamb Who was slain.

Gotquestions has a sobering comment on hell - The variety and symbolic nature of descriptors do not lessen hell, however—just the opposite, in fact. Their combined effect describes a hell that is *worse* than death, *darker* than darkness, and *deeper* than any abyss. Hell is a place with *more* wailing and gnashing of teeth than any single descriptor could ever portray. **Its symbolic descriptors bring us to a place beyond the limits of our language—to a place far worse than we could ever imagine** (READ THAT AGAIN). (Ref)

> **John Blanchard** amplifies the preceding comment - In common communication the thing being symbolized is always greater than the symbol. In the case of hell, this has to be so, because without symbols employing things we understand we would never be able to grasp anything of the nature of hell. By using symbols, God accommodates our ignorance. When telling us about heaven he speaks of it as 'the city of pure gold' (Revelation 21:18) with 'each gate made of a single pearl' (Revelation 21:21), but this does not mean that heaven has any kind of commercial value. The language is obviously symbolic and 'combines to convey, as far as it is possible for the human mind to grasp and human language to express, the infinite and inexpressible beauty and perfection of heaven'. **In the same way, even if we can prove that hell's 'fire' and 'worm' are metaphorical we shall not have removed one iota of their horror or terror**. (What Ever Happened to Hell?)

Francis Chan on **weeping** - the image of "**weeping**" as the wicked are cast into hell ("the fiery furnace") is common among first-century Jewish writers....These images of "everlasting fire" and a "hell of fire" were typical in the first century. Jesus used this common vocabulary to convey an unmistakable message—no Jew would have scratched his head wondering what Jesus was getting at. The everlasting fire of gehenna is a place of punishment for all who don't follow Jesus in this life.

J S Lang comments that Jesus' picturesque phrase expresses "the agony of eternal torment (and)...perhaps more than any images of fire and brimstone, **the weeping and gnashing of teeth** suggests pain, regret, and eternal sorrow of an earthly life wasted. (Lang, J. S.. 1,001 Things You Always Wanted to Know About Angels, Demons, and the Afterlife. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Robert Morey commenting on Jesus' description writes that "The rabbinic picture used by Christ of people "**weeping and gnashing their teeth**" in the excruciating pain caused by the fires of **Gehenna** cannot be ignored or downplayed (Mt 13:42, 50). In Rev 14:10+, Rev 14:11+, we are explicitly told that they will be tormented by sulfuric fire…for all eternity…without rest day or night. The words of the Apostle could not be clearer or plainer. The text says "*tormented*," not annihilated. (BORROW Death and the afterlife)

Steven Cole says that Jesus' fearful description of hell should serve to remind all procrastinators that "Salvation requires our careful self-examination because of the horrible consequences of making a mistake. **Weeping and gnashing of teeth** doesn't sound like a fun experience, especially when it continues through all eternity! Think of it as an eternal root canal without anesthesia! These men had assumed that they would be included in the kingdom. They were Jews, not "filthy" Gentiles. They were related to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But now they find themselves shut out and, of all things, those "dirty" Gentiles from east and west and north and south are inside, dining with the patriarchs and prophets! Contrary to popular modern views, hell will not be a wild party for all the wicked. And, contrary to most popular thinking, hell will not be just for the worst of the worst—the Hitlers of this world. These men were religious Jews who thought they were deserving of heaven. But they would not submit to Jesus and so they faced the horrible eternal consequence of being in that place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. Because there will be many religious people in hell, all

of us who attend church should examine ourselves to make sure that we are not cast into that place of weeping and gnashing of teeth. (Luke 13:22-30 - The Narrow Door)

> **Weeping** (2805)(**klauthmos** from **klaio** = to weep or bewail) is a noun which describes a strong inner emotion which is evoked in weeping, crying, lamentation (cries of grief, the act of bewailing as an expression of sorrow). Describes the shedding of tears usually accompanied by sobs or other inarticulate sounds. Interesting that in Revelation God says He will "wipe every tear from their eyes" referring to His children! (Rev 7:17+, Rev 21:4+) 9x - Mt 2:18; 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk 13:28; Acts 20:37
>
> **Gnashing** (1030)(**brugmos** from **brucho**) describes striking, grinding or biting of teeth together. In the context of the NT **brugmos** is a manifestation or picture of the extreme anguish and utter despair of those consigned to eternal torment in hell. **Webster** says gnash means to strike the teeth together as in anger or pain, both emotions probably in play in the fires of hell. Uses 7x - Matt. 8:12; Matt. 13:42; Matt. 13:50; Matt. 22:13; Matt. 24:51; Matt. 25:30; Lk. 13:28. The weeping and the gnashing of teeth may express anger (cf Acts 7:54) because of being excluded from the kingdom of God.

Related Resources:

- Eternal punishment
- What does the Bible mean when it refers to the gnashing of teeth?
- What is the outer darkness in Matthew 22:13?
- Will there be tears in heaven?
- What does hell look like? How hot is hell?
- Is hell literally a place of fire and brimstone?
- How is an eternity in hell a just punishment for only a human lifetime of sin?
- Steve Lawson - sermon on The Great White Throne Judgment!
- Richard Mayhue - Hell: Never, Forever or Just for Awhile? (25 pages)

Robert Morgan has the following quote related to Hell (**WARNING**: His Description is almost too painful read) - Several years ago, writer John Thomas wrote an article in Moody Magazine in which he fleshed out the picture behind the New Testament words describing hell as a bottomless pit of pain, weeping, wailing, gnashing of teeth, and endless darkness:

> Imagine the person who just entered hell—a neighbor, relative, co-worker, friend. After a roar of physical pain blasts him, he spends his first moments wailing and gnashing his teeth. But after a season, he grows accustomed to the pain, not that it's become tolerable, but that his capacity for it has enlarged to comprehend it. Though he hurts, he is now able to think, and he instinctively looks about him. But as he looks, he sees only blackness.
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> In his past life he learned that if he looked long enough, a glow of light somewhere would yield definition to his surroundings. So he blinks and strains to focus his eyes, but his efforts yield only blackness. He turns and strains his eyes in another direction. He waits. He sees nothing but unyielding black ink. It clings to him, smothering and oppressing him.
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> Realizing that the darkness is not going to give way, he nervously begins to feel for something solid to get his bearings. He reaches for walls or rocks or trees or chairs; he stretches his legs to feel the ground and touches nothing.
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> Hell is a bottomless pit; however, the new occupant is slow to learn. In growing panic, he kicks his feet and waves his arms. He stretches and he lunges. But he finds nothing. After more feverish tries, he pauses from exhaustion, suspended in black. Suddenly, with a scream he kicks, twists, and lunges until he is again too exhausted to move. He hangs there, alone in his pain. Unable to touch a solid object or see a solitary thing, he begins to weep. His sobs choke through the darkness. They become weak, then lost in hell's roar.
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> As time passes, he begins to do what the rich man did—he again starts to think. His first thoughts are of hope. You see, he still thinks as he did on earth, where he kept himself alive with hope. When things got bad, he always found a way out. If he felt pain, he took medicine. If he were hungry, he ate food.....
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> (But) the awful truth spreads before him like endless, overlapping slats: "When I put in ten thousand centuries of time here, I will not have accomplished one thing. I will not have one second less to spend here." The smoke of (his) torment goes up forever and ever. (See full article from Moody Monthly, 1985 That Hideous Doctrine -John Thomas)

Matthew 13:43 "Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

NET Matthew 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The one who has ears had better listen!

GNT Matthew 13:43 Τ τε ο δ καιοι κλ μψουσιν ς λιος ν τ βασιλε το πατρ ς α τ ν. χων τα κου τω.

NLT Matthew 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's Kingdom. Anyone with ears to hear should listen and understand!

KJV Matthew 13:43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

ESV Matthew 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

NIV Matthew 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

ASV Matthew 13:43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He that hath ears, let him hear.

CSB Matthew 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in their Father's kingdom. Anyone who has ears should listen!

NKJ Matthew 13:43 "Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!

NRS Matthew 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen!

YLT Matthew 13:43 'Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the reign of their Father. He who is having ears to hear -- let him hear.

NAB Matthew 13:43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears ought to hear.

NJB Matthew 13:43 Then the upright will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Anyone who has ears should listen!

GWN Matthew 13:43 Then the people who have God's approval will shine like the sun in their Father's kingdom. Let the person who has ears listen!

BBE Matthew 13:43 Then will the upright be shining as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him give ear.

- **THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH** - Mt 25:34,36 Da 12:3 1Co 15:41-54,58 Rev 21:3-5,22,23 Da 12
- **in the kingdom of their Father** - Mt 26:29 Lu 12:32 22:29 Jas 2:5
- **He who has ears, let him hear** - Mt 13:9
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Those who have insight will shine brightly
like the brightness of the expanse of heaven
Daniel 12:3

THE RIGHTEOUS
WILL SHINE LIKE THE SUN

Then (5119)(**tote**) is an **expression of time** which means "At that time." When used as an adverb **THEN** is always worth pausing to ponder and query asking questions like "What time is it? What happens next? Why does this happen now?, etc". When **then** is used (as determined by the context) to be an **expression of time** or "time phrase", it usually indicates **sequence** and thus marks that which is next in order of time, soon after that, following next after in order of position, narration or enumeration, being next in a series (See English definitions

This verse is the follow-up to the last part of Mt 13:30 to "Allow both (WHEAT AND TARES) to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, “First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but **gather the wheat into my barn**.”

There could hardly be a more radical, stark contrast than Jesus' description of the fate of unbelievers in torment to His description of believers in bliss. Both states will last forever! Some evangelicals, even respected names like John Stott, say eternal does not mean eternal when it comes to eternal punishment, but they are absolutely, totally wrong and counter the clear teaching of the Bible. Listen to these sobering words by the Lord Jesus Christ, Who Himself will one day sit as the Judge at the Great White Throne judgment...

> “These will go away into **eternal** punishment, but the righteous into **eternal** life.” (Mt 25:46)

Could Jesus have been any clearer? Punishment for eternity. Life for eternity. That settles all arguments whether we believe Him or not.

THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN - This is not a perfect quotation of Daniel 12:3 but clearly is an allusion to that passage as the Septuagint uses the same rare verb **eklampo** (see below). Who are the **righteous**? In the parable, they are the wheat. They are the antithesis of those who habitually **commit lawlessness** in Mt 13:41. They are those who are saved by grace through faith in Jesus (Eph 2:8-9+). As Paul says "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**being justified** (DECLARED RIGHTEOUS) as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." (Ro 3:23-24+) "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." (2 Cor 5:21+). " But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, Who became to us wisdom from God, and **righteousness** and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor 1:30+) **As the sun** is a striking description of the glory that believers will manifest in eternity.

MacArthur - Believers already shine in that they possess the Spirit of Christ and the glorious message of the gospel (Mt 5:16; 2Co 4:3–7+, **ED**: cf 2 Cor 3:18+). We will shine even more in the glory of Christ’s kingdom and eternal heaven (Ro 8:16–23; Php 3:20, 21; Rev 19:7–9). (BORROW The MacArthur Study Bible)

> **Righteous** (1342)(**dikaios** from **dike** = right, just) defines that which is in accordance with high standards of rectitude. It is an individual who is in right relation to another and so defines the one who is morally and ethically righteous, upright or just. In simple terms righteous describes being in accordance with what God requires. The **righteous** man does what he ought and conforms to the standard, will or character of God. Of course no person in themselves is righteous (Ro 3:10+), but only by grace through faith does God declare a person righteous (Ro 3:24+ "being justified" = declared righteous).
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> **Shine forth** (1584)(**eklampo** from **ek** = out + **lampo** = to shine) means literally to shine out or shine forth, to be radiant or resplendent. Gilbrant comments that saints that shine forth "calls to mind the divine glory that will be their inheritance (1 Corinthians 15:40; cf. Matthew 17:2)" **Vincent** adds that "The compound verb with κ, forth, is designedly used to express a dissipating of darkness which has hidden: a bursting into light. The righteous shall shine forth as the sun from behind a cloud (**ED**: PICTURE THOSE TIMES YOU HAVE SEEN THIS PHENOMENON IN THE SKY -- THAT IS YOU BELOVED IN ETERNITY FUTURE!!!). The mixture of evil with good in the world obscures the good, and veils the true glory of righteous character (cf 1 Jn 3:1-2+) " (WSNT)
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> Here are the three Septuagint uses -
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> > 2 Samuel 22:29 “For You are my lamp, O LORD; And the LORD **illumines** (Lxx = **eklampo**) my darkness.
> >
> > Ezekiel 43:2 and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth **shone** (Lxx = **eklampo**) with His glory.
> >
> > Daniel 12:3+ “Those who have insight **will shine** (Lxx = **eklampo**) brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

In the kingdom (basileia) **of their Father** - This is an interesting phrase and not easy to interpret. It may correspond to that time in the future when the Son gives the Kingdom to His Father. Paul writes " then comes the end, when He (JESUS) **hands over the kingdom to the God and Father**, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power....When all things are subjected to Him, **THEN** (tote = AN EXPRESSION OF TIME) the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all. (1 Cor 15:24, 28)

Gotquestions - Jesus Christ will one day establish true righteousness. After He raptures the true church out of this world, God will pour out His righteous wrath on the world. During that tribulation, He will draw others to saving faith in Jesus Christ. At the end of the tribulation, all unbelievers will be judged for their sin and unbelief; then, they will be removed from God’s presence. True followers of

Christ will reign with Him. What a glorious hope for the “wheat”!

CALL TO GIVE
SOLEMN ATTENTION

He who has ears, let him hear - Who has ears? Everyone! But Jesus is not speaking solely of physical ears, but of "spiritual ears." And not everyone is willing to listen with "spiritual ears" (and a humble heart, cf Acts 7:57+ of the Jews rushing to stone Stephen because they would not "hear" his words of truth and conviction!) This translation almost sounds like a proverb, suggesting it is a good idea to hear. More literally this is a command from Jesus because **let him hear** is in the present imperative. Jesus is not just saying take in the "sound waves!" He is saying make sure you accurately interpret the "sound waves" and respond obediently and without hesitation to the "sound waves!" As Jesus' half-brother **James** would later write "But **prove** (present imperative) yourselves doers (poietes) of the word, and not merely hearers (akroates) who delude (paralogizomai - present tense continually deceiving by false reasoning) themselves.." (James 1:22+).

I like the **NET Note** - The translation "**had better listen!**" captures the force of the third person imperative more effectively than the traditional "let him hear," which sounds more like a permissive than an imperative to the modern English reader. This was Jesus' common expression to listen and heed carefully (cf. Matt 11:15, 13:43; Mark 4:9, 23; Luke 8:8, 14:35).

Phillips - The expression implies that many who read will not understand and many who hear will not heed. It was designed to draw attention to the urgency of certain of His utterances. (Exploring the Gospel of Matthew)

Broadus - The righteous and the wicked.

1) Dwelling in the same world.

2) Rooted together in political, social, and family life. (v. 29.)

3) Blessed with the same outward mercies. (v. 25)

4) Sometimes confounded by superficial observers, but easily distinguished through their fruit. (v. 26.)

5) Sure to be separated in the great coming day,

a) without chance of error,

b) without possibility of reunion,

c) so that the one class shall burn in unquenchable fire, and the other shall shine in unsullied purity and undimmed glory forever

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Matthew 13:44 “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid again; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

NET Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure, hidden in a field, that a person found and hid. Then because of joy he went and sold all that he had and bought that field.

GNT Matthew 13:44 μοια στιν βασιλεια των ουρανων θησαυρω κεκρυμμενω εν τω αγρω, ον ευρων ανθρωπος εκρυψεν, και απ της χαρας αυτου υπαγει και πωλει παντα σα εχει και αγοραζει τον αγρον εκεινον.

NLT Matthew 13:44 "The Kingdom of Heaven is like a treasure that a man discovered hidden in a field. In his excitement, he hid it again and sold everything he owned to get enough money to buy the field.

KJV Matthew 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

ESV Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

NIV Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

ASV Matthew 13:44 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in the field; which a man found, and hid; and in his joy he goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

CSB Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure, buried in a field, that a man found and reburied. Then in his joy he goes and sells everything he has and buys that field.

NKJ Matthew 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.

NRS Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

YLT Matthew 13:44 'Again, the reign of the heavens is like to treasure hid in the field, which a man having found did hide, and from his joy goeth, and all, as much as he hath, he selleth, and buyeth that field.

NAB Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which a person finds and hides again, and out of joy goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.

NJB Matthew 13:44 'The kingdom of Heaven is like treasure hidden in a field which someone has found; he hides it again, goes off in his joy, sells everything he owns and buys the field.

GWN Matthew 13:44 "The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field. When a man discovered it, he buried it again. He was so delighted with it that he went away, sold everything he had, and bought that field.

BBE Matthew 13:44 The kingdom of heaven is like a secret store of wealth in a field, which a man came across and put back again; and in his joy he goes and gives all he has, to get that field.

- **The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field** - Mt 6:21 Pr 2:2-5 16:16 17:16 18:1 Joh 6:35 Ro 15:4 1Co 2:9,10 Col 2:3 3:3,4,16
- **from joy over it** - Mt 19:21,27,29 Lu 14:33 18:23,24 19:6-8 Ac 2:44-47 4:32-35 Php 3:7-9 Heb 10:34 11:24-26
- **buys that field** - Pr 23:23 Isa 55:1 Rev 3:18
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DISCOVERY OF A TREASURE

The last 3 parables in Matthew 13 are found only in Matthew's Gospel.

Because there is such variation in interpretation of the parable of the treasure and the pearl (see Examples) it is easy to miss Jesus' main point - the **kingdom of heaven** is of inestimable value! And practically speaking what is the kingdom of heaven? Is it not salvation entered into by grace through belief in Jesus Christ?

The kingdom (basileia) **of heaven** (note) **is like** - See preceding note on homoios and repetition of this phrase. To reiterate these parables are about what is **the Kingdom of Heaven**. While the definition of what constitutes the **Kingdom** can be broken down into several parts, the main sense of the **Kingdom of Heaven** today is that it is the rule of Christ in the hearts of His people. In that regard, it is interesting that the Kingdom of Heaven is "**hidden**" for as Zodhiates comments "In Luke 17:20, 21+, Jesus said that His present kingdom rules invisibly in the hearts of believers and is therefore **hidden** from physical eyes, though its impact in the world is apparent."

> **Like** (same)(3664) see preceding note on homoios. A parable is a simile, a comparative using the word "like" or "as." While Jesus does not call these last three stories parables, what He says in Mt 13:53 clearly implies they are parables.

A treasure hidden in the field - What is the context? In this case the historical context is important because in Jesus' day there were no banks or safety deposit boxes, so valuables were commonly buried the ground (some of our older relatives who went through the 1929 Depression did the same thing because so many banks failed). And what would happen if that person died or was taken off to another country because of war? The treasure remained hidden and might later be discovered by someone digging in that area.

Notice that while the **treasure** is **hidden** it is meant to be found...

> At that time Jesus said, "I praise You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You **have hidden** these things from the wise and intelligent and **have revealed** (apokalupto) them to infants. (Mt 11:25+)
>
> **Rugh** - These great truths have been hidden and are like a buried treasure. You can be standing right over it and not know it is there. You can be within inches of it, yet you may be blind to it. This is true concerning Jesus Christ and what He was proclaiming

And in Luke we see that truth related to the Kingdom of Heaven (and King) was hidden from the Jews because of their personal choice

> "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now **they have been hidden** from your eyes. (Lk 19:42+)
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> > **Comment** - Jesus indicates that they could have known had they looked and understood and believed the prophets such as Daniel (cf Da 9:24-25 +).

S Lewis Johnson - There was a rabbinic saying that the only safe repository for money was the earth.

Josephus wrote, "The gold and the silver and the rest of that most precious furniture which the Jews had and which the owners treasured underground was done to withstand the fortunes of war."

John Broadus adds "Palestine had passed through many revolutions, and had always been exposed to raids from wandering tribes around, and in many districts to plunder from robbers at home. Accordingly it was common, as is the case in all unsettled countries, for one who apprehended robbery or thievery (25:25), or who was setting off to a distant country, to bury his money, jewelry, plate, and the like, in the earth. If the owner was killed in battle, or died in the far country, no one might know where his treasures were hid; and it became the usage that hidden valuables for which no owner appeared should belong to the owner of the land.....We are told that in the East men of wealth have been known to divide their estate into three parts, one invested in trade, a second part in jewels easily kept about the person, and the remainder buried in the earth.....An instance of hiding treasure occurred during the War of Secession in a South Carolina village, where the writer lived. A shoemaker, upon the approach of hostile troops, hid five hundred dollars in gold, and told his wife and a friend that he had done so, but without revealing the place, supposed to have been in some adjoining forest. In a few days he died after a brief illness, and his widow was quite unable to recover the money, which years hence some man may find "hidden in the field" where he is at work

> **Treasure** (2344) (**thesauros** from **títhemi** = put, set) refers to the place where goods and precious things are stored for safekeeping and thus a repository (place, room, or container where something is deposited or stored), a treasure chest, a storehouse, a treasury. The second sense of **thesauros** refers to that which is stored up as that which is deemed precious. (Mt 2:11 Mt 6:19 20 21 Lk 12:33). Figuratively **thesauros** can refer to the **heart**, as the repository of thoughts, feelings, purposes, etc (Lk 6:45, Mt 12:35). All NT uses Matt. 2:11; Matt. 6:19; Matt. 6:20; Matt. 6:21; Matt. 12:35; Matt. 13:44; Matt. 13:52; Matt. 19:21; Mk. 10:21; Lk. 6:45; Lk. 12:33; Lk. 12:34; Lk. 18:22; 2 Co. 4:7; Col. 2:3; Heb. 11:26
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> **Field** (68)(**agros**) refers to a field (Mt 6:28; Lk 17:7), to the country as opposed to city or village (Mk 15:21). In the plural it refers to farms, hamlets (Lk 9:12) [cf acre, agriculture, agronomy]
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> > **Agros** - 37x - 1 Chr. 16:38; Matt. 6:28; Matt. 6:30; Matt. 13:24; Matt. 13:27; Matt. 13:31; Matt. 13:36; Matt. 13:38; Matt. 13:44; Matt. 19:29; Matt. 22:5; Matt. 24:18; Matt. 24:40; Matt. 27:7; Matt. 27:8; Matt. 27:10; Mk. 5:14; Mk. 6:36; Mk. 6:56; Mk. 10:29; Mk. 10:30; Mk. 11:8; Mk. 13:16; Mk. 15:21; Mk. 16:12; Lk. 8:34; Lk. 9:12; Lk. 12:28; Lk. 14:18; Lk. 15:15; Lk. 15:25; Lk. 17:7; Lk. 17:31; Lk. 17:36; Lk. 23:26; Acts 4:37
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> > **Septuagint** has over 200 uses so only a few are noted - Gen. 2:5; Gen. 2:19; Gen. 2:20; Gen. 3:18; Gen. 23:9; Gen. 23:11; Gen. 23:13; Gen. 23:17; Gen. 23:19; Gen. 23:20; Gen. 25:9; Gen. 25:10; Gen. 27:27; Gen. 30:14; Gen. 30:16; Gen. 33:19; Gen. 39:5; Gen. 49:29; Gen. 49:32; Ruth 1:1; Ruth 1:2; Ruth 1:6; Ruth 1:22; Ruth 2:2; Ruth 2:3; Ruth 2:6; Ruth 2:7; Ruth 2:8; Ruth 2:9; Ruth 2:17; Ruth 2:22; Ruth 4:3; Ruth 4:5;
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> **Hidden** (2928)(**krupto**; English = crypt, cryptic) is a verb meaning to cover, to hide, to conceal, to keep secret (either protectively or for selfish reasons) and so to keep something from being seen. Jesus had just used this verb in Mt 13:35 declaring "I WILL OPEN MY MOUTH IN PARABLES; I WILL UTTER THINGS **HIDDEN** SINCE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD." - All NT uses - Matt. 5:14; Matt. 11:25; Matt. 13:35; Matt. 13:44; Matt. 25:18; Matt. 25:25; Lk. 13:21; Lk. 18:34; Lk. 19:42; Jn. 8:59; Jn. 12:36; Jn. 19:38; Col. 3:3; 1 Tim. 5:25; Heb. 11:23; Rev. 2:17; Rev. 6:15; Rev. 6:16

Stuart Weber - It was a kingdom of the spirit realm and human souls, which cannot be seen with physical eyes. This parable makes four points: (1) there is an "accidental" aspect to our discovery of the kingdom's value, because each of us is so absorbed in going his own way that God must take the initiative to show us the kingdom (cf. Isa. 53:6; Matt. 18:12–14; Ro 5:6–8; 1 John 4:10, 19); (2) when we do realize the value of the invisible kingdom, its value is cause for great joy; (3) the kingdom is worth everything we have and are; (4) to own the kingdom, we must accept all that comes with it. The **field** in the parable that cost everything the man owned represents the losses, hardships, and persecution a follower of Jesus is called on to endure for him. (HNTC-Mt)

Which a man found and hid again - He **hid** it **again** because it was of such great value. In essence Jesus is saying that **Kingdom of Heaven** is precious. And before you accuse this man of unethical behavior for not telling the owner about finding the treasure, understand that Jesus was not teaching ethics nor using the man's presumed unethical behavior (which is not necessarily unethical - see below) to teach a spiritual truth. Certainly with the detail **found and hid**, Jesus is clearly not implying that believers should hide the Kingdom from others! This detail is simply part of the parable story, for if he had told others what was hidden, someone else may have tried to purchase the field and he would have lost the field and the treasure. Again Jesus is giving this detail to emphasize the incredible value of the Kingdom of Heaven. And clearly from many other NT passages, believers who have been granted access by grace through faith into the Kingdom are to HERALD it, not HIDE it! (cf Jesus great commission - Mt 28:19-20).

Gil Rugh has an interesting comment - This great treasure, however, is sometimes found even by those who are not actively looking for it. There are a number of examples of this kind of individual in the New Testament. The woman at the well in Samaria recorded in John 4:1-29+ was not looking for the King, nor was she looking for the kingdom. She was a Samaritan woman who had simply come to the well to draw water. Yet as Jesus confronted her with the truth about Himself (Jn 4:25, 26), she believed in Him, then went to bring the people of the city back to hear Him to see for themselves if he was the promised Messiah (Jn 4:28-30, 39, 40). Saul was not searching for Christ on the road to Damascus. This man, who became known as the great Apostle Paul, was opposing Christ, yet he came upon that great treasure and the salvation that is found in Him. (Acts 9:2-17, 18, 19, 30+) This seems to be the point of the parable of the hidden treasure. The great treasure of the kingdom and its King is present, yet many do not know it is there or recognize it, but some stumble upon it. The parable views salvation from the human aspect. No one questions the sovereign work of God in bringing these people to Jesus Christ, but humanly speaking, they are not pursuing or actively looking for the kingdom. The prophet Isaiah recorded a statement which fits very well with what Jesus is illustrating in this parable. "**I permitted Myself to be sought by those who did not ask for Me; I permitted Myself to be found by those who did not seek Me**" (Isa.65:1). Those who were not seeking came upon this great treasure. (Sermon)

MacArthur commenting on the ethics writes "In the first place, it is obvious that the treasure was not hidden by the present owner of the field and was unknown to him. Otherwise, he would have retrieved it before he sold the field. The man who bought the field obviously knew the owner was not aware of the treasure or he would not have offered to buy the field, knowing the treasure would not be included in the deal. In the second place, rabbinic law provided that "if a man finds scattered fruit or money, it belongs to the finder." If a person came across money or other valuables that were obviously lost and whose owner was dead or unknown, the finder had the right to keep what was found. In the third place, the basic honesty of the man is testified to by the fact that, had he been dishonest, he would simply have taken the treasure without any thought of buying the field. But he did not even use part of the treasure to buy the field; rather, he sells all that he has, and buys that field." (See Matthew Commentary)

Leon Morris - In any case Jesus is not dealing with the morality or the legality of the man's action, but making the point that there can be treasure such that it is worth selling everything in order to possess it. So with membership in the kingdom. (BORROW The Gospel according to Matthew)

Broadus comments - It seems idle to seek any special spiritual meaning in the re-hiding, or in the field, as that it means "the church," or the Scriptures (Origen), or Christ, because of Col. 2:3. To run through the Bible with a concordance, and wherever there is mention of a treasure or a field connect it with this illustration, is a process fatal to sound interpretation and unworthy of sober sense. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

And from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field- Note that this treasure brought **joy** (chara), which should be our response to knowing that by faith in Christ we have been granted entry into the **Kingdom of Heaven** (John 3:3-8+). If one **sells all** they have to buy something, then clearly they consider they are buying something that is extremely precious or valuable, in this case the **Kingdom of Heaven**. Jesus is not saying we are to go and sell everything we own so we can buy our way into the **Kingdom of Heaven**. No man can merit the **Kingdom of Heaven**, for entry is a gift of God (cf Ro 6:23b+) to those who receive that gift by faith.They do not try to earn it nor buy it. The price of entry into the **Kingdom of Heaven** has been paid by the King Himself Who died on the Cross and in some of His last words assured all who would believe Him that the "price" had been "**Paid in Full** (tetelestai)." (Jn 19:30+), cause He had paid with the only "currency" God would accept, His sinless sacrifice (1 Pe 2:24+, 2 Cor 5:21+) and His "precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless." (1 Pe 1:18+).

Leon Morris - Jesus is not saying that a man may buy his way into the kingdom; that would fly in the face of all his teaching. The selling of all he has is rather a way of bringing out the truth that one should count all well lost for the sake of the kingdom. It may not appear to be riches from the world's point of view, but membership in the kingdom has superlative value. (BORROW The Gospel according to Matthew)

Zodhiates - The person who found the treasure of the **kingdom of heaven** realizes its inestimable value and that material things are worthless by comparison. Although this treasure is hidden in a field, it can be found by all who seek it....While this parable does not teach that the **kingdom of heaven** can be bought, it does teach that salvation is worth more than all we possess, that our

salvation should not be taken lightly, and that it is worth parting with worldly things we hold dear to fully enjoy our new wealth. A person who does not joyfully give of his material possessions to enable others to find the treasure of the kingdom of heaven is not a true possessor of that treasure. He does not freely possess his possessions; they, rather, possess and enslave him. A reluctant, sorrowful giver is a hypocrite. (Exegetical Commentary - Mt)

MacArthur says "we can learn at least six valuable lessons about the Kingdom of Heaven, and therefore about salvation:

1. The Kingdom of Heaven must be personally appropriated,
2. The Kingdom of Heaven is priceless,
3. The Kingdom of Heaven is not superficially visible,
4. The Kingdom of Heaven is the source of true joy,
5. The Kingdom of Heaven may be entered from different circumstances
6. The Kingdom of Heaven is made personal by a transaction." (**For detailed discussion of each point** see Matthew 13:44-46: Entering the Kingdom - Study Guide - click dropdown)

Example of entering the Kingdom of Heaven from different circumstances - Charles Haddon Spurgeon grew up in a Christian home, but as a boy he attended church only because it was the proper thing to do. He was not immoral or rebellious but was basically satisfied with his life and was not seeking any more religion than he had. One New Year's morning, when he was fifteen years old, he decided he ought to attend the service at his church. When the snow and cold wind became too fierce for him, he ducked into a little storefront type of church, as much to get out of the cold as anything. "When I could go no further," he writes of the event, "I turned down a court and came to a little Primitive Methodist church. The preacher who was to have conducted the service never got there because he was held up by the weather, and quickly one of the officers had to be brought forward to conduct the service with the congregation of perhaps fifteen people. The man was really stupid. His text was, 'Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.' And he just kept repeating it because he had nothing else to say." But something about Spurgeon caught the man's eye, and he said, "Young man, you look very miserable. And miserable in life and miserable in death you will be if you don't obey my text." He then shouted, "Young man, look to Jesus! Look, look, loo k!" "I looked," said Spurgeon; "and then and there the cloud was gone and the darkness rolled away and that moment I saw the Son." (For more see Spurgeon's Testimony)

Here are examples of individuals who were seeking the Kingdom of Heaven- That was the experience of the Ethiopian eunuch whom the Holy Spirit led Philip to intercept on the road to Gaza. The man was a Gentile proselyte who had come to Jerusalem to worship, and as he returned home he was reading from Isaiah but understanding nothing of what he read. After all his seeking and study, he was still confused and unsatisfied. But when Philip explained that Isaiah was writing about Christ, the Savior, the Ethiopian immediately believed. His long quest was ended, and he "went on his way rejoicing" (Acts 8:26–39).

Another Gentile, Cornelius, was also a God-fearing proselyte, who "gave many alms to the Jewish people, and prayed to God continually." God honored his sincere seeking by sending Peter to explain the gospel and lead him and his household to salvation (Acts 10). In similar ways, the Gentile Lydia (Acts 16:14–15) and both Jewish and Greek worshipers in the synagogue at Berea (17:10–12) sought and found the Lord.

Several years ago I met a couple attending our church who were celebrating their fiftieth wedding anniversary. The husband had been blind for a number of years, and they were visiting from a distant state. They told me they had sought God all of their married lives, trying one religion after another and finally ending up in the Unity cult. They soon came to realize that that religion was just as empty as their lives, and they went home from a service one day in utter despair. They turned on the radio and came across one of my broadcasts. After listening intently during the first half of the message, they both broke down in tears and said to each other, "This is the truth for which we've been searching for fifty years. At last we've found it!" (John MacArthur - MNTC-Mt)

Bruce Barton - To teach the inestimable value of the kingdom of heaven and of being part of that kingdom, Jesus described it as a treasure hidden in a field. (LAC)

William Hendriksen - The point of the parable is that the kingdom of heaven, the glad recognition of God's rule over heart and life, including salvation for the present and for the future, for soul and ultimately also for the body, the great privilege of being thereby made a blessing to others to the glory of God, all this, is a treasure so inestimably precious that one who obtains it is willing to surrender for it whatever could interfere with having it. It is the supreme treasure because it fully satisfies the needs of the heart....Of course, the possession of the treasure also implies love for the Word, but rather than loading the parable with subjective allegorical embellishments of individual items, we should grasp its one important lesson: the incalculable preciousness of salvation for those

who discover it and obtain possession of it without even looking for it! (Borrow Exposition of the gospel according to Matthew)

Reformation Study Bible - Jesus made known the hidden things of the kingdom by parables (Mt 13:35), but they remain hidden for most people, who cannot see their value. But like the man who finds treasure or the trader in pearls, those who do perceive the value of the kingdom will sacrifice anything to obtain it (Phil. 3:8).

Andrus on **treasure** and **pearl** - Both speak of discovery. What is discovered is deemed to be of such value that one is willing to give all they have to possess it....In the minds of Christ's audience these were viable images of what could occur in life; people discovering something of great value. As we envision these scenarios, and think about the words of the parables, it is important to state these cautions. First, as is the case with most of the parables he taught, Christ does not give the interpretation. Thus we must proceed with great care. Second, we must bring the truth of all Scripture to bear on any understanding we consider. If we don't do that, we could erroneously conclude that in some situations it is an individual's good fortune that they stumble upon the **kingdom of heaven** and in some situations it is someone's trained, investigative eye that allows them to possess the**kingdom of heaven**. In both parables the word "bought" is found, which could erroneously lead to the belief that the **kingdom of heaven** can be purchased. The Scriptures are repeatedly clear that possession of the kingdom of heaven is only through and on the basis of God's grace (Ephesians 2:8-9+) . **The point of these two parables is that possessing the kingdom of heaven is of such incomparable value that it is worth giving up everything one has. Stated another way, a personal relationship with God through faith in the forgiving work of Christ in His death and resurrection is a treasure without equal.** Please turn three chapters ahead in your Bible to Matthew 16:26. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? There is nothing of value that can compare to having the rule of God in your heart and life! That is the pointed testimony of the Apostle Paul in Philippians 3:7-8+. But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish…

Ryle - "When a man will venture nothing for Christ's sake, we must draw the sorrowful conclusion that he has not got the grace of God"

David Turner - This is another picture of the sacrifice entailed in discipleship when kingdom values are taken seriously (cf. Mt 6:19–34+). (BECNT-Mt)

D A Carson - So the parable deals with neither the legality nor the morality of the situation (as with the parable of the thief in the night) but with the value of the treasure, which is worth every sacrifice. When the man buys the field at such sacrifice, he possesses far more than the price paid (cf. Mt 10:39+). The kingdom of heaven is worth infinitely more than the cost of discipleship, and those who know where the treasure lies joyfully abandon everything else to secure it. (BORROW The Expositor's Bible Commentary : abridged edition: 1994).

David Garland - Both parables make the point that the kingdom comes as a chance of a lifetime. Its presence elicits joy, but decisiveness is required if one is to capitalize on the opportunity. One cannot possess the treasure or the pearl without making a major commitment. The price is high because both finders must sell everything to acquire it. Neither gets something for nothing. They get something for everything. But what formerly had value pales beside the supreme worth of the kingdom (see Phil 3:7–10). The behavior of the finders in selling all contrasts with the thorn-infested soil where the seed is choked by the snares of wealth (Mt 13:22) and matches the reaction of the disciples who have left everything to follow Jesus (Mt 19:27). (See Reading Matthew:)

Donald Hagner - Like a hidden treasure or a pearl that can be held in one's hand, the kingdom is known only to its joyful possessors. Yet those who find the kingdom, I.e., who receive the message and who respond in discipleship, have begun to experience the wonder of the kingdom's presence. They know that the kingdom is a reality that is worth everything. And thus they joyfully make it their one priority in life (cf Mt 4:18–22+; Mt 10:39+). They seek first the kingdom, sacrificing all to it, but at the same time paradoxically finding with the kingdom all they need (Mt 6:33+). (See Matthew 1-13, Volume 33A)

Here are some examples of interpretations that seem to take the parable a bit too far...

> **Guzik** says The **field** is the world, but the man does not represent the believer, because we have nothing to buy this **treasure** with. Instead, Jesus is the **man** who gave all that He had to buy the field. (Enduring Word Bible Commentary – Matthew)
>
> **Constable** writes "The kingdom lay concealed in history for hundreds of years, probably from the Exile to the time of Jesus. When the Jews in Jesus' day stumbled on it, the believers among them recognized its worth and were eager to make any sacrifice necessary for it. The point of the parable to Jesus' disciples was that they should be willing to pay any price to have a significant part in the kingdom. Some interpreters believe the person who hid and then paid a great price for the treasure was Jesus, the price being His own life. This seems unlikely to me since in all these parables the focus seems to be on the disciples more than on Jesus.

They should pay the price." (TCE)

G Campbell Morgan - I need hardly stay to say that I do not accept the interpretation of the parable which regards the pearl of great price as the Saviour, and the merchant seeking and selling all to obtain the pearl, as the sinner. Such an interpretation, as we have already seen, contradicts the whole scheme of the teaching, and is out of harmony with all the facts of experience. (But then Morgan launches into a major allegorical interpretation to refer to the pearl as the church!)

Grant Richison - The “hidden treasure” refers to the godly remnant of Israel during the earthly ministry of Jesus and to believers throughout the interim present kingdom until the Second Coming. The **godly** remnant of Israel has been scattered throughout the world during the interim present kingdom. The “man” here i s **Jesus**. He will find the believing remnant throughout the world at His Second Coming. Christ gave everything He had to purchase the world (field). As owner He holds the **right** of redemption. At His Second Coming Jesus will claim His right over the believing remnant.

Warren Wiersbe - The common interpretation of this parable is that the sinner finds Christ and gives up all that he possesses to gain Him and be saved. But this interpretation presents several problems. To begin with, Jesus Christ is not a hidden treasure. He is perhaps the best-known Person of history. In the second place, the sinner cannot “find Christ” for he is blind and stubborn (Rom. 3:10ff). It is the Saviour who finds the lost sinner (Luke 19:10). And no sinner could ever purchase salvation! Please note that the man in the parable did not purchase the treasure; he purchased the whole field. “The field is the world” (Matt. 13:38). Must the lost sinner purchase the world to gain Christ? Does he hide Him again? Once again, Old Testament symbolism assists us in our interpretation. The treasure is the nation of Israel (Ex. 19:5; Ps. 135:4). That nation was placed in the world to bring glory to God, but it failed. It became a nation hidden, a treasure not being invested to produce dividends for God. Jesus Christ gave His all to purchase the whole world in order to save the nation (John 11:51). On the cross, Jesus died for the whole world; but in a special way, He died for Israel (Isa. 53:8). The nation suffered judgment and seeming destruction, but in God’s sight it is “hidden” and will be revealed again in glory. There is, then, a future for Israel. Politically, the nation was reborn on May 14, 1948. But the nation is far from what it ought to be spiritually. God sees Israel as His treasure, and one day He will establish her in her glorious kingdom. (Bible Exposition Commentary)

> **D A Carson** rebuts (and I agree with him) interpretations like **Wiersbe** a n d **Walvoord** writing - Walvoord understands the treasure to represent Israel and Jesus as the man who sold everything to purchase her. He rejects the above view by making the parable mean that “a believer in Christ has nothing to offer and the treasure is not for sale” and proposes his own interpretation by noting that in Exodus 19:5 Israel is called God’s treasure. But any view, including Walvoord’s, can be made to look foolish by pressing a parable into a detailed allegory. For instance, one could rebut his view by showing that it entails Israel’s being worth far more than the price paid, and that of course would constitute an implicit depreciation of Christ’s sacrifice, which no thoughtful Christian would accept. One must come to grips with the nature of parables (see comments at v. 3a). And “treasure” has a vast range of associations in the OT and NT; on what basis, then, does Walvoord select Exodus 19:5? Above all, his interpretation does not adequately handle the opening clause.
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> **Gil Rugh** - The common interpretation of this parable by most dispensational interpreters is that the nation Israel is the treasure hidden in the field which is the world, and that Jesus Christ came and gave everything He had to purchase the nation Israel for Himself....The common interpretation of this parable by most dispensationalists is that the pearl refers to the Church, and Jesus Christ came and purchased the pearl for Himself providing redemption for the Church by His death. In these common dispensational interpretations both Israel and the Church have been secured by Christ for Himself. **Even though I am a dispensational interpreter, I do not follow these interpretations.** I have no problem with the truthfulness of the statement regarding Jesus Christ securing for Himself the nation Israel and the Church by His death and resurrection. But I do seriously question whether that is Jesus’ intent in giving these two parables. I do not believe that the Church is in view in Matthew 13. Rather, the subject is the kingdom of heaven and conditions relating to the first coming of Christ and leading up to His Second Coming....Stated simply, the emphasis of these two parables is on what one has to do to secure the kingdom for himself. The difference in emphasis shows that one finds the kingdom when he is not looking for it while the other finds it after diligently searching. To be consistent in interpreting what Christ has been emphasizing in Matthew 13, the hidden treasure refers to the kingdom that Christ has been offering. A kingdom and its king are synonymous because the kingdom centers in the king. By rejecting its king, a nation rejected his kingdom. By believing in the king, the people acknowledged their willingness to accept his kingdom.

> Therefore, the treasure hidden in the field refers to the kingdom Christ was offering. Even though it was overwhelming in value and importance, it was unrecognized and unknown by the bulk of the people. They did not know what it was and did not accept it. (Sermon)

S Lewis Johnson has a nice review of the various interpretations and then offers his interpretation which agrees for the most part with those of MacArthur, Barton, Hendricksen, and Andrus mentioned above:

> Now, there are differing interpretations, and I want to mention two or three of these interpretations, not to degrade them, but to let you know there are different interpretations, and it is possible that my interpretation is wrong. So I want to suggest some of the others and then give you what I think is the interpretation of the parable...
>
> **It is the opinion of some that the church of the Lord Jesus is the treasure,**and that the man who found the treasure is the Lord Jesus himself, and that when the man of the parable sells all that he has and buys that field, that is a picture of the Lord Jesus giving all that the possessed in the sacrifice on the cross for the church of the Lord Jesus.
>
> > Now, there are some biblical sentiments expressed by this, of course. It is true that the church is a kind of treasure so far as God is concerned. It's obvious that he would not have redeemed the church if he did not have in mind for the church great purposes. But of course, the church is no great treasure in herself. And she is only valuable by virtue of that which God does for her. She is totally worthless otherwise. But nevertheless, it is true that the church has a great place in the purpose of God and might be called a treasure in that sense. And of course, it is true that the Lord Jesus gave his life for the redemption of the church.
> >
> > But how could the church be "found" by the Lord Jesus when she was chosen before the foundation of the world? How could the church be represented as something the Lord stumbled over while he was wandering through a field? In the light of the fact that Paul says we are chosen in him before the foundation of the world, what is the second hiding that is referred to also, here? So while that interpretation has some things that commend it, I really do not think that it satisfies everything that is found in this context.
>
> **Still others say, no, the church is not the treasure, Israel the Nation is the treasure,**because does not the Old Testament say that in the beginning of Israel's history "A peculiar treasure will I make of Thee unto me?"—the passage in Exodus 19:5 would seem to suggest that Israel is a treasure to God, and could not Israel be the treasure over which the Lord Jesus stumbles? Again, remember the primary feature of these parables is the kingdom of heaven. The period of time between the first coming and the second coming in mystery form, but ultimately, the kingdom of the heavens in its manifested form begins at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus and continues for a thousand years thereafter.
>
> > What he is doing is giving us things that have to do with the gathering of the sons of the kingdom during this present age, in order that they may enter that glorious Messianic kingdom of the future. And the kingdom is the thing that is stressed, and not the entities within the kingdom. The church is not found in Matthew 13, so far as I can tell, nor is the Nation Israel, specifically found. He's thinking about the kingdom. He's thinking about this age, and the movements, and the works of God and of Satan that will characterize this inter-advent period.
>
> **Others have said the kingdom is the treasure and Jesus is the man finding it and giving himself for it.** So, the kingdom is the treasure. With that, I certainly can agree. But is the kingdom that which the Lord Jesus finds and gives himself for?
>
> > Again, that's an appealing interpretation. It has some things about it that are attractive. The kingdom is a treasure and he is speaking about the kingdom, but is the man who stumbles over the hidden treasure a fit picture of the Lord Jesus? I think not. The discovery is a surprise to the man. I don't think that this is a fit picture of the Lord Jesus. And yet again, I say, that there are some things that are appealing about that interpretation.
>
> Let me suggest to you, with a little bit of diffidence, what I think is the correct interpretation of it.**The kingdom is the treasure**. The Lord Jesus is speaking about the **kingdom**. But the **finder of the treasure is the one who becomes the believer** and therefore, we are to look at this as a picture of how a man comes to the understanding and the possession of the kingdom as a treasure.

Now if that is true, if the kingdom is the treasure and the man who stumbles over it is the man who comes to be a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and appropriates the blessings of the kingdom himself, then these points are made.

First of all, the kingdom is something of great value, but men may fail to see it by virtue of blindness. Now we know that that is true. The kingdom is something of great value. To possess the life of the kingdom is great. To possess the life of the kingdom and live in that future Messianic kingdom is something that is surely great, and it is held out as future for the believers in our Lord Jesus Christ.

I want you to know that I am looking forward to the day when I, by virtue of the grace of God, shall be able to live in that marvelous, glorious, Messianic kingdom, in which the world recognizes and must recognize the glory of our Savior God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is a second thing that we may argue from this, and that is that the kingdom may be found unexpectedly. The Bible stresses this as one aspect of the truth. For example, we read in Isaiah chapter 65 and verse 1, "I was found by them that sought me not." Isn't that an interesting statement? I was found by them that sought me not. That is, those who weren't paying any attention to me, were not seeking after me, have found me.

Now, every believer – well, I wouldn't say every believer – but if we looked at our lives, we probably, every one of us, would come to the conviction that there was a time in our lives when we did not have any desire whatsoever for the relationship to the Lord Jesus, and that when we did come into that period of time in which there was a desire, it was something we recognized was not natural to us.

Now, in my case, I do not think – while I grew up in a Christian church and grew up in a Sunday School in which we studied the word of God – I do not think that I had the slightest desire whatsoever to have a part in the Messianic kingdom of Jesus or to have any personal relationship to him all through my youth. Up through my high school days and college days and on into my business experience, no desire whatsoever.

And in fact, the interest that ultimately came to my heart was awakened by means of a tea party on Sunday afternoon, and the presence of a Bible teacher at that tea party. A most unlikely thing, for in the first place, I don't think I had been to a tea party for five years before – and I'm not sure that I attended on after that [laughter] – but at that particular one, I stumbled over the treasure hidden in the field. And as a result of that meeting that afternoon, attended a meeting that night and through the preaching of the word that week came to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. It could truly be said of me, I was found by them that sought me not, for I was certainly not seeking so far as I know.

Now, the Bible tells us, of course, that there is none that seeketh after God; no not one. So it is true of every one of us that we do not naturally seek after God. So when you do find a person who is seeking after God, you know that God has already worked in prevenient grace.

Now, here the stress rests upon the unexpectedness of finding the treasure. And of course, thinking of Biblical illustrations, the one that stands out most strikingly in the conversion of the Apostle Paul on the road to Damascus with letters in his pocket by which he might persecute the Christians further. And there, on the Damascus road, the Lord Jesus appeared to him and as a result of that experience which transformed his life, turned him completely around, the apostle became the preacher of the faith that he at one time had destroyed.

He later on said that he had, as one of his ambitions, that he might lay hold of that for which God had grasped or seized him. So, he was the kind of person who stumbled over the treasure in the field, who God, through the Holy Spirit, awakened in a moment to the significance of the treasure of the relationship to the king.

We think also of men like Philip the Apostle, who was found by the Lord Jesus. Of Nathaniel, and others.

There is another thing that this parable would seem, then, to teach, that there is such a thing as a decision involving a forsaking of all self-reliance. When the Apostle Paul speaks about his own conversion in that same passage of Philippians chapter 3, he describes the decision that he made as one of self-renunciation. Listen to what he says, "But what things were gain to me those I counted lost for Christ. Yea, doubtless and I count all things but lost for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but refuse that I may win Christ and be found in him, not having my own righteousness which is of the Lord, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which of God by faith."

We are not saying to you – and I do not intend to say to you – that you must give up this before you can

> receive Jesus Christ as your Savior. What I am saying to you is that the decision to trust Christ involves a decision to renounce [trust] in anything else. And when a person comes to faith in the Lord Jesus, there is implicit in that decision a renunciation of everything else.

Before, you had been trusting in your own good works. Before, you had been trusting in your culture. Before, you had been trusting in your education. Before, you had been trusting in your religion – or whatever it may be – but in the moment that you see the Lord Jesus on the cross as the objective basis for the saving work, and you're trust moves from trust in the things that have characterized you old life to trust in him, you have moved in self-renunciation to an objective trust in the Lord Jesus that means life.

Now that comes only by virtue of the enabling, enlightening power of the Holy Spirit. It is not a work of righteousness which you do which God rewards by giving good works. It is the result of the work of the Holy Spirit by which you are turned by God to trust in the Lord Jesus. But it involves a self-renunciation. As the apostle says, "He suffered the loss of all things."

Now this parable does not stress the divine grace behind it, and the reason that I'm stressing it is because these are two sides of the same thing. It is the divine grace that enabled this man to stumble over the treasure in the field. (The Parables)

Michael Andrus - Today is the third consecutive Sunday that the sermon will be drawn from Matthew 13. The majority of that chapter contains parables that Christ taught about the kingdom of heaven. Prior to looking at our text for today, I want to spend some initial time talking about the use of parables.

In its general sense a parable is a brief, succinct story, in prose or verse that illustrates a moral or religious lesson. Jesus did not invent the parable. Some can be found in the Old Testament. There are other examples of parables found outside the Scriptures. One does not need to look hard to find what some consider to be modern-day parables.

Consider this example; a parable about a frog. A frog was hopping around a farmyard, when it decided to investigate the barn. Being somewhat careless, and maybe a little too curious, he ended up hopping into a pail half-filled with fresh milk. As he swam about attempting to reach the top of the pail, he found that the sides of the pail were too high and steep for him to escape. He also tried to stretch his back legs to push off the bottom of the pail but found it too deep. Although his options for escape appeared minimal, at best, he did not lay idly in the milk. He swam and kicked and squirmed until at last, all his motion had turned the milk into a big chunk of butter. The butter became a platform from which he could hop out of the pail!

Now, if we were a contestant on "Who Wants to be a Millionaire?" and were asked what was the title of this parable, here would be our options. A. "Look before you leap," B. "The curdling property of milk," C. "A hop, a plop, and a glop," or D. "Never give up." (A nd the answer is: "Never give up.")

What's my point? As we open our Bible today to Matthew 13, I want us to do so with the understanding that when we read the parables of Christ recorded there, what we read is far more than a winsome story illustrating a moral or religious lesson. In the use of parables Christ does employ a recognized and acceptable means of teaching. A parable does provide a good means of comparison. You may have noticed the repeated use of the word "like" in Matthew 13. But the real power in these parables here is the One who presents the parables; the person of Jesus Christ.

Additionally, these parables are part of the accepted canon of Scripture; they are the inspired Word of God. What they teach is truth. And it is truth that has eternal implications! So it is with entirely appropriate to read these verses now with the understanding that "this is the word of the Lord!"

Matthew 13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls,

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NET Matthew 13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls.

GNT Matthew 13:45 Π λιν μο α στ ν βασιλε α τ ν ο ραν ν νθρ π μπ ρ ζητο ντι καλο ς μαργαρ τας·

NLT Matthew 13:45 "Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant on the lookout for choice pearls.

KJV Matthew 13:45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:

ESV Matthew 13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls,

NIV Matthew 13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls.

ASV Matthew 13:45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a merchant seeking goodly pearls:

CSB Matthew 13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls.

NKJ Matthew 13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls,

NRS Matthew 13:45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls;

YLT Matthew 13:45 'Again, the reign of the heavens is like to a man, a merchant, seeking goodly pearls,

NAB Matthew 13:45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls.

NJB Matthew 13:45 'Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls;

GWN Matthew 13:45 "Also, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant who was searching for fine pearls.

BBE Matthew 13:45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a trader searching for beautiful jewels.

- **the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant** - Mt 16:26 22:5 Pr 3:13-18 8:10,11,18-20
- **seeking fine pearls** - Job 28:18 Ps 4:6,7 39:6,7 Ec 2:2-12 Eccl 12:8,13
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SEEKING
FINE PEARLS

Again - This word suggest that this parable goes with the previous one in Mt 13:44. And because the parable of the treasure in Mt 13:44 is so similar to the parable of the pearl see comments on Mt 13:44. Jesus is presenting a picture to help us understand the **Kingdom of Heaven**. Be sure to read vv 45-46 together, because this makes the point that the Kingdom of Heaven is beautiful, fine, etc.

The Kingdom (basileia) **of Heaven** (note) **is like (homoios) a merchant seeking fine pearls** - Historical context again is important to understand this parable. In Jesus' day pearls were one of the most highly valued gems in the society and were even purchased as investments. A merchant would look for high quality pearls to purchase and/or sell to others as an investment, much like we would do with diamonds today. In that day pearls were more valuable than diamonds.

Note that in the previous parable, the man accidentally found the treasure, but here the merchant is actively **seeking** the "treasure" (**fine pearls**). I like how Stuart Weber explains this difference writing "We need not take this as a contradiction of the “accidental” element of our discovery of the kingdom. Even though we are going our own way, oblivious to the kingdom apart from God’s revelation, every human being is on a quest. Every choice a person makes is somehow guided by his or her search for ultimate fulfillment. Before God breaks in, we simply do not know what we are searching for. Most people search in the wrong places, seeking fulfillment through deceitful, worldly means (wealth, pleasure, power, fame), yet never finding it in those places. When, by God’s gracious guidance, we find the kingdom, we realize that it is what we have been searching for all along.The pearl merchant recognized instantly the value of the one pearl, because he had measured the value of many lesser pearls throughout his life. He, like the treasure finder, went and sold everything he owned in order to possess the pearl." (HNTC-Mt)

> **Merchant** (1713)(**emporos** from **en** = in + **poros** = a way, passage) literally means a passenger (as by sea) and thus a traveler, one who travels about which came to mean traveling for trading and thus a merchant or wholesale dealer in contrast to a retailer. The word emphasizes those who travel in merchandising and is also used of a passenger on shipboard. "Originally it designated a passenger in a ship going from one place to another, a traveler. Later **émporos** was substituted by the word epibátēs, one who boards, from epibaínō, to go aboard. In the NT, émporos means a merchant, trader, one who trades with foreign countries by sea or land on a large scale, a wholesale dealer; distinguished from the kápēlos, the verb kapēleúō or agoraíos, a retailer, one who purchased his wares." (Zodhiates) Emporos is a "key word" in Revelation 18, which describes the end of all merchandise which the world has in effect made its idol! Take care what you "possess" lest it end up "possessing" you (specifically your heart, see the preferred "possession" in Mt 6:21+).
>
> **Emporos** - 5x - Matt. 13:45; Rev. 18:3+; Rev. 18:11+; Rev. 18:15+; Rev. 18:23+
>
> **Emporos** in the Septuagint - Gen. 23:16; Gen. 37:28; 1 Ki. 10:15; 1 Ki. 10:28; 2 Chr. 1:16; Isa. 23:8; Ezek. 27:12; Ezek. 27:15; Ezek. 27:17; Ezek. 27:18; Ezek. 27:20; Ezek. 27:21; Ezek. 27:22; Ezek. 27:23; Ezek. 27:25; Ezek. 27:36; Ezek. 38:13;
>
> **Tony Garland** adds the following note on **merchants** from his commentary on Revelation 18 - The

merchants are “the great men of the earth” (Rev. 18:23▸), powerful magnates who use their great wealth to influence the affairs of the world to further their own power and interests. The city polluted the commercial realm. Throughout history, the boundary between kings and powerful merchants has been blurred. In our own day, perhaps more than in previous eras, wealthy heads of powerful multinational corporations may have greater influence over the affairs of the world than their publicly elected national counterparts (Isa. 23:8). While kings wield political power, merchants wield great financial power. With rare exception, world leadership has generally been immersed in a tangled web of political, religious, and commercial interests which are impossible to isolate from one another. "Such international magnates and financiers constitute, more often than not, the power behind the throne. Kings and presidents often attain and keep their authority by sufferance of those who finance their undertakings. In turn, these great men of the earth receive land grants and trade monopolies and tax loopholes and innumerable other favors from those whom they establish in political power, all to enrich themselves still further."20 "It has become an axiom that “corporations have no souls,” and upon this all great moneyed corporations act, though the men who constitute them will find out a different doctrine when they come to the day of judgment. And when it comes to these great and ever magnifying commercial compacts and interests, there is not a law of God or man which is not compelled to yield if found in the way. . . . If the question were ever pressed in these circles, What is truth? it would be hooted and laughed to scorn. The cry would be, “What have we to do with that? Let every one quietly enjoy his own opinions.” . . . Church is nothing, State is nothing, creed is nothing, Bible is nothing, Sunday is nothing, religious scruples are nothing, conscience is nothing, everything is practically nothing, except as it can be turned or used to the one great end of accumulation and wealth." 21

Seeking (present tense)(2212)(**zeteo**) implies giving attention and priority to and deliberately pursuing after. The most common sense of this word is to "**seek**". **Webster** says that to **seek** means to go in search or quest of, to look for, to try to discover, to search for by going from place to place. To inquire for; to ask for; to solicit; to endeavor to find or gain by any means. Uses in Matthew - Matt. 2:13; Matt. 2:20; Matt. 6:33; Matt. 7:7; Matt. 7:8; Matt. 12:43; Matt. 12:46; Matt. 12:47; Matt. 13:45; Matt. 18:12; Matt. 21:46; Matt. 26:16; Matt. 26:59; Matt. 28:5.

Jesus commanded His hearers "But **seek** (present imperative) first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." (Mt 6:33+) Jesus commands hearers to seek His Kingdom but spiritually dead men cannot do this. This is the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts giving us the desire and the power to seek this Kingdom and ultimately the King of the Kingdom, Christ Jesus. (cf Php 2:13NLT+) Example - Sir William Ramsay sought to disprove the Bible (attempted to discredit journeys of Paul) and yet came to faith in Christ when he found out claims of Bible were true.

Fine (2570)(see above for main discussion of **kalos**) means beautiful, good, free from defects, fine. lovely.

Pearls (3135)(**margarites**) refers to a literal pearl as in Rev. 17:4+; Rev. 18:12+; Rev. 18:16+ which all refer to pearls as items the **lost** world highly valued (and **lost**!). In Rev 21:21+ John described "the twelve gates were twelve pearls." Figuratively the pearl speaks of something of supreme worth. BDAG writes in Jesus' day the pearl was "more in demand than gold." **BDAG** adds "Among the Indians worth 3 times as much as pure gold: Arrian, Ind. 8, 13 and always in great demand....in imagery, in a proverb....throw pearls to swine i.e. entrust something precious" (Mt 7:6+). Thayer adds that Mt 7:6 "a proverb, i.e., to thrust the most sacred and precious teachings of the gospel upon the most wicked and abandoned men (incompetent as they are, through their hostility to the gospel, to receive them), and thus to profane them."

Margarites - Mt. 7:6+ ("do not throw your pearls before swine" = do not give something valuable to a swine); Matt. 13:45; Matt. 13:46; 1 Ti 2:9; Rev. 17:4+; Rev. 18:12+; Rev. 18:16+; Rev. 21:21+. Not present in the Septuagint (Lxx).

MacArthur explains one reason pearls were so highly valued - It is incredible what was involved in pearl hunting. Pearls were found in the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean. The price to pay in obtaining them was great--many people died from pearl hunting. They did not have the equipment that is available today for pearl diving. Rather, a pearl diver would tie rocks to his body, jump over the side of a little boat, go down into the dangerous waters infested with sharks and other creatures, and scour the mud below for oysters. A pearl diver had to hold his breath during the whole dive, and hope that he wouldn't burst and die....A pearl that was perfect and beautiful was priceless. The Talmud said that "pearls are beyond price." The Egyptians actually worshiped the pearl, and the Romans copied that practice. When women wanted to show their wealth, they put pearls in their hair (1 Tim. 2:9). The wife of the Roman emperor Caligula, Lollia Paulina, once went to a dinner party with pearls on her hair, ears, neck, and fingers that

would be worth $36 million today. The historian Pliny said that Cleopatra had two pearls that were each worth half a million dollars at that time (and money had twenty times more buying power then than it does now!). When Roman emperors wanted to show how rich they were, they dissolved pearls in vinegar and drank them in their wine.(FOR AN EXCELLENT DISCUSSION SEE Matthew 13:44-46: Entering the Kingdom - Study Guide - click dropdown)

Phil Newton - Others are on a different course in their conversion. They are "seeking fine pearls," that is, they are in pursuit of something better and grander than what they know but they do not know how and where to find it. They may try one religion or philosophy or principle of life but realize that their search has not ended. They follow the Golden Rule but it cannot satisfy. They obey the law but do not find it satisfying for their guilt. They engage in various rituals and religious practices; they read the latest popular books for self-help, but nothing fills the void that aches in their lives... until they see Jesus Christ in the gospel! George Whitefield was such a one, seeking fine pearls in religious service, devotion to prayer and Bible reading, disciplining himself to follow God's law, fasting and denying himself to appease God for his guilt. But nothing satisfied him; he felt only desperation and misery. But as he read Matthew Henry's Expositions, Joseph Alleine's Alarm to the Unconverted, and Richard Baxter's Call to the Unconverted, he testifies, "About this time God was pleased to enlighten my soul, and bring me into the knowledge of His free grace, and the necessity of being justified in His sight by faith only" [Whitefield's Journal, 62, italics his]. No doubt remains about Whitefield's life. He discovered the "one pearl of great value" to who he was devoted until he died. We need not think that there is only one manner of coming to Christ. For certain, there is only one way to God, and that is through Jesus Christ alone. But coming to Christ might take different paths and experiences and circumstances, yet all yield the same treasure - Jesus Christ alone as Redeemer and King! (Sermon)

QUESTION - What is the meaning of the Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl of Great Price?

ANSWER - Jesus had just finished explaining to the disciples the meaning of theParable of the Wheat and the Tares, and these two short parables are a continuance of His discussion of the “kingdom of heaven.” He expressed truths about the kingdom in three pairs of parables in Matthew 13: the seed and the sower (Matthew 13:3-23) and the weeds in the field (Matthew 13:24-30); the mustard seed (Matthew 13:31-32) and the leaven (Matthew 13:33); and the hidden treasure (Matthew 13:44) and the pearl of great price (Matthew 13:45-46).

The similarities of these two short parables make it clear they teach the same lesson—the kingdom of heaven is of inestimable value. Both parables involve a man who sold all he had to possess the kingdom. The treasure and the pearl represent Jesus Christ and the salvation He offers. And while we cannot pay for salvation by selling all our worldly goods, once we have found the prize, we are willing to give up everything to possess it. But what is attained in exchange is so much more valuable that it is comparable to trading an ounce of trash for a ton of diamonds (Philippians 3:7-9).

In both parables, the treasures are hidden, indicating that spiritual truth is missed by many and cannot be found by intelligence or power or worldly wisdom. Matthew 13:11-17 and 1 Corinthians 2:7-8, 14 make it clear that the mysteries of the kingdom are hidden from some who are unable to hear, see, and comprehend these truths. The disobedient reap the natural consequences of their unbelief—spiritual blindness. Those whose eyes are opened by the Spirit do discern spiritual truth, and they, like the men in the parable, understand its great value.

Notice that the merchant stopped seeking pearls when he found the pearl of great price. Eternal life, the incorruptible inheritance, and the love of God through Christ constitute the pearl which, once found, makes further searching unnecessary. Christ fulfills our greatest needs, satisfies our longings, makes us whole and clean before God, calms and quiets our hearts, and gives us hope for the future. The “great price,” of course, is that which was paid by Christ for our redemption. He emptied Himself of His glory, came to earth in the form of a lowly man and shed His precious blood on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins.GotQuestions.org

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Matthew 13:46 and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

NET Matthew 13:46 When he found a pearl of great value, he went out and sold everything he had and bought it.

GNT Matthew 13:46 ε ρ ν δ να πολ τιμον μαργαρ την πελθ ν π πρακεν π ντα σα ε χεν κα γ ρασεν α τ ν.

NLT Matthew 13:46 When he discovered a pearl of great value, he sold everything he owned and bought it!

KJV Matthew 13:46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

ESV Matthew 13:46 who, on finding one pearl of great value, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

NIV Matthew 13:46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

ASV Matthew 13:46 and having found one pearl of great price, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

CSB Matthew 13:46 When he found one priceless pearl, he went and sold everything he had, and bought it.

NKJ Matthew 13:46 "who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it.

NRS Matthew 13:46 on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

YLT Matthew 13:46 who having found one pearl of great price, having gone away, hath sold all, as much as he had, and bought it.

NAB Matthew 13:46 When he finds a pearl of great price, he goes and sells all that he has and buys it.

NJB Matthew 13:46 when he finds one of great value he goes and sells everything he owns and buys it.

GWN Matthew 13:46 When he found a valuable pearl, he went away, sold everything he had, and bought it.

BBE Matthew 13:46 And having come across one jewel of great price, he went and gave all he had in exchange for it.

- **and upon finding one pearl of great value** - Pr 2:4 Isa 33:6 1Co 3:21-23 Eph 3:8 Col 2:3 1Jn 5:11,12 Rev 21:21
- **he went and sold all that he had** - Mk 10:28-31 Lu 18:28-30 Ac 20:24 Ga 6:14
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DISCOVERY OF
A PEARL OF GREAT VALUE

Since the parable of the treasure in Mt 13:44 is so similar to the parable of the pearl see comments on Mt 13:44. In sum, the Kingdom of Heaven is the greatest of treasures, the greatest in value.

And upon finding one pearl of great value - **Finding** is heurisko which gives us our English exclamation "**Eureka**!" The merchant was an entrepreneur who would seek fine pearns and sell them for a profit to retailers and as noted above they were used for investments in the ancient world.

> **Finding** (2147)(**heurisko**) means to find after searching and so to discover (Mt 7:7), to find accidentally or without seeking (Mt 12:44), to experience for oneself and to to obtain or procure (Heb 9:12). **Heurisko** is used in the Septuagint of Jeremiah 29:13 which was written to Israel but in principle applies to all who would seek the Kingdom of Heaven - "'You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart." As discussed above under seek, clearly no one would seek God's Kingdom unless the Spirit urged them. As Jesus said to Nicodemus "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." 7 "Do not be amazed that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8"The wind blows where it wishes and you hear the sound of it, but do not know where it comes from and where it is going; so is everyone who is born of the Spirit." (John 3:5-8+)
>
> **Great value** (4186)(**polutimos** from **polus** = great + **timos** = value) means literally great value.

He went and sold all that he had and bought it - Normally financial advisers tell you to diversify your portfolio, but this man did just the opposite, which in effect emphasizes the **great value**. To repeat what we stated above, Jesus is not saying one can buy their way into the Kingdom of Heaven (see note).

A T Robertson - "He has gone off and sold." The present perfect indicative, the dramatic perfect of vivid picture. Then he bought it. Present perfect, imperfect, aorist tenses together for lively action. (Word Pictures in the New Testament)

Bob Utley on **went and sold all** - This shows the radical nature of discipleship. The paradox is (1) a free salvation comes by God's grace alone and is therefore absolutely free (cf. Ro 3:24; Ro 5:15; 6:23; Eph. 2:8–9), but (2) it costs the disciple everything (cf. Mt 10:34–39; Mt 13:44, 46).

I agree with **D A Carson** who writes that "Walvoord recognizes that this parable is roughly equivalent to the last. But here, he says, the pearl represents not Israel but the church. The church, like the pearl, is formed organically, and "there is a sense in which the church was formed out of the wounds of Christ." This does not take us much beyond patristic allegorizing. The real connection with

the last parable is the supreme worth of the kingdom." (BORROW The Expositor's Bible Commentary : abridged edition: 1994).

Bruce Barton on **went and sold all** - The kingdom of heaven is so valuable that it calls for a total investment (radical discipleship) from those who find it.(LAC)

For example listen to Paul's willingness to in effect "sell all"

> "But **I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself**, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God. (Acts 20:24+)
>
> But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which **the world has been crucified to me**, and I to the world. (Gal 6:14+)

Jesus addressed Peter's concern about the "cost" of following Jesus...

> Peter began to say to Him, "Behold, **we have left everything and followed You**." 29 Jesus said, "Truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or farms, for My sake and for the gospel's sake, 30 but that he will receive a hundred times as much now in the present age, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and farms, along with persecutions; and in the age to come, eternal life. 31 "But many who are first will be last, and the last, first." (Mk 10:28-31, cf Lk 18:28-30+)

Stuart Weber - Despite its appearance to human eyes, the kingdom is well worth the investment of a person's life. These parables answer two closely related questions from the surrounding context. First, why should we give our lives for a kingdom we cannot see? Second, can the kingdom truly be the answer to our search for ultimate fulfillment?...In Matthew 10, Jesus projected even farther into the future, predicting even worse happenings for those who stayed by him. These timid souls needed assurance that the price they were paying was worth the kingdom they would receive. Believers today need exactly the same reassurance. The rewards are worth the price! (HNTC-Mt)

Knox Chamblin- This man's holdings would far exceed those of the worker in the previous parable. Nevertheless, to acquire a single pearl he too sells all his possessions—which shows that the pearl is valuable to the point of being priceless, and that no price is too great for so precious an object. (Mentor Commentary - MT)

Tony Evans - Discoverers are willing to give up everything they possess in order to gain their prizes because they recognize their incalculable value (13:44, 46). Similarly, men and women who discover and recognize the worth of living life under the rule of God will sacrifice anything of earthly value for participation in his kingdom. Life holds no greater treasure.(Tony Evans Bible Commentary)

Gil Rugh has some very interesting comments on these parables suggesting that they apply to both Jews and Gentiles and also addressing the thorny issue of what it means to sell all to buy land or pearl. Read his logic to see if you agree. He quotes a number of interesting passages to make his argument. -

> In order to be consistent in the interpretation, the pearl of great price represents the kingdom and the King. The kingdom is of great value and of great beauty. Some find it as they are searching for costly pearls; this is a picture of those seeking for the Messiah. They responded to the message of John the Baptist as he introduced Jesus Christ to the nation and became Christ's followers.
>
> Individuals have experienced salvation by both means. Some have met someone at work who shared the gospel with them and they believed even though they were not looking for it. They were not consciously thinking about such an experience, but were exposed to it. They recognized it to be the truth, and in the grace of God they believed.
>
> Others had an emptiness, a recognition that something was missing, and were seeking for truth. Again, that is the result of the work of God in drawing people to Christ. Such individuals were in a pursuit of truth and were looking for an answer.
>
> God addressed Israel many times in this way instructing them that when they wandered from Him and became confused and lost in their wickedness, they were to turn again and search diligently for Him. Israel is instructed in Deuteronomy 4 that if they pursue after other gods, they will be judged and scattered throughout the world. Then He instructs them in Deuteronomy 4:29, "But from there you will seek the Lord your God, and you will find Him if you search for Him with all your heart and all your soul." If there is hunger in the soul for God, they are to seek for Him and they will find Him. This will happen in the Tribulation as the events of that period are used

by God to bring pressure upon Israel and drive them to a hunger for their Messiah (see Zech 12:10-14+, Zech 13:1+, Zech 13:8-9+). As a result they will begin to search for Him so that when the message of the gospel of the kingdom is proclaimed, multitudes in the nation will believe in the Messiah and find Him and His salvation.

God instructed the nation Israel in Isaiah 55:6, "Seek the Lord while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near." That is what is pictured in Matthew 13 as a man searches for a costly pearl. Then God speaks of His plan to restore Israel in Jeremiah 29:11-13: "For I know the plans I have for you (THIS IS ADDRESSED TO ISRAEL)," declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart."

This passage shows the diligence that should characterize Israel in their search for God. The parable of the costly pearl shows the nation hungering after the kingdom. Amos 5:4,5 provides similar instruction: "For thus says the Lord to the house of Israel, „Seek Me that you may live. But do not resort to Bethel and do not come to Gilgal, nor cross over to Beersheba; for Gilgal will certainly go into captivity and Bethel will come to trouble." In the parable of the costly pearl, the picture seems to be depicting those who would be searching for the Messiah and His salvation.

If you are going to make a distinction between Israel and the Gentiles in these parables, the parable of the hidden treasure fits the Gentiles while the parable of the costly pearl seems to fit Israel. The Gentiles were not searching for the King or the kingdom, yet many of them were privileged to believe in the Messiah. However, the Jews supposedly were searching for the kingdom, yet that kingdom was hidden from their view. In the coming Tribulation, a great number like the sand of the seashore from every tribe, tongue, people and nation will believe the message of the gospel of the kingdom even though by and large they are not searching for the Messiah or for His coming kingdom (Rev 7:9, 14+). The parable of the hidden treasure fits the Gentiles, because Isaiah 65:1 speaks of God's being found by those who were not searching for Him, a reference in the context to the Gentiles finding salvation in Jehovah as those who will come to Christ even though they are not looking for a Messiah. They, in effect, stumble upon Him. But by the events God is using in the lives of the people of Israel, they will be driven to seek after Him until they recognize that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. As a result of their search for Him, they will believe in Him because of the grace of God. At that time there will be the national conversion of Israel which is referred to in Romans 11:25-28+. The conclusion of both parables is identical. The one who finds the hidden treasure or the costly pearl sells all he has in order to buy the prize.

This interpretation of these two parables of Matthew 13 leaves one major problem that bothers many. In both parables the individual goes and sells everything he has and buys the field with the treasure or the pearl. For many, such an approach is incompatible with our concept of salvation. Entrance into the kingdom is only by being born again. Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3:3+, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Salvation in every dispensation is a result of the grace of God. In order to experience God's righteousness, it has been essential for man to believe in the revelation God has given of Himself. As far back as Genesis 15:6+, Abraham believed God and God credited it to Abraham as righteousness. Anyone who has ever been saved from the beginning of time until eternity is saved by faith in the revelation God has given of Himself. That revelation centers in the person and work of God's Son, Jesus Christ. When a person believes in Christ as the One who loved him and died for him, he experiences God's salvation. That is true whether you are talking about entering the kingdom or about salvation for people who will become part of the Church today.

Then how does it fit to give up everything and purchase your salvation? Can one purchase entrance into the kingdom of heaven? When you understand the analogy that is being drawn, it is not so hard to understand. Follow me closely on this interpretation so you do not think that I am a heretic saying you can buy salvation. **That is not what these parables are saying**.

The point in buying or purchasing something is in securing it for yourself, having it as your possession. The point Jesus is driving home in these parables is that when one sees the overwhelming value of the kingdom and its King, there is a desire to obtain that for yourself no matter what the cost. **Salvation, of course, is free**. The point of buying in this parable is to secure the item for yourself . We say the same thing today when we tell someone that we bought an item. We are not speaking of the price we paid but rather the fact that the item has become our possession.

If you ask someone if he is buying the car he drives or leasing it, the question you are asking relates to whether the car belongs to him or someone else. Behind the concept of purchasing in this parable is the

concept of securing it for yourself. This parable pictures a person who will let nothing stand in the way of his coming into possession of the King and His kingdom.

This analogy is drawn from the Old Testament. Solomon wrote in Proverbs 23:23, "**Buy truth, and do not sell it, get wisdom and instruction and understanding.**" He is not saying that if you come up with enough money, you can acquire the truth. If you read the opening chapters of Proverbs, you will see that wisdom and truth are not purchased with money. Solomon is making the point that if you buy the truth, you acquire it for yourself and you should not give it up for any reason. The goal is to get wisdom, instruction and understanding for yourself. You are instructed to keep it in your possession and not to sacrifice the truth for anything. The emphasis on buying the truth is not on paying money for it necessarily, but rather the emphasis is on doing whatever is necessary to secure the truth. It may cost you to stand for the truth. That is fine. Do whatever is necessary to secure it for yourself.

The invitation is given to Israel in Isaiah 55:1 to secure for themselves the blessings of God without paying any money: "**Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost**." In this verse, the idea behind buying is really securing for yourself. When Jesus was addressing the disciples in these parables, they understood that they must do whatever was necessary to secure this precious possession for themselves.

Jesus used this same approach in Revelation 3 as He wrote to the church at Laodicea. This church thought it was wealthy and needed nothing. Yet Christ said they were "**wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked**" (Rev. 3:17+). So He tells them in Revelation 3:18+, "**I advise you to buy from Me gold refined by fire so that you may become rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself, and that the shame of your nakedness will not be revealed; and eye salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see.**" Can these things be purchased from Christ? No. His salvation is a free gift, but you can buy it from Him from the standpoint of securing it from Him. You can acquire from God whatever is necessary for you to be righteous before God.

6. The Overwhelming Importance of Securing Possession

As has been demonstrated, the point of buying the field or the costly pearl in Matthew 13 is to secure it for yourself. What is the emphasis of selling all that one has? The point is to recognize the overwhelming importance and value of the King and the kingdom so that nothing keeps you from it. In the context of true biblical faith, there must be the realization that Jesus Christ alone is the One in whom you place all your confidence and trust for your salvation. Apart from that there can be no salvation. Until you recognize the overwhelming importance of the King and His kingdom, you cannot possess the kingdom because you are not willing to trust Christ alone. T

his emphasis appears several times in Matthew's Gospel. Jesus said in Matthew 5, '**If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. If your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you; for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body, than for your whole body to go into hell**" (Mt 5:29,30+). The point of this passage is not to throw away your eye or cut off your hand. Rather, the emphasis is that you should not let anything–not any of the parts of your body, nothing at all–keep you from the life that is found only in Christ. You must see that He is more important than your body. Jesus said in Matthew 6, "**But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you**" (Mt 6:33+). Jesus must take priority over our physical needs of shelter, food and clothing. We are to seek His kingdom first. That means He must take priority and precedence over everything else. We must recognize that He is that important.

Matthew 10 also emphasizes that Jesus Christ must be first. '**He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me**" (Mt 10:37,38+). Family members cannot take precedence over Jesus Christ. He must take priority. You must sell all to secure the kingdom. You must see Him as the One who has priority or you are not willing to trust Him.

Jesus does not offer Himself as one of many options or as added security to the other things you may be trusting. Some people trust their riches, their family, their church, their baptism or their good works. They also try to add Christ into what they are trusting thinking that cannot hurt anything. It is as though He is just another block to be added to the things they are trusting. But that is not acceptable. Jesus Christ says you must see Him as first and foremost. **When you place your trust in Him, you must abandon your trust in anything**

and everything else. You cannot place your faith in Christ as your Savior and also have your faith in your baptism, your good works or your family ties. The Book of Galatians deals with that concept. If you are trusting Christ plus anything else, you are under the curse. You must be willing to abandon everything because your faith is in Him alone. You must see the overwhelming importance of Christ, His kingdom and His salvation.

Again in Matthew 19 the rich young ruler comes to Christ with a question. I understand this passage to be in the context of salvation. This young man does not ask Christ what he can do to be a better follower of Him. He asks in Matthew 19:16, "**Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?**" The issue is the acquisition of eternal life. Jesus Christ said to him in Matthew 19:21, "**If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.**" Jesus told him to abandon everything and place his total confidence in Him. He was to let go of everything else and rest only in Christ. This young man experienced a tragedy. "**But when the young man heard this statement, he went away grieving; for he was one who owned much property**" (Mt 19:22).

It is amazing that this rich young ruler came to the Messiah of Israel to find out how he could have eternal life as his own possession. Jesus told him to abandon everything and place his faith in Him alone. The young man said that was too much. Can you imagine a person saying that is too much to pay for eternal life? Ask yourself how much that rich young ruler was worth. How much does he have today? Did he make a good choice? His choice was ridiculous!

Jesus is saying there must be a willingness to sacrifice everything in order to have eternal life. He asked that young ruler if he really understood who Christ was and if he was willing to trust Him. **Jesus does not ask everyone to give away everything to become His follower. But Scripture indicates that He demands of everyone the same attitude**. **A person cannot be saved until he recognizes that Jesus Christ alone is the Savior and trusts Him alone as the One who loved him and died for him**.

7. Assuring Participation in the Kingdom

It is not clear to me how much detail one must go into in his mind before he can trust Christ in this way. When I was saved as a young person, I did not stop and figure out if I would have to give up my bedroom or anything that I owned. But I did know at that point that Jesus Christ was the most important thing in the world to me and that whatever else transpired, I wanted Him to be my Savior. I believe there must be that kind of commitment to Him. It is not possible to trust Him partially while holding on to riches in case it does not work out. Neither can one hold on to church membership or baptism in case Christ is not adequate. You must recognize who Jesus Christ is and what the issues really are. When a person comes to salvation in Christ, he must recognize that Christ is most important. As the message of the kingdom is proclaimed to people by His followers, they must recognize that this is more valuable than anything else. It does not matter what else happens, the most important thing in all the world must be that they belong to Jesus Christ and have their life in Him.

This was true of the Apostle Paul. He related the glory that was his before he became a follower of Christ in Philippians 3. Before he was saved he was powerful and honored and he had prestige, influence and probably a degree of wealth. But when he met Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, everything was downhill for him from that day on humanly speaking. He wrote, "**But whatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ. More than that, I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ, and may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own derived from the Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which comes from God on the basis of faith**" (Phil. 3:7-9+). Paul said that Christ was the most important thing in his life. It was essential that he have Christ's righteousness. To him everything else was nothing and worse than nothing. He was glad to lose it all to have Jesus Christ.

That is the attitude Christ is talking about in these two parables of Matthew 13 We saw in our study of the parable of the soils that one of the things that keeps people from Christ is persecution and pressure from family members. Another is hearts that are full of the lusts of the world: the love of money and the cares of this life. Those things choke the Word of God so that it cannot bear fruit. Those were the things that kept the rich young ruler from trusting Christ in Matthew 19, and those things still keep people from believing in Jesus Christ. (ED: I SHARED CHRIST WITH A DOCTOR FRIEND OF MIND. HE LISTENED ATTENTIVELY IN HIS LIVING ROOM. AND THEN HE LOOKED AT ME WITH ALL SINCERITY AND SAID "I CAN'T BELIEVE IN JESUS, BECAUSE IF I DO IT MEANS I WILL HAVE TO GIVE UP MY HUNTING DOGS AND ALL THE TIME THAT THAT INVOLVES!" I WAS SHOCKED. I LEFT HIS HOUSE VERY SAD.) Jesus goes on to talk about how difficult it is for a rich man to be saved (Lk 18:23, 24, 25+). That is true because it is hard to quit trusting

yourself and your accomplishments and abandon yourself without reservation to total trust in Jesus Christ.

This is what Jesus is talking about in Matthew 13. The subject is the **kingdom of heaven**. It is like a treasure hidden in a field. Some stumble upon it. This may describe your condition. You may not have been looking for anything as you started reading, but now you have been confronted with the reality that Jesus Christ is the Savior, and you can have eternal life from Him at this very moment. On the other hand, you may be one who has an intense longing. You may have been searching for something to fill the void in your life for as long as you can remember. You need to recognize that Jesus Christ is the Savior. He is the One who can bring meaning and purpose to life. If you really understand the issue that you are a sinner and apart from Christ there is no salvation, then you will be willing to trust Jesus Christ alone as your Savior whatever the cost (**ED**: AND THIS COST CAN BE VERY HIGH IN MUSLIM AND HINDU NATIONS - WHICH MAY EXPLAIN WHY THERE ARE OFTEN NO KNOWN BELIEVERS IN LARGE HINDU PEOPLE GROUPS - SOMETIMES WITH AS MANY AS 7 MILLION PEOPLE! THIS IS SHOCKING AND INCREDIBLY SAD! SEE Mahratta Kunbi in India).

If you have not trusted Him yet as your Savior, **what stands between you and Christ? What do you think is more important than eternal life? Your family, your job, your prestige, your influence, the pleasures you now enjoy? Looking back now, it is clear that the rich young ruler make a bad choice two thousand years ago. Whatever he had then is gone, and he has nothing now. In two thousand years what difference will it make what you now have? Will it matter how your family treated you, what kind of job you had, whether life treated you well or harshly? No. But it will matter if you had a personal relationship with Christ. There is nothing so costly as that for which we exchange eternal life.** For those of us who have trusted Christ, this kind of abandonment to Him is to characterize us throughout our lives and not just when we make the decision to believe in Him. That is how we are to live our lives every day. He is to be more important to us than anything else, more important than life, family or possessions. Our relationship with Him is to be evidenced by faithfulness. He is to take precedence over everything else in our lives. We are to love Him most and honor Him with our lives.(Sermon)

Matthew 13:47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering fish of every kind;

NET Matthew 13:47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was cast into the sea that caught all kinds of fish.

GNT Matthew 13:47 Π λιν μο α στ ν βασιλε α τ ν ο ραν ν σαγ ν βληθε σ ε ς τ ν θ λασσαν κα κ παντ ς γ νους συναγαγο σ ·

NLT Matthew 13:47 "Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is like a fishing net that was thrown into the water and caught fish of every kind.

KJV Matthew 13:47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

ESV Matthew 13:47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and gathered fish of every kind.

NIV Matthew 13:47 "Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish.

ASV Matthew 13:47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

CSB Matthew 13:47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a large net thrown into the sea. It collected every kind of fish,

NKJ Matthew 13:47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind,

NRS Matthew 13:47 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind;

YLT Matthew 13:47 'Again, the reign of the heavens is like to a net that was cast into the sea, and did gather together of every kind,

NAB Matthew 13:47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind.

NJB Matthew 13:47 'Again, the kingdom of Heaven is like a dragnet that is cast in the sea and brings in a haul of all kinds of fish.

GWN Matthew 13:47 "Also, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea. It gathered all kinds of fish.

BBE Matthew 13:47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net, which was put into the sea and took in every sort of fish:

- **kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet** - Mt 4:19 Mk 1:17 Lu 5:10
- **gathering fish of every kind** - Mt 13:26-30 22:9,10 25:1-4 Lu 14:21-23 Joh 15:2,6 Ac 5:1-10 Ac 8:18-22 20:30 1Co 5:1-6 10:1-12 11:19 2Co 11:13-15,26 2Co 12:20,21 Ga 2:4 2Ti 3:2-5 4:3,4 Tit 1:9-11 2Pe 2:1-3,13-22 1Jn 2:18,19 4:1-6 Jude 1:4,5 Rev 3:1,15-17
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A DRAGNET

COMPARISON TO A DRAGNET

Weber - The parable of the net teaches the same lesson as the parable of the weeds—that the righteous must endure some period of coexistence with evil, until God's final judgment brings justice and reward. (HNTC-Mt)

Again, the kingdom (basileia) **of heaven** (note) **is like** - How interesting for Jesus to use this comparison which would have been very familiar to His disciples, several of which had been fishermen when He first called them...

> Now as Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting (ballo cf related verb in Mark's version - amphiballo) a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. And He said to them, "**Follow** Me, and I will make you fishers of men." The disciples had personal experience with this parable, but soon the literal fish would be figurative fish in the form of the souls of men." (Mt 4:18-19+)
>
> > **Comment** - The net in this passage is a smaller net (**amphiblestron** from **amphiballo** from **amphi** = around + **ballo** = throw) which describes a net that was cast from over the fisherman's shoulder standing either on the shore or in a boat. As he spotted a school of fish he would cast the net, the throw causing the net to spread out in a circle on the water, sinking rapidly because of weights on the edges and trapping whatever was below. The net would be drawn up by a cord on the center of the net and draw in the catch in the form of a sack that could then be examined.
>
> **Like** (same)(3664) see preceding note on homoios

A dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering fish of every kind - This large net would bring in a catch of all manner of fish, some of which were not edible or not big enough to eat.

> **Dragnet** (4522)(**sagene**; English = **seine**) describes a long fishing net lowered into the water and hanging vertically with floats along the top and weights along the bottom. "A **seine**, a long-drawn net or sweep-net, the ends of which were spread out by boats so as to cover a large portion of open sea, then drawn together, and all which they contain is taken." (Zodhiates) "The **dragnet** was an expensive piece of equipment, sometimes immense in size (PICTURE). It was used in two different ways. It could be stretched between two boats and then dragged through the water, or it may have been weighted on one side to hold it on the bottom of the lake while the other side was held at the surface by floats. A single boat could then drag it along, pushing everything ahead of the vertical wall thus formed. In either usage, fish of any size were trapped in this net." (Gilbrant)
>
> **Sagene** - All uses in Bible, most in the Septuagint - Eccl. 7:26; Isa. 19:8; Ezek. 26:5; Ezek. 26:14; Ezek. 47:10; Hab. 1:15; Hab. 1:16; Matt. 13:47
>
> > **MacArthur** adds that the **seine** "required a team of fishermen to operate and sometimes covered as much as a half square mile. It was pulled into a giant circle around the fish, between two boats out in

deep water or by one boat when working from the shore. In the latter case, one end of the net would be firmly moored on shore while the other was attached to the boat, which would make a large circle out into the water and come back to the starting place. Floats were attached to the top of the net and weights to the bottom, forming a wall of net from the surface to the bottom of the lake. Because the net permitted nothing to escape, all sorts of things besides the desirable fish were caught. It swept everything in its path —weeds, objects dropped overboard from boats, all manner of sea life, and **fish of every kind**." (See Matthew Commentary)

QUESTION - What is the meaning of the Parable of the Dragnet?

ANSWER - Jesus tells the Parable of the Dragnet, or the Parable of the Various Kinds of Fish, in Matthew 13:47-50. Jesus prefaces the parable by saying it illustrates an aspect of the kingdom of heaven. The story concerns fishermen using a dragnet, a weighted net dragged along the bottom of a body of water to collect an assortment of fish.

In the parable, the dragnet is cast into the sea and pulled onto shore full of all kinds of fish. Then the fishermen sat down to the business of sorting the fish into the "good" and the "bad." The fish worth keeping were gathered into containers, but the rest were tossed away.

Jesus then interprets the parable for His disciples: "This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (verses 49-50).

This parable is similar to the Parable of the Wheat and the Tares (Matthew 13:36-43). Both parables concern an end-times sorting, aided by angels, when believers will be separated from unbelievers once and for all.

Just as the net was cast into the sea drawing many fish, the gospel message is spread into the world, drawing many people to it. Just as the net gathered all types of fish, regardless of their value, so the gospel attracts many people who neither repent nor desire to follow Christ. Just as the fish could not be sorted until the net was pulled ashore, so false believers masquerading as true Christians will not be made known until the end of the age.

These "bad fish," or false believers, can be likened to the rocky soil and thorny soil in Matthew 13:5-7 and to the tares in verse 40. They claim to have a relationship with Jesus, saying "Lord, Lord" (Matthew 7:22), and Jesus' reply will be "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!" (verse 23).

The sobering main point of the parable can be stated thus: "A day of reckoning will come in which God will separate the true believers from mere pretenders, and those found to be false will be cast into hell."GotQuestions.org

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Matthew 13:48 and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down and gathered the good fish into containers, but the bad they threw away.

NET Matthew 13:48 When it was full, they pulled it ashore, sat down, and put the good fish into containers and threw the bad away.

GNT Matthew 13:48 ν τε πληρ θη ναβιβ σαντες π τ ν α γιαλ ν κα καθ σαντες συν λεξαν τ καλ ε ς γγη, τ δ σαπρ ξω βαλον.

NLT Matthew 13:48 When the net was full, they dragged it up onto the shore, sat down, and sorted the good fish into crates, but threw the bad ones away.

KJV Matthew 13:48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

ESV Matthew 13:48 When it was full, men drew it ashore and sat down and sorted the good into containers but threw away the bad.

NIV Matthew 13:48 When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away.

ASV Matthew 13:48 which, when it was filled, they drew up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but the bad they cast away.

CSB Matthew 13:48 and when it was full, they dragged it ashore, sat down, and gathered the good fish into containers, but threw out the worthless ones.

NKJ Matthew 13:48 "which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away.

NRS Matthew 13:48 when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad.

YLT Matthew 13:48 which, when it was filled, having drawn up again upon the beach, and having sat down, they gathered the good into vessels, and the bad they did cast out,

NAB Matthew 13:48 When it is full they haul it ashore and sit down to put what is good into buckets. What is bad they throw away.

NJB Matthew 13:48 When it is full, the fishermen bring it ashore; then, sitting down, they collect the good ones in baskets and throw away those that are no use.

GWN Matthew 13:48 When it was full, they pulled it to the shore. Then they sat down, gathered the good fish into containers, and threw the bad ones away.

BBE Matthew 13:48 When it was full, they took it up on the sands; and seated there they put the good into vessels, but the bad they put away.

- **gathered the good fish into containers** - Mt 13:30,40-43 3:12
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SEPARATION OF THE SEINE

Webster says a **seine** is "a large net with sinkers on one edge and floats on the other that hangs vertically in the water and is used to enclose and catch fish when its ends are pulled together or are drawn ashore."

And when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach- **Filled** assumes a good catch. And then Jesus describes the way one did seine or dragnet fishing by bringing the filled net **up on the beach** to keep the fish from jumping out in the water.

And they sat down and gathered (sullego) the good fish into containers but the bad they threw away - Sat down was the typical posture of fisherman examining their large nets of fish. **Gathered** (sullego) is the same verb used 5x in the parable of the tares (Mt 13:28, 29, 30, 40, 41) with the same goal which was the prelude to separation of the good from the bad. As noted above, the fish were bad because they were not edible or big enough to eat. For those things that were not clean (and thus not edible by the Jews) see Leviticus 11:9–12+. There is a tragic irony here for even in the band of 12 there were 11 good "fish" and one bad, Judas Iscariot.

> **Bad** (4550)(**sapros** from **sepo** = cause to decay, to putrefy, to rot away, be corrupted) describes that which is rotten, putrefying, corrupt, disgusting, perishing, rank, foul, putrid, worthless (Mt 7:17,18 = fruit, Mt 13:48 = fish). In secular writings **sapros** was used to describe spoiled fish, **rotten** grapes on the ground, **crumbling** stones. The basic meaning relates to the process of decay. **Sapros** is used of things unusable, unfit, bad. It describes that which is harmful due to the fact that it is corrupt and corrupting or defiling.

Matthew 13:49 "So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous,

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NET Matthew 13:49 It will be this way at the end of the age. Angels will come and separate the evil from the righteous

GNT Matthew 13:49 ο τως σται ν τ συντελε το α νος· ξελε σονται ο γγελοι κα φοριο σιν το ς πονηρο ς κ μ σου τ ν δικα ων

NLT Matthew 13:49 That is the way it will be at the end of the world. The angels will come and separate the wicked people from the righteous,

KJV Matthew 13:49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

ESV Matthew 13:49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous

NIV Matthew 13:49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous

ASV Matthew 13:49 So shall it be in the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous,

CSB Matthew 13:49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out, separate the evil people from the righteous,

NKJ Matthew 13:49 "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just,

NRS Matthew 13:49 So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous

YLT Matthew 13:49 so shall it be in the full end of the age, the messengers shall come forth and separate the evil out of the midst of the righteous,

NAB Matthew 13:49 Thus it will be at the end of the age. The angels will go out and separate the wicked from the righteous

NJB Matthew 13:49 This is how it will be at the end of time: the angels will appear and separate the wicked from the upright,

GWN Matthew 13:49 The same thing will happen at the end of time. The angels will go out and separate the evil people from people who have God's approval.

BBE Matthew 13:49 So will it be in the end of the world: the angels will come and take out the bad from the good,

- **the angels -** Mt 13:39 24:31
- **take out the wicked from among the righteous** - Mt 22:12-14 25:5-12,19-33 2Th 1:7-10 Rev 20:12-15
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE SAVIOR'S SOLEMN WARNING OF SEPARATION

It is worth noting that in Mt 13:49 Jesus repeats the **solemn warning** in the parable of the tares (Mt 13:38-41), specifically repeating the first seven Greek words in Mt 13:40 "**so shall it be at the end of the age**" Here is the Greek which is identical in v40 and v49 = ο τως σται ν τ συντελε το α νος. Repetition of anything signifies importance, especially if it is something repeated by Jesus. Jesus' repeated warnings are not given to "scare" people into Heaven, but to to cause them to look to His claims as the Lamb of God, the only One Who could take away the sins of tares and wicked people.

Jesus used repetition regarding the coming separation in the Olivet Discourse declaring...

> "For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark and they did not understand until **the flood came and took them all away** (SEPARATION OF RIGHTEOUS FROM THE WICKED); so will the coming of the Son of Man be. Then there will be two men in the field; **one will be taken and one will be left.** Two women will be grinding at the mill; **one will be taken and one will be left.**" (TWO MORE EXAMPLES OF SEPARATION OF RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED) (Mt. 24:38-41)

In John we see Jesus' heart in his double warning (die at beginning and end of sentence)

> "Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for unless you believe that I am [He], you will die in your sins." (John 8:24)

In Ezekiel God asked rhetorically

> "Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked," declares the Lord GOD, "**rather than that he should turn**

from his ways and live? (Ezek. 18:23)

Peter added

> The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance**. (2 Peter 3:9+)

And so Jesus the repeats the warning that men might

> "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." (Isaiah 45:22KJV) (Verse God used to save Spurgeon)

So it will be at the end (sunteleia**) of the age (**aion**)** - To what **age** does Jesus refer? As noted above (see preceding discussion), this is not as easy to answer as one might initially surmise. In support of this premise is the fact that a number of commentaries simply say **end of the age** and add no further explanation! While I favor the age to be the one in which we are living and which will terminate at the **Second Coming**, there are some difficulties with this interpretation (see notes)

John MacArthur has a dramatic description of men who are like fish trapped in a net preparing for final separation - During the present era, which is the church age, God permits unbelief and unrighteousness. But the time is coming when His toleration will end and His judgment begins. The first phase of judgment will be the separation of the wicked from among the righteous, the tares from among the wheat. The dragnet of God's judgment moves silently through the sea of mankind and draws all men to the shores of eternity for final separation to their ultimate destiny—believers to eternal life and unbelievers to eternal damnation. Men move about within that net as if they were forever free. It may touch them from time to time, as it were, startling them. But they quickly swim away, thinking they have escaped, not realizing they are completely and inescapably encompassed in God's sovereign plan. The invisible web of God's judgment encroaches on every human being just as that of the dragnet encroaches on the fish. Most men do not perceive the kingdom, and they do not see God working in the world. They may be briefly moved by the grace of the gospel or frightened by the threat of judgment; but they soon return to their old ways of thinking and living, oblivious to the things of eternity. But when man's day is over and Christ returns to set up His glorious kingdom, then judgment will come. (See Matthew Commentary)

The angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous (dikaios**)** - By comparing the parallel passage in Mt 13:41 the one calling **the angels** to **come forth** is again **the Son of Man**, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. **Take out** means to **separate**. In the previous verse Jesus referred to **bad** (sapros) fish but now switches to **wicked** (poneros) men, those who actively carry out evil deeds, even with a desire to harm.

MacArthur points out that "The separation will include all persons who are then living and all who have died—"those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment" (John 5:29)."

> **Angels** (messengers)(32)(**aggelos/angelos**) literally means a messenger (one who bears a message - Lk 1:11, 2:9, etc or does an errand). Most of the NT uses refer to heavenly angels (messengers) who are supernatural, transcendent beings with power to carry out various tasks. All uses of **aggelos** that refer to angels are masculine gender (so much for the painting often depicting female angels!) **Angels** will one day gather the **righteous** (Mt 24:31, Mk 13:27) as well as the **wicked** as described in Matthew 13 (Mt 13:41, 49). **Vine** adds that **aggelos** refer to "an order of created beings, superior to man, Heb 2:7; Ps. 8:5, belonging to Heaven, Mt. 24:36; Mark 12:25, and to God, Luke 12:8, and engaged in His service, Ps 103:20. Angels are spirits, Heb 1:14, i.e., they do not have material bodies as men have; they are either human in form, or can assume the human form when necessary, cp. Lk 24:4, with Lk 24:23, Acts 10:3 with Acts 10:30."
>
> > **THOUGHT** - One has to wonder what the interaction of the wicked person will be with the angel? Will they see the angel, etc? Imagine the moment of horror presaging far greater horrors to come, and those horrors for all eternity! The implication is that they will, but we cannot be dogmatic. Perhaps this is where the idea of the so-called "**Angel of Death**" came from but the Bible does not specifically describe such an angel.
>
> **Take out** (separate) (873)(**aphorizo** from **apó** = off from, apart + **horizo** = mark out the limit) means to mark off the boundaries, to appoint, set one apart for some purpose. Aphorizo is used of the final separation of the righteous from the wicked not only here in Mt 13:49 but also in Mt 25:32 Jesus explaining "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd **separates** (aphorizo) the sheep from the goats." Aphorizo is used of the separation of the disciples from the world (Lk 6:22); and of the setting apart of apostles to special functions (Acts 13:2). Matt. 13:49; Matt. 25:32; Lk. 6:22; Acts 13:2; Acts 19:9; Rom. 1:1; 2 Co. 6:17; Gal. 1:15; Gal. 2:12.

Wicked (wicked, bad) (4190) see discussion on poneros. Poneros in Matthew - Matt. 5:11; Matt. 5:37; Matt. 5:39; Matt. 5:45; Matt. 6:13; Matt. 6:23; Matt. 7:11; Matt. 7:17; Matt. 7:18; Matt. 9:4; Matt. 12:34; Matt. 12:35; Matt. 12:39; Matt. 12:45; Matt. 13:19; Matt. 13:38; Matt. 13:49; Matt. 15:19; Matt. 16:4; Matt. 18:32; Matt. 20:15; Matt. 22:10; Matt. 25:26

Matthew 13:50 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

NET Matthew 13:50 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

GNT Matthew 13:50 κα βαλο σιν α το ς ε ς τ ν κ μινον το πυρ ς· κε σται κλαυθμ ς κα βρυγμ ς τ ν δ ντων.

NLT Matthew 13:50 throwing the wicked into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

KJV Matthew 13:50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

ESV Matthew 13:50 and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

NIV Matthew 13:50 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

ASV Matthew 13:50 and shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of teeth.

CSB Matthew 13:50 and throw them into the blazing furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

NKJ Matthew 13:50 "and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

NRS Matthew 13:50 and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

YLT Matthew 13:50 and shall cast them to the furnace of the fire, there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth.'

NAB Matthew 13:50 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be wailing and grinding of teeth.

NJB Matthew 13:50 to throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.

GWN Matthew 13:50 Then the angels will throw the evil people into a blazing furnace. They will cry and be in extreme pain there.

BBE Matthew 13:50 And will put them into the fire: there will be weeping and cries of sorrow.

- **will throw them into the furnace of fire** - Mt 13:42
- **in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth** - Mt 24:50,51 Lu 13:27,28 Rev 14:10,11 16:10,11
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Furnace of Fire

CONSUMMATION:
CAST INTO A CONSUMING FIRE

Consummation means the ultimate end, in the present context the ultimate end of all the wicked. In the previous separation of the wheat and tares, the fate of both righteous and wicked were described, but here the focus is on the fate of the wicked Christ rejecters.

Notice again that Jesus repeats the Greek exactly - κα βαλο σιν α το ς ε ς τ ν κ μινον το πυρ ς· κε σται κλαυθμ ς κα βρυγμ ς τ ν δ ντων. (Mt 13:42 and Mt 13:50). And so again Jesus places emphasis on the final judgment of the wicked.

The writer of Hebrews says "It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God" (Heb 10:31+) "for our God is a consuming fire." (Heb 12:29+). But the tragic paradox is that this is a consuming fire that does not consume. In other words, it does not annihilate one's soul.

Now Jesus presents the main point of this parable, so it neither wise, nor profitable for edification to try to allegorize the details of catching the fish in the net. The main point is separation of men, good and bad. The Psalmist spoke of this separation writing "For the LORD knows the way of the **righteous**, But the way of the **wicked** will perish." (Ps 1:6+).

THE WAY TO FACE CHRIST AS JUDGE
IS TO KNOW HIM AS SAVIOR.

John MacArthur writes "Perhaps no doctrine is harder to accept emotionally than the doctrine of hell. Yet it is too clear and too often mentioned in Scripture either to deny or to ignore. Jesus spoke more of hell than any of the prophets or apostles did—perhaps for the reason that its horrible truth would be all but impossible to accept had not the Son of God Himself absolutely affirmed it. It had special emphasis in Jesus' teaching from the beginning to the end of His earthly ministry. He said more about hell than about love. More than all other teachers in the Bible combined, He warned men of hell, promising no escape for those who refused His gracious, loving offer of salvation. When an interviewer asked a young punk rock singer what she was looking forward to at the end of her career, she replied, "Death. I'm looking forward to death." When asked why, she said, "I want to go to hell, because hell will be fun." Such deception is tragic beyond words. Nothing could less describe hell than fun. The human mind cannot begin to conceive of the eternal horror that is hell. Even the biblical figures related to hell are only suggestive, because the finite mind cannot comprehend infinite pain and torment any more than it can comprehend infinite joy and bliss." (See Matthew Commentary) (For a graphic description see MacArthur's sermon The Furnace of Fire.)

And will throw them into the furnace (kamino) of fire (pur) - **Throw** is the verb ballo which means to cast or as **BDAG** says to cause the wicked "to move from one location to another through use of forceful motion." This same verb is used in John's description of God's final judgment at the **Great White Throne**...

> Then death and **Hades** (OT = Sheol) were **thrown** (ballo) into the **Lake of fire**. This is **the second death**, the **Lake of fire**. And if anyone's name was not found written in the **Book of Life**, he was **thrown** (ballo) into the **Lake of fire**. (Revelation 20:14-15+).
>
> **Related Resources:**
>
> - What is the difference between Sheol, Hades, Hell, the lake of fire, Paradise, and Abraham's bosom?
> - Births, Deaths, and Resurrections.

In that place there will be weeping (klauthmos) and gnashing (brugmos) of teeth - To what does **that place** refer? This is **Hell** where the wicked will consciously experience **eternal punishment** which is why they will be **weeping** and **gnashing** their **teeth**.

The judgment (and separation) in this passage recalls Jesus' **parable of the wedding feast** in Mt 22:1-14 in which the "slaves went out into the streets and gathered together all they found, both evil and good." (Mt 22:10) And then the king came and saw "a man who was not dressed in wedding clothes" (Mt 22:11), upon which he commanded the servants "Bind him hand and foot and throw him into the outer darkness, **in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth**." (Mt 22:13).

FUTURE JUDGMENTS

1) During the Seventieth Week of Daniel (commonly referred to as "The Tribulation") the earth and **"earth dwellers"** will be impacted by a series of "judgments" that flow sequentially from the Seal, Trumpet and Bowl judgments described in detail in Revelation 6-19. For an excellent, conservative (literal) verse by verse analysis of this time when God's wrath is poured out, I highly recommend Tony Garland's commentary on the Revelation entitled Tony Garland's commentary on the Revelation entitled "A Testimony of Jesus Christ".

2) The Judgment of the Nations (synonymous with "Gentiles") (Mt 25:31-46)

> The **Sheep** (saved Gentiles) and the **Goats** (unsaved Gentiles) will be separated. The Gentiles who come out of the time of the **Great Tribulation** are saved by grace through faith, but in Matthew 25 Jesus teaches that they will be identified on the basis of whether they befriended the Jews during the **Great Tribulation** in which anti-Semitism will reach its historical zenith. The fact that these Gentiles befriend Jews does not earn their salvation but demonstrates that they are saved. The saved Gentiles will have the wonderful privilege of

entering into the **Millennial Reign** of Christ in their natural bodies.

3) The Judgment of Israel (Zech 13:8, 9+. Ezekiel 20:33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38).

Paul taught in Romans "they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel" (Ro 9:6) and after the Great Tribulation there will be a time in which God specifically judges Israel to determine who is the "true Israel" and it is these born again Jews who will enter into the Millennial reign of Christ.

4) The Judgment of Satan and his fallen angelic cohorts

These judgments are described in (Jude 1:6+, Re 20:1-10+)

5) The Judgment of the Unbelieving Dead

This judgment is most commonly referred to as the "**Great White Throne**" Judgment (Rev 20:11-15+) and follows (1) the 1000 year binding of Satan, subsequent release and utter defeat and (2) the 1000 year reign of the saints with Christ on earth (Re 20:4-6+). Compare 2 Th 1:6, 7, 8, 9 which describes the tragedy of hell, which is eternal separation from the Living God. May this immutable, awesome truth drive us to pray fervently and urgently for the lost in our sphere and influence and to witness to the liberating truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Related Resources:

- What are the different judgments in the Bible? - excellent summary of past, present and future judgments
- Christ as Judge
- What is the Great White Throne Judgment?
- What is the Judgment Seat of Christ / Bema Seat of Christ?
- What happens at the final judgment?

LET US PONDER OFTEN AND SOBERLY…
THE BREVITY OF OUR DAYS
and
THE LENGTH OF ETERNITY!

Matthew 13:51 "Have you understood all these things?" They *said to Him, "Yes."

NET Matthew 13:51 "Have you understood all these things?" They replied, "Yes."

GNT Matthew 13:51 Συν κατε τα τα π ντα; λ γουσιν α τ , Να .

NLT Matthew 13:51 Do you understand all these things?" "Yes," they said, "we do."

KJV Matthew 13:51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.

ESV Matthew 13:51 "Have you understood all these things?" They said to him, "Yes."

NIV Matthew 13:51 "Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked. "Yes," they replied.

ASV Matthew 13:51 Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea.

CSB Matthew 13:51 "Have you understood all these things?" "Yes," they told Him.

NKJ Matthew 13:51 Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

NRS Matthew 13:51 "Have you understood all this?" They answered, "Yes."

YLT Matthew 13:51 Jesus saith to them, 'Did ye understand all these?' They say to him, 'Yes, sir.'

NAB Matthew 13:51 "Do you understand all these things?" They answered, "Yes."

NJB Matthew 13:51 'Have you understood all these?' They said, 'Yes.'

GWN Matthew 13:51 "Have you understood all of this?" "Yes," they answered.

BBE Matthew 13:51 Are all these things now clear to you? They say to him, Yes.

- **Have** - Mt 13:11,19 15:17 16:11 24:15 Mk 4:34 7:18 8:17,18 Lu 9:44,45 Ac 8:30,31 1Jn 5:20
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Have you understood all these things?"They said to Him, "Yes." - To whom is Jesus speaking? This is clearly the disciples, not the crowds, for earlier the disciples had asked "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." (Mt 13:36+). Mt 13:50 supports that Jesus is addressing His disciples. What are all these things? In the immediate context of Matthew 13, it is all the main points of each parable such as the variable response of people (character of their heart - soils) to their message and yet despite the fact that many will reject their message, the Kingdom will grow. These things also includes the fact that the Kingdom will have both good people and evil people in it until the very end, but that one day these two groups would be separated by God. And while His disciples said they understood, we know from later statements and actions, they their understanding was not perfect (cf Mt 15:16). Notice that earlier we saw that **understanding** the Word was related to **bearing fruit with perseverance** (Mt 13:23+), so ultimately the disciples would demonstrate that they understood Jesus' parables by bearing fruit, something all did except for Judas Iscariot.

> **Understood** (4920)(**suniemi** from **sun/syn** = with + **hiemi** = send) literally means to send together or bring together which gives the idea of putting together "pieces of the puzzle" and so to exhibit quick comprehension. Suniemi is the ability to understand concepts and see relationships between them. **Suniemi** means to put together, grasp or exhibit quick comprehension. **Suniemi** is the manifestation of the ability to understand concepts and see relationships between them and thus describes the exercise of the faculty of comprehension, intelligence, acuteness, shrewdness. The noun **sunesis** was originally used by Homer in the Odyssey to describe the running together or a flowing together of two rivers.
>
> Understand is a key word in Matthew 13
>
> > Matthew 13:13 "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they **understand**.
> >
> > Matthew 13:14 "In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT **UNDERSTAND**; YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;
> >
> > Matthew 13:15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL, WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR, AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES, OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES, HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, AND **UNDERSTAND** WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN, AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'
> >
> > Matthew 13:19 "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not**understand** it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.
> >
> > Matthew 13:23 "And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and **understands** it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty."

MacArthur - Jesus had instructed the disciples to "beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest" (Matt. 9:38)—to proclaim the coming harvest of judgment and to warn men of it and tell them how to escape it while they could. In the following four chapters we see Him specifically call them to this ministry and begin teaching, training, and in every way preparing them for it. (See Matthew Commentary)

John Broadus - Since you have understood these new views of the Messianic reign, it follows that you, and every Scribe who like you has become a disciple to that reign, will have good store of truths to teach, of new things as well as old. If the disciples had not understood, it could not have been at that time said that such a store of varied instruction would be possessed by them and other teachers under the New Dispensation. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

J C Ryle applies this passage - Personal application has been called the "soul" of preaching. A sermon without application is like a letter posted without a direction. It may be well-written, rightly dated, and duly signed. But it is useless, because it never reaches its destination. Our Lord's inquiry is an admirable example of real heart-searching application, "**Have ye understood?**" The mere form of hearing a sermon can profit no man, unless he comprehends what it means. He might just as well listen to the blowing of a trumpet, or the beating of a drum. His intellect must be set in motion, and his heart impressed. Ideas must be received into his mind. He must carry off the seeds of new thoughts. Without this he hears in vain. It is of great importance to see this point clearly. There is a vast amount of ignorance about it. There are thousands who go regularly to places of worship, and think they have done their religious duty, but never carry away an idea, or receive an impression. Ask them, when they return home on a Sunday evening,

what they have learned, and they cannot tell you a word. Examine them at the end of a year, as to the religious knowledge they have attained, and you will find them as ignorant as the heathen. Let us watch our souls in this matter. Let us take with us to Church, not only our bodies, but our minds, our reason, our hearts, and our consciences. Let us often ask ourselves, “What have I got from this sermon? what have I learned? what truths have been impressed on my mind?” Intellect, no doubt, is not everything in religion. But it does not therefore follow that it is nothing at all.—The heart is unquestionably the main point. But we must never forget that the Holy Ghost generally reaches the heart through the mind.—Sleepy, idle, inattentive hearers, are never likely to be converted.

Matthew 13:52 And Jesus said to them, “Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings out of his treasure things new and old.”

NET Matthew 13:52 Then he said to them, "Therefore every expert in the law who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his treasure what is new and old."

GNT Matthew 13:52 δ ε πεν α το ς, Δι το το π ς γραμματε ς μαθητευθε ς τ βασιλε τ ν ο ραν ν μοι ς στιν νθρ π ο κοδεσπ τ , στις κβ λλει κ το θησαυρο α το καιν κα παλαι .

NLT Matthew 13:52 Then he added, "Every teacher of religious law who becomes a disciple in the Kingdom of Heaven is like a homeowner who brings from his storeroom new gems of truth as well as old."

KJV Matthew 13:52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

ESV Matthew 13:52 And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house, who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

NIV Matthew 13:52 He said to them, "Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old."

ASV Matthew 13:52 And he said unto them, Therefore every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is a householder, who bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.

CSB Matthew 13:52 "Therefore," He said to them, "every student of Scripture instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who brings out of his storeroom what is new and what is old."

NKJ Matthew 13:52 Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."

NRS Matthew 13:52 And he said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old."

YLT Matthew 13:52 And he said to them, 'Because of this every scribe having been discipled in regard to the reign of the heavens, is like to a man, a householder, who doth bring forth out of his treasure things new and old.'

NAB Matthew 13:52 And he replied, "Then every scribe who has been instructed in the kingdom of heaven is like the head of a household who brings from his storeroom both the new and the old."

NJB Matthew 13:52 And he said to them, 'Well then, every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of Heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom new things as well as old.'

GWN Matthew 13:52 So Jesus said to them, "That is why every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a home owner. He brings new and old things out of his treasure chest."

BBE Matthew 13:52 And he said to them, For this reason every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house, who gives out from his store things new and old.

- **Therefore every scribe** - Mt 23:34 Ezr 7:6,10,21 Lu 11:49 2Co 3:4-6 Col 1:7 1Ti 3:6,15,16 2Ti 3:16,17 Tit 1:9 2:6,7
- **who has become a disciple** - Mt 12:35 Pr 10:20,21 11:30 15:7 16:20-24 18:4 22:17,18 Ec 12:9-11 2Co 4:5-7 6:10 Eph 3:4,8 Col 3:16
- **brings out of his treasure things new and old** - Song 7:13 Joh 13:34 1Jn 2:7,8
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And Jesus said to them, "Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom (basileia) **of heaven** (note) **is like** - **Therefore** is a term of conclusion, indicating that Jesus accepted the disciples' "**Yes**" and concludes they are to be in essence **scribes**, those men who would now interpret and teach the **things old and new** to their hearers. As discussed below, some would literally inscribe these teachings for all to read in God's Holy Word. **BDAG** says that scribe or **grammateus** in this verse was in essence an "interpreter of teaching connected with the ministry of Jesus." The phrase **has become a disciple** could be paraphrased "has been discipled."

D A Carson - Since Jesus' disciples have now understood his parables, they can legitimately be called "**scribes**" themselves, as can all of his disciples with similar understanding. Jesus adds an explanatory expression: the **scribe** with whom he is concerned "has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven". (BORROW The Expositor's Bible Commentary : abridged edition: 1994).

Jesus differentiates this **scribe** from the more common Jewish scribes who were skilled in the OT law (see grammateus), Jewish legal scholars who had not **become a disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven**. The 12 (minus Judas Iscariot) had become **disciples of the Kingdom of Heaven**, and more specifically they had become disciples of the King of that Kingdom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

> **Michael Andrus** on **scribes** - When Christ speaks here of a "teacher of the law" it is more of an informal usage than what you would find in other passages, such as Matthew 23. In that chapter He denounces individuals so named for their misuse and misapplication of Scripture. Here it is a broader usage that could encompass the disciples, individuals who had no formal education but were recipients of instruction from Christ. Notice further that the teacher of the law referred to here has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven… These would be individuals who had heard, knew, understood, and accepted what Christ had taught about the kingdom of heaven. (Sermon Notes)
>
> **Wiersbe** comments on the **scribes** who had not become disciples of the Kingdom of Heaven - The scribes began as a noble group under the leadership of Ezra. Their purpose was to preserve the Law, study it, and apply its truths to daily life. Over the years, their noble cause degenerated into a routine task of preserving traditions and man-made interpretations, and adding burdens to the lives of the people (Luke 11:46–52). They were so wrapped up in the past that they ignored the present! Instead of sharing living truth from God's Word, they merchandised dead doctrines and "embalmed" traditions that could not help the people. " (Bible Exposition Commentary)
>
> **Wiersbe** goes on to apply **scribes** to NT believers - We are scribes—students—who sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to His words. One joy of the Christian life is the privilege of learning God's truth from God's Word. But we must not stop there....They must be **disciples** who do the truth. ...The **scribe** emphasizes learning, but the **disciple** emphasizes living. Disciples are doers of the Word (James 1:22ff+), and they learn by doing. It is difficult to keep our lives balanced. We often emphasize learning at the expense of living. Or, we may get so busy serving God that we do not take time to listen to His Word. Every scribe must be a disciple, and every disciple must be a scribe." (Bible Exposition Commentary)

We see the disciples beginning to function as scribes in interpreting **things new and old** in Acts and in the epistles. For example, in Acts 2 when Peter filled with the Spirit stood up before the Jews and spoke to them using many OT prophecies (Acts 2:4, 14, 16+, etc) to explain the truth of the Christ and how his hearers could enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. We also see that some of the disciples like Matthew and John became **scribes** in the sense that they inscribed Jesus' life and teachings. Similarly, the apostle Peter penned two epistles.

Vincent on **Kingdom of Heaven** - The **Kingdom of Heaven** is personified. The disciples of Christ are disciples of that kingdom of which he is the representative.

Knox Chamblin comments that "Not every disciple would become a grammateus in that sense; but each was to become a teacher —a discipler—of others (Mt 28:19–20+; with both **matheteuo** [**make disciples**] and **didasko**, "**teaching** them to observe all that I commanded you"). Every true disciple has discovered the treasure (thesauros) of the kingdom (Mt 13:44); and each of them will in time have a full treasury (thesauros) from which to impart things both new and old (Mt 13:52b), including things formerly learned but now freshly illuminated by the foregoing parables and explanations. (Mentor Commentary -Mt - see related sermon on Matthew 13:24-58)

MacArthur - Under Jesus' instruction, each of the twelve was becoming a genuinely learned **scribe** and a true disciple of the kingdom of heaven.

> **Scribe** (1122)(**grammateus** from **grapho** = to write) refers to a learned person who was able to read and write, and so a writer. **BDAG** says grammateus in general described "one who has special functions in connection with documents....an expert in matters relating to divine revelation." (cf Mt 2:4+) Among the Greeks

a scribe served the public by acting as the reader of legal and state papers. It was one who had acquired a high level of education in a given body of literature or discipline and thus a scholar or teacher. A scribe was one skilled in the Mosaic law and thus was distinguished as a learner, interpreter and teacher of the God's Word as revealed in the OT.

Has become a disciple (instructed - NIV)(3100)(**matheteuo** verb form of **mathetes** = disciple) intransitively means to be the disciple of another, to follow his precepts and instruction, to be a pupil of another implying one is an adherent of the teacher.

Andrus comments on **matheteuo** - The word "instructed" is of particular importance. It is often translated as "disciple." The Kittel Theological Dictionary of the New Testament states that this term always implies the existence of a personal attachment which shapes the whole life of the one described as a disciple, and which in its particularity leaves no doubt as to who is deploying the formative power. This is instruction that occurs in the formative context of a strong personal relationship with Christ. It is beyond merely intellectual understanding. It is understanding that penetrates the heart; that understands and submits to the deity of Christ. It is every one in that position who is said to be like the owner of a house. (Sermon Notes)

Brian Bell - The **Scribe** emphasizes Learning & the **Disciple** emphasizes Living. We must keep our lives balanced. Don't emphasize learning at the expense of living. Every Scribe must be a Disciple, every Disciple must be a Scribe. We must be Stewards (see below) who dispense the truth. (Sermon Notes)

Like (homoios) Jesus is now going to describe by way of comparison, what the "job description" of His disciples was to become in the future.

A head of a household - The **head** is responsible for the welfare of his family, and here Jesus is speaking of spiritual welfare and that the disciples are to be like the head who takes care of his family, which after Pentecost would be the family of God, the Church.

THOUGHT - **Michael Andrus** applies this passage - This is a term of stewardship. It is someone who is in a position of overseeing that which belongs to someone else. It is the term used in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25. Having being instructed in the truth of Scripture in the formative context of a personal relationship with Christ, these disciples have a reservoir from which they can teach others, whether that be truth with which they are already familiar, or additional truth that they will continue to learn and understand. This really is a position that many of us occupy. I am thinking much broader than church staff or elected leaders or even a Sunday school teacher. As each believer grows in their relationship with and knowledge of Christ, we accumulate a storeroom from which God expects us to share with others. That is a position of stewardship that had nothing to do with finances. (Sermon Notes) (See also What is Biblical Stewardship?)

Who brings out of his treasure things new and old - **Brings out** is the verb ekbállō in the present tense indicating this was to be the **head's** continual duty. This verb ekballo conveys the idea of casting out ("hurls forth" - Robertson) or scattering widely (which makes me think of vigorously flings out the Gospel seed). Vincent says that Matthew's use of ekballo here speaks of the scribe/disciple's "zeal in communicating instruction and the fulness out of which he speaks." **MacArthur** adds that "In this context (ekballo) also connotes generosity, giving out the truth of God both wisely and liberally." What is the **treasure**? In context this refers to the teachings the disciples had heard from Jesus and would continue to hear from Him right up to the time He ascended. And so we read that to the disciples Jesus "also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a period of forty days and **speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God** (THE VERY SUBJECT HE HAD BEEN EMPHASIZING IN THE PARABLES IN MATTHEW 13)." (Acts 1:3+)

Brian Bell - **New** principles and insights are based upon **old** Truths. Caution! The new without the old is merely novelty & will not last. But the old does no good unless it is given new applications in life today. In answering affirmatively yes, Lord, they become responsible for making the truth known to others. New things and old things - The disciples were beginning to understand the new things Jesus was teaching in conjunction with the traditions from the Scriptures they already knew.(Sermon Notes)

Carson has an interesting interpretation of **treasure** - The **thesauros** ("storeroom,") so regularly stands for a man's "heart," its wealth and cherished values (see Mt 12:35+), that we must understand the discipled **scribe** to be bringing things out of his heart—out of his understanding, personality, and very being. (BORROW The Expositor's Bible Commentary : abridged edition: 1994).

Knox Chamblin - Every true disciple has discovered the **treasure** (thesauros) of the kingdom (Mt 13:44); and each of them will in time have a full treasury (thēsauros again) from which to impart things both **new** and **old** (Mt 13:52b), including things formerly learned but now freshly illuminated by the foregoing parables and explanations. (Mentor Commentary -Mt - see related sermon on Matthew 13:24-58)

Wiersbe - The **scribes** preserved the Law but did not invest it in the lives of the people. The treasure of the Law was encrusted by man's traditions. The seed was not planted so it could bear fruit. The "spiritual gold and silver" was not put to work so it could produce dividends. As Christians we should be conservative but not preservative. The steward guards the treasure, but he also dispenses it as it is needed. He dispenses both the old and the new. New principles and insights are based on old truths. The new cannot contradict the old because the old comes out of the new (Lev. 26:10). The new without the old is mere novelty and will not last. But the old does no good unless it is given new applications in life today. We need both. (Bible Exposition Commentary)

John Broadus - A man with ample stores flings out garments or articles of food in profusion, some recently acquired, others long on hand, each class having its peculiar value. A good housekeeper would make frequent additions to his stores, while carefully preserving the old. The Jewish Scribes gloried in teaching only old things, but the Christian Scribe learned such new lessons as these parables have just been giving, and so could fling out things new and old.

Things new and old - What are **things new**? Jesus' teachings which the disciples would propagate orally and in writing (Gospel of Matthew). What are the **things...old**? This would be the OT teachings in light of Jesus' illuminating, revelatory teaching on the OT passages. This reminds me of Paul's words in Romans that "Christ is **the end** (telos - a goal achieved, a consummation, a realization) of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." (Ro 10:4+) And in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to **fulfill** (pleroo = in Matthew often speaks of fulfilled OT prophecy)." (Mt 5:17+)

Carson - In Matthew the Gospel of the Kingdom, though **new**, takes precedence over the **old** revelation and is its fulfillment (cf. Mt 5:17–20). The **new** is not added to the **old**; there is but one revelation, and its focus is the "**new**" that has fulfilled and thereby renewed the **old**, which has thereby become **new**." (BORROW The Expositor's Bible Commentary : abridged edition: 1994).

Bruce - The mere scribe, Rabbinical in spirit, produces only the old and stale. The disciple of the kingdom like the Master, is always fresh-minded, yet knows how to value all old spiritual treasures of Holy Writ, or Christian tradition"

As **Augustine** said "The old covenant is revealed in the New, and the New Covenant is veiled in the Old." And so, after His resurrection Jesus appeared to the eleven (Lk 24:33, 36+) and then He began to tie the Old with the New declaring

> These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that **all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled**." 45 **Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures**, 46 and He said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, 47 and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. 48 "You are witnesses of these things. 49 "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Lk 24:44-49+)
>
> **Head of a household** (3617)(**oikodespotes** from **oikos** = house + **despotes** = lord, master) means the master of the house, the head of a family. It denotes one who is empowered to rule over a household. This same word was used in Mt 13:27 describing the **landowner** in the parable of the wheat and tares.
>
> **Brings out** (1544)(**ekbállō** from **ek** = out + **bállō** = to cast, throw, drive) means to cast, throw out often with the idea of force (e.g., "Spirit impelled" Jesus out into the wilderness." Mk 1:12+; Of casting out demons - Mk 1:34, 39+) Without the connotation of force = send out Lk 10:2; release Ac 16:37.—take out, remove Mt 7:4f; Mk 9:47; Lk 10:35; bring out Mt 13:52; John 10:4 ; evacuate Jn 15:17. Leave out of consideration Rev 11:2. Lead on Mt 12:20. **Vincent** on **ekballo** in Mt 12:35+ - "The word means to throw or fling out. The good or evil things come forth out of the treasure of the heart (Mt 12:34). "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." The issues of the heart are thrown out, as if under pressure of the abundance within."
>
> **Treasure** (2344) (**thesauros** from **títhemi** = put, set) refers to that which is stored up as that which is deemed precious, in this context surely referring to the priceless teachings of Jesus which the disciples were privileged to hear and have explained. These teachings they would later pass on to the world.
>
> **New** (2537)(**kainos**) is an adjective which refers to that which is new kind (unprecedented, novel, uncommon, unheard of). It relates to being not previously present. It is the same word Jesus used in Luke 22:20+ declaring "This cup which is poured out for you is the **new** covenant in My blood." (cf similar use in 2 Cor 3:6+). The New Covenant was not previously present, even though it was prophesied in the Old Testament in Jeremiah 31:31 ""Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a **new** (Lxx = **kainos**) covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah,"
>
> **Old** (3820)(**palaios** from **pálai** = in the past, long ago) antique, not recent, not new, old in the sense of worn out and decrepit. **Palaios** means in existence for a long time, and in a number of contexts conveys the sense

of being obsolete, antiquated or outworn. **Old** covenant = 2 Co. 3:14+

Matthew 13:53 When Jesus had finished these parables, He departed from there.

NET Matthew 13:53 Now when Jesus finished these parables, he moved on from there.

GNT Matthew 13:53 Κα γ νετο τε τ λεσεν ησο ς τ ς παραβολ ς τα τας, μετ ρεν κε θεν.

NLT Matthew 13:53 When Jesus had finished telling these stories and illustrations, he left that part of the country.

KJV Matthew 13:53 And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

ESV Matthew 13:53 And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there,

NIV Matthew 13:53 When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there.

ASV Matthew 13:53 And it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.

CSB Matthew 13:53 When Jesus had finished these parables, He left there.

NKJ Matthew 13:53 Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there.

NRS Matthew 13:53 When Jesus had finished these parables, he left that place.

YLT Matthew 13:53 And it came to pass, when Jesus finished these similes, he removed thence,

NAB Matthew 13:53 When Jesus finished these parables, he went away from there.

NJB Matthew 13:53 When Jesus had finished these parables he left the district;

GWN Matthew 13:53 When Jesus had finished these illustrations, he left that place.

BBE Matthew 13:53 And when Jesus had come to the end of these stories he went away from there.

- **he** - Mk 4:33-35
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Broadus - This closes the account of this series of parables. (Comp. Mt 11:1.) The chapter ought to have ended here, thus possessing a beautiful unity. The remaining verses have nothing to do with the group of parables, either in time, place, or topic. The other group of parables given by Matthew will be found near the close of our Lord's public ministry, in Mt 18:1ff, Mt 201ff, Mt 211ff, Mt 221ff, and Mt 251ff.

When Jesus had finished these parables (parabole), He departed from there - Recall that this chapter began with Jesus leaving the house (probably Peter's in Capernaum) and sitting by the sea (Mt 13:1) where He proceeded to deliver what some have referred to as "The Sermon by the Sea," composed of seven parables regarding the "mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven." (Mt 13:11).

> **Finished** (completed) (5055)(**teleo** from **telos** = goal, an end, a purpose) means to bring to an end, in this case Jesus **finished** speaking. It is when one brings a process, a task or an undertaking to the end. Jesus has been presenting the parables of the Kingdom of Heaven and now "brings them to an end."

Edersheim - IT almost seems, as if the departure of Jesus from Capernaum marked crisis in the history of that town. From henceforth it ceases to be the centre of His activity, and is only occasionally, and in passing, visited. Indeed, the concentration and growing power of Pharisaic opposition, and the proximity of Herod's residence at Tiberias would have rendered a permanent stay there impossible at this stage in our Lord's history. Henceforth, His Life is, indeed, not purely missionary, but He has no certain dwelling-place: in the sublime pathos of His own language, 'He hath not where to lay His Head.'

Happy Ending

Read: Matthew 13:53-58

When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. —Colossians 3:4

By the end of his life, musician Giuseppe Verdi was recognized as a master of dramatic composition. But he didn't begin his career

with such success. As a youth, he had obvious musical ability, but he was denied entrance to the Milan Conservatory because he lacked the required education and background.

Yet time does strange things. After Verdi's fame had spread worldwide, the school was renamed the Verdi Conservatory of Music.

Verdi's experience reminds me of the experience of our Lord and of all who trust in Him. The Son of God was rejected by His countrymen because they didn't feel He had adequate training or the right family background (Mt. 13:53-58). Even though Jesus spoke the truth in a powerful, irrefutable way, and even though His works spoke for themselves, He did not receive the recognition He deserved. Yet someday everyone will bow before Him and give Him the honor due His name (Phil. 2:9-11).

We who have put our faith in Christ as our personal Savior will have a part in that great day, for He plans to share the honor with us (Eph. 1:18; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 22:5). Even though our beginnings may seem insignificant, we can look forward to a glorious, happy ending. By Mart DeHaan (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

My Father's own Son, the Savior of men,
Once wandered o'er earth as the poorest of them;
But now He is reigning forever on high,
And will give me a home in heaven by and by.
—Buell

All that we long to become will find fulfillment when we see Jesus.

Matthew 13:54 He came to His hometown and began teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?

NET Matthew 13:54 Then he came to his hometown and began to teach the people in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, "Where did this man get such wisdom and miraculous powers?

GNT Matthew 13:54 κα λθ ν ε ς τ ν πατρ δα α το δ δασκεν α το ς ν τ συναγωγ α τ ν, στε κπλ σσεσθαι α το ς κα λ γειν, Π θεν το τ σοφ α α τη κα α δυν μεις;

NLT Matthew 13:54 He returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogue, everyone was amazed and said, "Where does he get this wisdom and the power to do miracles?"

KJV Matthew 13:54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?

ESV Matthew 13:54 and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works?

NIV Matthew 13:54 Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?" they asked.

ASV Matthew 13:54 And coming into his own country he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this man this wisdom, and these mighty works?

CSB Matthew 13:54 He went to His hometown and began to teach them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "How did this wisdom and these miracles come to Him?

NKJ Matthew 13:54 And 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?

NRS Matthew 13:54 He came to his hometown and began to teach the people in their synagogue, so that they were astounded and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these deeds of power?

YLT Matthew 13:54 and having come to his own country, he was teaching them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and were saying, 'Whence to this one this wisdom and the mighty works?

NAB Matthew 13:54 He came to his native place and taught the people in their synagogue. They were astonished and said, "Where did this man get such wisdom and mighty deeds?

NJB Matthew 13:54 and, coming to his home town, he taught the people in their synagogue in such a way that they were astonished and said, 'Where did the man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?

GWN Matthew 13:54 Jesus went to his hometown and taught the people in the synagogue in a way that amazed them. People were asking, "Where did this man get this wisdom and the power to do these miracles?

BBE Matthew 13:54 And coming into his country, he gave them teaching in their Synagogue, so that they were greatly surprised and said, Where did this man get this wisdom and these works of power?

- **He came to His hometown** - Mt 2:23 Mk 6:1,2 Lu 4:16-30 Joh 1:11
- **began teaching** - Ps 22:22 40:9,10 Ac 13:46 28:17-29
- **they were astonished** - Joh 7:15,16 Ac 4:13
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passage

Mark 6:1-6 (see commentary) Jesus went out from there and *came into His hometown; and His disciples followed Him. 2 When the Sabbath came, He began to teach in the synagogue; and the many listeners were astonished, saying, “Where did this man get these things, and what is this wisdom given to Him, and such miracles as these performed by His hands? 3 “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?” And they took offense at Him. 4 Jesus said to them, “A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household.” 5 And He could do no miracle there except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them. 6 And He wondered at their unbelief. And He was going around the villages teaching.

HOMETOWN BOY MAKES GOOD!

This should have been the title of this section on Jesus' return to His boyhood home, but such was not to be the case. A more appropriate title would be "Opposition of the Nazarenes to the Nazarene!"

Constable entitles this next section - **The reactions of the King** Matthew 13:54 through Matthew 19:2. So here at the end of the parables, we see hometown opposition arising.

He came to His hometown and began teaching them in their synagogue (sunagoge) - **His hometown** of course was Nazareth (Mt 2:23+). **Teaching** (didasko) is in the imperfect tense indicating over and over. The next opposition would come from the Roman leadership of the area in which Jesus was ministering (Mt 14:1–12). The fact that Mark's parallel passage adds that "**His disciples followed Him**," (Mk 6:1+) would seem to be fairly strong support for this being the Savior's **second** synagogue sermon (see below). Mark 6:2+ tells us this teaching came about "when the Sabbath came."

While some consider this Jesus' first sermon in Nazareth (William Hendriksen), other consider it a second sermon in Nazareth (John MacArthur, Gil Rugh). Jesus is giving His hometown an opportunity (either first time or probably a "second chance") to believe in Him. Luke records the synagogue sermon (Lk 4:16-21+) and then the reaction...

And all were speaking well of Him, and wondering at the gracious words which were falling from His lips; and they were saying, “Is this not Joseph’s son?” 23 And He said to them, “No doubt you will quote this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we heard was done at Capernaum, do here in your hometown as well.’” 24 And He said, “Truly I say to you, no prophet is welcome in his hometown. 25 “But I say to you in truth, there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the sky was shut up for three years and six months, when a great famine came over all the land; 26 and yet Elijah was sent to none of them, but only to Zarephath, in the land of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow. 27 “And there were many lepers in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, but only Naaman the Syrian.” 28 And all the people in the synagogue were filled with rage as they heard these things; 29 and they got up and drove Him out of the city, and led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city had been built, in order to throw Him down the cliff. (Lk 4:22-29+)

Bruce Barton - Jesus had been born in Bethlehem, but he had been reared in Nazareth (Matthew 2:19–23; Luke 2:39–40; 4:16). This was not the first time he had spoken and taught in Nazareth. Luke 4:14–30 states that Jesus went to Nazareth, “where he had been brought up, [and] he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day” to read and teach (Luke 4:16 NRSV). At that time, the response was less than positive; in fact, the people had tried to kill him, but Jesus had walked away unharmed. This trip to Nazareth, therefore, is significant. The people of Nazareth were about to receive a second chance to believe;

unfortunately, they again rejected the Lord. (LAC)

Hometown (3968)(**patris**) is literally one's native country and so fatherland, homeland (Jn 4:44; fig. Heb 11:14). It also can refer as in the present passage to one's home town, one's own part of the country (Mt 13:54, 57; Mk 6:1, 4; Lk 2:3, 4:23f) **Leon Morris** notes that **hometown** is "patris is strictly the feminine of patrios, but it is used to mean one's "fatherland," "home land," or, as here, "hometown." (BORROW The Gospel according to Matthew) (**ED**: Think "patriotic") **BDAG** adds patris is "a relatively large geographical area associated with one's familial connections and personal life." or "a relatively restricted area as locale of one's immediate family and ancestry, home town."

Patris - 8x in NT - country(1), country of their own(1), hometown(6). Matt. 13:54; Matt. 13:57; Mk. 6:1; Mk. 6:4; Lk. 4:23; Lk. 4:24; Jn. 4:44; Heb. 11:14

Patris in Septuagint - Lev. 25:10; Est. 2:10; Est. 2:20; Est. 8:6; Jer. 22:10; Jer. 46:16; Ezek. 23:15;

Teaching (1321)(**didasko**) has the root meaning of systematic teaching or systematic training. **Didasko** means to teach a student in such a way that the will of the student becomes conformed to the teaching taught. So the teacher teaches in such a way that as the student is taught, he now changes his mind saying in essence "I won't do it this way, but I will do it this way because I've learned this doctrine or this teaching." Doctrine determines direction of our behavior, conformed to world or to God? (cf Ro 12:1+) Teaching that Scripture finds significant is not that which gives information alone but which produces (Spirit enabled) transformation (2 Cor 3:18+), making disciples (learners) who seek to live supernaturally (enabled by the Spirit - Eph 5:18+) in loving obedience to the will of our Father Who art in Heaven. **MacArthur** adds that "the root meaning carries with it the idea of systematic teaching or systematic training. It is the word that is used to refer to a choir director who trains a choir over a long period of rehearsals until they are able to perform. The gift of prophecy could be a one-time proclamation of Christ, but the gift of teaching is a systematic training problem to take a person from one point to another. What is the curriculum for the teacher? The Bible, the Word of God. The gift is to teach systematically the truth of God."

Synagogue (4864)(**sunagoge** from **sunago** = lead together, assemble or bring together) refers to a group of people "going with one another" (**sunago**) literally describes a bringing together or congregating in one place. Eventually, **sunagoge** came to mean the place where they congregated together. The word was used to designate the buildings other than the central Jewish temple where the Jews congregated for worship. Historically, the Synagogues originated in the Babylonian captivity after the 586 BC destruction of the temple by Nebuchadnezzar and served as places of worship and instruction. **Synagogues** should have been (and frequently were) a place of teaching and proclamation of the Gospel (Mt 4:23, 9:35, 12:9, 13:54, Mk 6:2, Lk 4:15, 16, Lk 4:44, 6:6, 13:10, Jn 6:59, 18:20, Acts 9:20 = Paul immediately "began to proclaim Jesus," Acts 13:5 = Paul proclaimed "the word of God," Acts 14:1 = place Paul, et al, spoke and where "a large number of people believed," Acts 17:17, 18:4, 18:19, 19:8 = Paul, et al reasoned with various audiences in synagogues). Sadly many **synagogues** became hotbeds of hypocrisy (Mt 6:2), assemblies for arrogant display (a form of hypocrisy) (Mt 6:5, Mk 12:39, Lk 11:43, 20:46).

So that they were astonished - They were "stunned," "jolted!" This is a significant statement for it indicates that they did recognize something different about Jesus. What did their astonishment lead to? Questioning and criticizing Jesus! Not believing in Him! It was the fact that they knew He had such a common upbringing that caused them their astonishment and subsequent reaction (questions). Sadly they were **astonished**, but not **admonished**. In other words, most of the Nazarenes went about with the majority opinion of all the Jews in Israel and failed to truly hear and heed His words, including His repeated warnings about their destiny in the **furnace of fire** if they persisted in their unbelief (cf Jn 8:24, Lk 13:23-30+). They heads were astonished, but their hearts remained apathetic.

Utley - They were incredulous, not only by the tremendous insight of His teaching, but also by the authority of His teaching. The scribes taught in the authority of earlier famous rabbis; Jesus taught in His own authority (cf. 7:28–29).

Earlier Matthew recorded the crowd's reaction to Jesus' Sermon on the Mount writing "When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were **amazed** at His teaching." (Matthew 7:28+)

John records "The Jews then were **astonished** (DIFFERENT VERB - thaumazo - same verb describing Jesus' reaction to Nazareth's unbelief in Mk 6:6+) saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" (Jn 7:15)

Astonished (1605)(**ekplesso** from **ek** = out + **plesso** = strike) means strike out, expel by a blow, drive out or away, force out or cast off by a blow. It is interesting to note that our English word "**astonish**" which is derived from the Latin word extonare meaning to **strike with thunder**! What a picture of Jesus' radical message which

must have struck His hearers like thunder! Figuratively **ekplesso** means to drive out of one's senses by a sudden shock or strong feeling, or "to be exceedingly struck in mind". It means to cause to be filled with amazement to the point of being overwhelmed (struck out of one's senses). It encompasses the ideas of wonder, astonishment or amazement. Ekplesso expresses a stunned amazement that leaves the subject unable to grasp what is happening. **Thayer** writes that **ekplesso** is "common in Greek from Homer down; properly, to strike out, expel by a blow, drive out or away; to cast off by a blow, to drive out; commonly, to strike one out of self-possession, to strike with panic, shock, astonish; passive to be struck with astonishment, astonished, amazed." **Ekplesso** in NT - Matt. 7:28; Matt. 13:54; Matt. 19:25; Matt. 22:33; Mk. 1:22; Mk. 6:2; Mk. 7:37; Mk. 10:26; Mk. 11:18; Lk. 2:48; Lk. 4:32; Lk. 9:43; Acts 13:12

And said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers (dunamis**)?** - They were **astonished** at His words (wisdom) and His works (miraculous powers). They had seen Him for 30 years as a citizen of Nazareth and never heard or seen anything in Him like they were seeing now! So in some ways it is not hard to see how the locals might wonder about Him now. Notice they refer to Him contemptuously as **this man** instead of by His Name (they knew Who he was because they knew His mother and siblings!) Their derogatory description of Jesus will change in Php 2:9-11+!. Sadly while wondered at His wisdom and power, their hearts were unmoved.

Carr on **this wisdom** – When Jesus spoke, His words were filled with truth. The people heard Him declare old truths in new ways. They listened as He taught spiritual truth by using the common everyday things around them. While His illustrations may have called on the common, the truth He preached was anything but common. The Lord's wisdom left them shaking their heads in disbelief. (Sermon)

Utley - The source of Jesus' power was much debated. He was an officially untrained local boy. The Jews even accused Him of being in league with the evil one. For them His action against the oral law was "the unpardonable sin." For those in Nazareth it was hard to believe that a local boy was the Messiah, Deity Incarnate.

Brian Bell - Their problem: They were too familiar w/Him in a human way. It was a case of knowing Him after the flesh. 2 Cor.5:16 His pedigree seemed to them to be the lowest. Where did this man get this wisdom - The people know that, unlike their rabbis, Jesus has no formal training; He was raised as a craftsman. (Sermon Notes)

Daniel Akin - **His miracles may captivate you but that is not enough**. They simply cannot reconcile what He has done with who they think He must be! Deny His miracles? No! Receive Him as Messiah? No! This is the Christ? This one we have known all our lives is the Son of God? Are you kidding? Are you serious? **We may not be able to explain His miracles but we know who He is. He is nothing and a nobody, of that we are certain. Application**: Apart from the **eyes of faith**, no one will see Jesus for who He truly is. Miracles can only take you so far, but in and of themselves, they are not enough. His **teachings** point to Him. His **miracles** point to Him. They are divinely ordained signs, billboards, declaring in BOLD LETTERS this one is the Christ, the Son of God! Believe Him! Trust Him! Follow Him! (Sermon)

Matthew 13:55 "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?

NET Matthew 13:55 Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother named Mary? And aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?

GNT Matthew 13:55 ο χ ο τ ς στιν το τ κτονος υ ς; ο χ μ τηρ α το λ γεται Μαρι μ κα ο δελφο α το κωβος κα ωσ φ κα Σ μων κα ο δας;

NLT Matthew 13:55 Then they scoffed, "He's just the carpenter's son, and we know Mary, his mother, and his brothers-- James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas.

KJV Matthew 13:55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

ESV Matthew 13:55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?

NIV Matthew 13:55 "Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas?

ASV Matthew 13:55 Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James,

and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas?

CSB Matthew 13:55 Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't His mother called Mary, and His brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?

NKJ Matthew 13:55 "Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas?

NRS Matthew 13:55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?

YLT Matthew 13:55 is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary, and his brethren James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?

NAB Matthew 13:55 Is he not the carpenter's son? Is not his mother named Mary and his brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?

NJB Matthew 13:55 This is the carpenter's son, surely? Is not his mother the woman called Mary, and his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Jude?

GWN Matthew 13:55 Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary? Aren't his brothers' names James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?

BBE Matthew 13:55 Is not this the woodworker's son? is not his mother named Mary? and his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?

- **is not this** - Mt 1:18-20 Lu 1:27 Lk 2:5-7
- **the carpenter's** - Ps 22:6 Isa 49:7 53:2,3 Mk 6:3 Lu 3:23 4:22 Joh 1:45,46 6:42 Joh 7:41,42 9:29
- **and his** - Mt 12:46, 48 Mt 27:56 Mk 15:40,47 16:1 Lu 24:10 Joh 19:25 Ga 1:19
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passage:

Mark 6:3+ “Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?” And they took offense at Him.

DESPITE JESUS' WORDS AND WORKS
NAZARETH STILL QUESTIONS HIS MESSIAHSHIP

Gil Rugh - If they are at all open and sensitive to the Word of God, they should be driven back to examine Christ in light of the Scriptures to consider who He is and the source of His wisdom and power. But rather, they are driven back to consider His human family. As a result of that, they are offended by Him. (Sermon)

Constable has an interesting note - The words of Jesus’ critics reveal wounded pride. They did not like His having wisdom and power superior to theirs since they had the same background. Their questions reveal denial of His Messiahship. By referring to Joseph as “the carpenter” and to Jesus as his son, they were implying that Jesus should have followed in His father’s footsteps. (Matthew 13 Commentary)

Is not this the carpenter’s son? - Their calling Him **the carpenter's Son** was not a compliment. The implication of these questions is that Jesus grew up as boy like other boys in Nazareth. **Carpenter's Son** is an allusion to Joseph but not in a way indicating Joseph was literally present as with His mother and brothers. Most commentators think that Joseph had died by this time.

Mark 6:3+ has "Is not this **the carpenter** (THEIR QUESTION INDICATING THAT JESUS TOOK UP HIS FATHER'S TRADE), the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?” And they took offense at Him." (Note: Yjod od the only place Jesus is expressly called the **carpenter.**)

Guzik makes a good point - People bring the same charge against Jesus today; “I see those associated with Him, and they seem lowly or very normal; Jesus must also not be special.”...It is wonderful to think that our Lord—of all the professions He could have been—chose to be a carpenter. God is a builder, and He knows how to build in our lives—and He knows how to finish the job.. A few things Jesus learned as a carpenter: (1) He learned that there is a lot of potential in a log. (2) He learned it takes work and time to make something useable. (3) He learned that the finest things are made from the hardest wood.

Brian Bell quips that "Jesus a blue-collar worker. Now there’s a fit place for Jesus, as He came to earth to build a ladder from earth to heaven! Jn.1:51+ Most assuredly, I say to you (Nathanael), hereafter you shall see heaven open, and the angels of God

ascending and descending upon the Son of Man. **The ladder that Jacob saw**, was now replaced by the Son of man. Gods link with earth. One day the townsfolk found a sign on the door to the carpenter shop Closed. The doors locked. No longer in business. a) Jesus left that shop & walked out into the world. No longer to build plows, yokes, & chairs, but to build lives. More than a Carpenter. (Sermon)

ILLUSTRATION - In ancient Rome, there was a terrible persecution under the Emperor Julian. At that time, a philosopher mocked a Christian, asking him "What do you think the carpenter's son is doing now?" The Christian wisely answered, "He is building a coffin for Julian." (Guzik)

> **Carpenter** (5045)(**tekton** kindred with **teúchō** = to fabricate, and **tíktō** = to produce, bear, bring forth) was used of the worker in wood or the builder with wood like our carpenter. Then it was used of any artisan or craftsman in metal or stone, and even of sculpture work. So the picture of carpenter is broader than just one who works with wood and conveyed the sense of "a builder. **Gilbrant** adds that "In classical Greek tektōn meant a craftsman in wood, stone, or metal. In the Septuagint the word translates chārāsh which refers to craftsmen in general. The Jews, unlike the Greeks and Romans, held a high regard for manual labor and a deep respect for those who worked skillfully." **Twice in the NT** - Matt. 13:55; Mk. 6:3.

Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? - John 7:5 tells us "even His brothers were believing in Him." This changed for they came to believe in Him later, Luke recording after His ascension "These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers." (Acts 1:14+). And of course **James** (James 1:1+) and **Judas** (Jude 1:1+) both went on to write epistles that formed part of the NT canon.

Mark 6:3+ says they referred to Jesus as **son of Mary** and this is the only place Jesus is called **the son of Mary.**

> **Brother** (80)(**adelphos** from **a** = denotes unity + **delphus** = a womb) literally from the same womb referring to physical brothers or figuratively to spiritual brothers, both of which proved to be true in the case of Jesus' brothers.

Of course the point of their question is this Man has a common upbringing so what makes Him so special? How could a man of clearly common stock claim to be the Christ? Note that clearly Mary was not a perpetual virgin. Jesus' brothers are mentioned again by John (Jn 7:5, 10) "They despised Him, because they were so familiar with Him." (Ryle)

Related Resources:

- What does the Bible say about the virgin Mary?
- Was Mary sinless? Was Mary without sin?
- Did Mary have other children? How many children did Mary have?
- Is Mary the co-redemptrix / mediatrix?
- Is prayer to saints / Mary biblical?
- Is the perpetual virginity of Mary biblical?
- What is Mariolatry?
- What is the immaculate conception?

Matthew 13:56 "And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"

NET Matthew 13:56 And aren't all his sisters here with us? Where did he get all this?"

GNT Matthew 13:56 κα α δελφα α το ο χ π σαι πρ ς μ ς ε σιν; π θεν ο ν το τ τα τα π ντα;

NLT Matthew 13:56 All his sisters live right here among us. Where did he learn all these things?"

KJV Matthew 13:56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?

ESV Matthew 13:56 And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"

NIV Matthew 13:56 Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"

ASV Matthew 13:56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?

CSB Matthew 13:56 And His sisters, aren't they all with us? So where does He get all these things?"

NKJ Matthew 13:56 "And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this Man get all these things?"

NRS Matthew 13:56 And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all this?"

YLT Matthew 13:56 and his sisters -- are they not all with us? whence, then, to this one all these?'

NAB Matthew 13:56 Are not his sisters all with us? Where did this man get all this?"

NJB Matthew 13:56 His sisters, too, are they not all here with us? So where did the man get it all?'

GWN Matthew 13:56 And aren't all his sisters here with us? Where, then, did this man get all this?"

BBE Matthew 13:56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? from where, then, has he all these things?

- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passage:

Mark 6:3+ "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him.

JESUS YOU SHOULD HAVE STAYED HOME!

And His sisters, are they not all with us? - Jesus had not only sisters, but brothers and they are apparently remained in obscurity in Nazareth.

Rugh has an interesting note - Though the **sisters** are not named, the fact that the people asked, "And His sisters, are they not all with us?" (v. 56), indicates there were at least three of them. They are referred to in the plural, so there would be more than one. If there were only two, the common way to refer to them would be to use the word "both." The reference to "all" indicates that there were at least three sisters, and there could have been more. The townspeople knew His four brothers and also His sisters. Jesus came from a large family. In addition to Christ, there were at least seven other children. This is significant because there is some discussion about Joseph having died when Jesus was very young. Evidently he did not die when Jesus was very, very young because he lived long enough to be the father of at least seven later children! Joseph was probably dead by the time Jesus began His public ministry, but Jesus was thirty at that time.

Where then did this man get all these things?" - What **things**? Wisdom and miraculous powers. "What the people of Nazareth could not comprehend was how one with the origin and environment of Jesus here in Nazareth could possess the wisdom which he appeared to have in his teaching." (Robertson)

Spurgeon - Julian the apostate, as he is called, once asked a certain Christian, 'What do you think the carpenter's son is doing now?' 'Making coffins for you and for all his enemies,' was the prompt reply.

Matthew's description of the townspeople of Nazareth's assessment of Jesus clearly indicates that His childhood and early adult life were nothing abnormal and certainly not characterized by miraculous works as described in the so-called apocryphal gospels. Christians would be very wise to avoid these uninspired works and focus on the four inspired Gospels!

Related Resources:

- What are the apocryphal gospels?
- What are the Infancy Gospels?
- What is the Infancy Gospel of Thomas?
- What is the Protoevangelium of James?

Living in Nazareth
Vance Havner

And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief (Matthew 13:58)

Our Lord did not have a very successful meeting with the hometown folks in Nazareth. The three elements necessary to a good meeting were present: "... Where two or three are gathered together in my name"—the place; "there am I"—the Person; "in the midst of them"—the people (Matthew 18:20). At Nazareth "he [the Person] did not many mighty works there [the place] because of their

unbelief [the people]" (Matthew 13:58). The trouble lay with the people. What form did their unbelief take?

Our Lord was a Prophet without honor in His own country. The Nazarenes could not accept Him as the Son of God. They were astonished and credited Him with mighty works, but He had not been to the schools of the rabbis. To this day there are those who will not accept any prophet who does not fit into their plans and specifications; if he has not been to the schools. everything he does and says is discounted. Hopelessly blinded by their provincialism, they view the prophet with complacency, if not with contempt, from the lofty heights of their intellectual stratosphere.

It was familiarity that lay behind the Nazarene unbelief. Jesus was just one of the local boys. The townspeople knew His family and they had known Him for years. They knew Him—and they didn't know him!

It is possible in more ways than one to live in Nazareth today so that our Lord can do no mighty works among us because of our unbelief. One may know much about Jesus without really knowing Him at all. The Nazarenes were too close to Him; their very advantage became a disadvantage. They were so close to Him that they were far from Him. So, too, may we draw nigh to Him with our mouths and honor Him with our lips while our hearts are far from Him.

I lived for years in a historic old city. People came from afar to see its sights. I lived almost next door to all of it and missed most of it. So may we live in the midst of spiritual realities without knowing them in experience. It is a wonderful thing to grow up in a Christian home, but it can also be very dangerous. As a boy I was saturated with Bible truth. I read through the New Testament again and again, was licensed to preach at eleven years of age, and ordained when I was fifteen. I wrote sermons for the local newspaper before I reached my teens, preached regularly when I was twelve. But there came a day when I had to put myself in a corner and ask myself, "Is all of this real to you, or is it merely patter you have learned to recite like a parrot?" It has been said that nothing is more perilous to a real Christian experience than a superficial knowledge of the language of Christianity from childhood.

I read of a man who had learned to read Arabic with ease, but could not speak enough Arabic to order a cup of coffee. So may the things of God become the vernacular of the mind but never the speech of the heart. It is possible to be a walking encyclopedia of Bible information, knowing "all the answers" without knowing Him who is the Answer. God's Word is a light and a lamp, but we are to walk in that light, not merely stare at it. There is such a thing as being blinded by an excess of light. The very light that brightens our path will blind us if we misuse it.

When our Lord was on earth, the people we would have expected to know Him best—the Pharisees, the Nazarenes, the rich ruler—never really knew Him. But Bartimaeus, Zacchaeus, the Syrophoenician woman, plain fishermen—they knew Him best. The Nazarenes knew too much and did not know enough. I remember a sign in an old country doctor's office: "It's what you learn after you know it all that counts!" It is possible to sit in a library of books about Jesus, to be busy seven days a week in Christian work, and all the while to be like a cat drowning in cream. We can know too little because we know too much.

One thinks of the old hillbilly who had lived almost all his days in a cabin facing a towering mountain. He had never climbed it. Eventually a road was built clear to the top and a friend took him up the winding curves until he stood on the summit with a breathtaking view before him in all directions. The tears coursed down his weather-beaten face and he murmured, "Just think, I've lived here all my life in reach of this, and almost missed it!" So may one live in proximity to the truth, as near to the Lord as the Nazarenes to Jesus, and never behold what God has prepared for those who love Him.

When I started out in a traveling ministry I had the idea that being in good meetings all the time would carry me along on its own momentum. Nothing can be more devastating to a deep Christian experience than being in the midst of religious activity all the time. We sink into a sort of stupefaction. We know all about it but we see few miracles. We become professionals "trafficking in unfelt truth."

Someone has said, "I wish I could read the Gospel of John for the first time." I know what he meant; he had gotten used to it. Leaving first love and then losing the joy of salvation is not the exclusive experience of backsliders who have quit reading the Bible and going to church. One may be busy with the things of God and all the while be getting farther away from experiencing the very truths he labors to perpetuate.

It was said of the Greek church scholars of the tenth century: "They held in their lifeless hands the riches of their fathers without inheriting the Spirit which had created and improved that sacred patrimony. They read, they praised, they compiled, but their languid souls seemed alike incapable of thought and action." So may we handle the coinage of God's truth without ever examining it for ourselves to know whose image and superscription may be thereupon.

How can old truths be made to glow with new meaning? When one visits historic spots he needs a guide. Places loaded with significance will be passed by if there is no one to explain their importance. The facts about Christ, the truths of God's Word take on life and warmth and meaning when the Holy Spirit is our Interpreter. John Wesley was an Oxford scholar and a religious man, but it was not until the Spirit set his heart ablaze that England caught fire. Like Job, Wesley had heard with the hearing of the ear, but then

he saw.

Do you know Jesus Christ in a conscious, compelling, continuing, challenging experience, or do you live in Nazareth, a next-door neighbor to the Lord but ignorant of His miracle-working power because of your unbelief? One may work in a travel office, sell tickets, and hand out folders about foreign lands without ever leaving the old hometown. It takes more than a suitcase covered with foreign labels to make a world traveler. One can make a living handling the things of God with no firsthand knowledge of any of them. One may make a business of starting other people toward the Promised Land without ever leaving Egypt.

Here is the test of every church meeting: we may have the Person, the place, and the people, but can our Lord do a mighty work or will He be hindered by our unbelief? I do not mean the unbelief of the agnostic or the worldling, the outsider we call a sinner. I mean the unbelief of Nazareth, of church people, of religious workers who sing and speak the Saviour's name but who suffer from a deadly unbelief. It is possible to be guilty of unbelieving belief, to have real faith in Christ but to give way at times to doubt. It is infinitely worse to be guilty of believing unbelief that accepts the facts about Him but never really knows Him, He Himself declared that one may prophesy in His name, cast out demons, and do wonderful works, and still hear Him say at that great day, "I never knew you..." (Matthew 7:23).

You must be nearer to Jesus than a fellow citizen of Nazareth. It is not enough to be His next-door neighbor in the old hometown.

Matthew 13:57 And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household."

- **they** - Mt 11:6 Isa 8:14 Isa 49:7 53:3 Mk 6:3 Lu 2:34,35 7:23 Joh 6:42,61 1Co 1:23-28
- **A prophet** - Mk 6:14 Lu 4:24 Joh 4:44 Acts 3:22,23 7:37-39,51,52
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passage:

> Mark 6:3-4+ "Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, and brother of James and Joses and Judas and Simon? Are not His sisters here with us?" And they took offense at Him. 4 Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and among his own relatives and in his own household."

SKEPTICS SCANDALIZED BY THE SAVIOR!

This passage encapsulates the attitude of the Nazarites. There are many sad passages in the Bible, but this surely has to be one of saddest of all, for instead of deification of Jesus, the Nazarenes sought defamation of Jesus! Instead of veneration they gave Him vilification! They were scandalized skeptics! While Jesus' words and wonders should have driven them to the Word, instead it drove them to the point of being scandalized by Him! They were scandalized by His wisdom and miraculous powers! "That the people did not pursue the source of His wisdom and power shows how irrational people are in their sin. Those people never sought to answer their questions. They were simply offended at Him." (Rugh)

Earlier Matthew recorded that Jesus' family "came and lived in a city called Nazareth. This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophets: "He shall be called a Nazarene." (Mt 2:23+). I think about towns that name streets after their famous sons and have signs as you enter the city like "This is the home of _____." Not so with Jesus. His fame engendered raw resentment instead of reverential respect!

And they took offense at Him - These Jews were two-faced, astonished on one hand but offended on the other. The verb **took offense** (skandalizo) is in the imperfect tense indicating one after another was scandalized! TEV paraphrases it as "And so they rejected him." Another version says "And they would have nothing to do with him." They were in good (evil) company because "the Pharisees were offended" by Jesus in Mt 15:12.

In English scandalize means to offend the moral sense of, to speak falsely or maliciously of, to bring into reproach, to strike with disgust or revulsion

Robertson - "They stumbled at him," "They were repelled by him" (Moffatt), "They turned against him" (Weymouth). It was unpardonable for Jesus not to be commonplace like themselves.

Wuest adds that **took offense** meant in a passive sense, "to find occasion of stumbling in a person, to be offended in a person, to see in another what one disapproves of and what hinders one from acknowledging his authority." They could not explain Him, so

they rejected Him. The saddest part of all was that His own brothers and sisters, sons and daughters of Mary and Joseph, disbelieved His Messianic claims. They had lived in the same home with Jesus for many years, and had been the recipients of the financial support He brought in to the family coffers by His carpenter work. His singularly beautiful life had made no effective impression upon their dull, cold hearts."

The prophet **Isaiah** had prophesied that Messiah would be a stone of stumbling

> "Then He shall become a sanctuary; But to both the houses of Israel, a stone to strike and a rock to stumble over, And a snare and a trap for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. "And many will stumble over them, Then they will fall and be broken; They will even be snared and caught." (Isa 8:14-15+)

Peter adds that Jesus was

> "A STONE OF STUMBLING AND A ROCK OF **OFFENSE** (**skandalon**)"; for they stumble because they are disobedient to the word, and to this doom they were also appointed. (1 Peter 2:8+)

> **Took offense** (4624)(**skandalizo** from **skandalon** = a trap = put a snare or stumbling block = 1 Cor 1:23; scandalize = offend the moral sense) means to put a snare in the way, hence to cause to stumble, to give offense. Matt. 5:29; Matt. 5:30; Matt. 11:6; Matt. 13:21 = he falls away (is scandalized); Matt. 13:57; Matt. 15:12; Matt. 17:27; Matt. 18:6; Matt. 18:8; Matt. 18:9; Matt. 24:10; Matt. 26:31; Matt. 26:33;
>
> **Andrus** adds that **skandalizo** "is built on a very graphic picture of taking a stick and using it to spring a trap shut. These individuals acknowledged Christ's wisdom and miraculous powers, they are amazed at his teaching, yet their minds have *sprung shut* against the truth of who He is. They are *trapped* in their thinking about Who Christ is and are unwilling to be *released* from that conclusion. They will not submit to the evidence of His identity, evidence that is powerful and compelling. They will not submit to the truth. They will not submit to the attesting miracles that He has done as indicators of His Deity. What tragic power unbelief has!...The people of Christ hometown had this treasure right in their midst, yet they would not see its worth, its value. They are a living illustration of the seed which fell on the path and was snatched away. They are a sobering reminder of how actively weeds can grow right at the feet of the Son of Man. (Sermon Notes)

Play Michael Card's great song SKANDALON

SKANDALON

The seers and the prophets had foretold it long ago
That the long awaited One would make men stumble
But they were looking for a king to conquer and to kill
Who'd have ever thought He'd be so weak and humble

Chorus
He will be the truth that will offend them one and all
A Stone that makes men stumble
And a Rock that makes them fall

Many will be broken so that He can make them whole
And many will be crushed and lose their own soul
Along the path of life there lies a stubborn **Scandalon**
And all who come this way must be offended
To some He is a barrier, To others He's the way
For all should know the scandal of believing

Chorus

It seems today the **Scandalon** offends no one at all
The image we present can be stepped over
Could it be that we are like the others long ago
Will we ever learn that all who come must stumble
Repeat Chorus

But Jesus said to them - Jesus responds to those who despised and rejected Him and were scandalized by Him.

A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household- Mark adds "**and among his own relatives.**" (Mk 6:4+) Note that Jesus acknowledges that He is in fact a **prophet**. The point of the double negative is that a prophet is respected everywhere but in His hometown and own household. Everyone else respects a prophet but you do not. A parallel passage is John 1:11+ for "He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him."

A T Robertson - This is a proverb found in Jewish, Greek, and Roman writers. Seen also in the Logia of Jesus (Oxyr. Papyri i. 3).

Gilbrant on **without honor** - The "lack of respect" held for Jesus by the townspeople of Nazareth was a tangible expression of their lack of faith (as Matthew observes, Mt 13:58).

Is this proverbial statement not a commentary on Isaiah's description of the Messiah....

> For He grew up before Him like a tender shoot, And like a root out of parched ground;**He has no stately form or majesty That we should look upon Him, Nor appearance that we should be attracted to Him** 3 **He was despised and forsaken of men**, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face **He was despised**, (Hebrew = **bazah** = despise; Lxx = **atimos**) and **we did not esteem Him.** (Isa 53:2-3+)
>
> **Prophet** (4396)(**prophetes** from **próphemi** = literally to tell beforehand in turn from **pró** = before, in front of, forth, on behalf of + **phemí** = speak, tell) is primarily a forth-teller or one who speaks out God's message, primarily to their own generation, usually always calling the people to God's truth for them at that moment. Although we commonly think of the prophet as predicting future events (foretelling) generally this was secondary to his work of forth-telling. When they functioned as predictors or prognosticators, the Biblical prophets foretold the future with 100 percent accuracy.
>
> The Jews should have recognized Him because **Moses** had prophesied that the Messiah would be a **Prophet** and warned Israel to **listen** to Him because God would put His **words in His mouth** in the famous prophecy in Dt 18:15, 18 "The LORD your God will raise up for you a **prophet** like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him....'I will raise up a **prophet** from among their countrymen like you, and I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him." Jesus was that **prophet** like Moses! The people refused to believe and instead were scandalized! When He spoke the Word of God, it antagonized the people of His own hometown.
>
> **Without honor** (820)(**atimos** from **a**= negates thus without + **time** = value, honor) means literally without honor, unhonored, dishonored, despised , of low character or reputation. Another nuance is less respectable, more insignificant (1Cor 12.23) BDAG - pert. to being considered relatively unimportant, insignificant of things that do not elicit special admiration or attention, comp. held in less esteem 1 Cor 12:23 (of parts of the body also Aristot., Part. An. 3, 672b, 21 'more esteemed … less esteemed', a distinction made in terms of dependency, lower members being at the service of upper ones."
>
> **Liddell-Scott** - (1) unhonoured, dishonoured, Il., Trag.; Comp. less honourable, Xen.; c. gen. without the honour of. . , not deemed worthy of. . , Aesch.; also, no unworthy return for. . , Id. 2. at Athens, deprived of privileges, Thuc.; deprived of the right of advising, Dem. II. without price or value, thou devourest his substance without payment made, Od. 2. unrevenged, Aesch. III. Adv. dishonourably, ignominiously, Id., Soph."
>
> **Atimos** - 4x in NT - less(1), less honorable(1), without honor(3). Matt. 13:57; Mk. 6:4; 1 Co. 4:10; 1 Co. 12:23
>
> **Atimos** in Septuagint - Job 30:4; Job 30:8; Isa. 3:5; Isa. 53:3 Job uses it of "dishonorable" names in apposition to "foolish sons".

And in his own household - In this case it included His own brothers, for John tells us "not even His brothers were believing in Him." (Jn 7:5)

> **THOUGHT** - A spokesman for God does not find honor among his own people. Even though we no longer have prophets per se, those who share the Word among unbelievers within their own household or family do not find a welcome or receptiveness. That is why you may face difficulties when you share the gospel with your family members. Often it will be your changed life that will make the greatest impact. They will not be able to deny the reality of your changed life. But it may be the testimony of others that is used to bring even our own family members to Christ....This is a good reminder that Jesus Christ was not acceptable to the nation. He was

not even acceptable to the people of His own town and His own household. He came to His hometown to minister to the people of His own family and community, yet He was rejected. They were offended by Him. Should we be surprised when we carry the message to those we are closest to and get a similar response? (Rugh)

MacArthur: Jesus' friends and former neighbors were offended by His claims. They were offended by His ordinary background, by the commonness of His family, the limits of His formal training, His lack of official religious status, and many other irrelevant or secondary issues. (MNTC-Mt)

Guzik has an interesting comment - We often have wrong ideas about what it means to be spiritual. We often think that spiritual people will be much more strange than normal. Therefore, those closest to truly spiritual people see just how normal they are and sometimes think that they aren't spiritual because they are normal.

Daniel Akin - Sometimes we can get so close to something we no longer see it. We spend so much time with someone we no longer appreciate them. For those of us raised in a Christian environment, this is certainly an ever present danger we must guard against. In a sense, we should never get completely comfortable with Jesus. His goal is never to make us comfortable. His goal is to bring us to repentance and faith, humbly falling at His feet confessing Him as Lord and God. He is not your homeboy, your buddy, your soul mate or a puppet on a string you pull and he does your bidding. He is not your genie in a bottle obligated to grant you every wish. Nor is He some ordinary guy who lived 2000 years ago who stirred things up for a few years and got nailed to a cross for His troubles. His hometown got it wrong. His relatives, at least for a while, got it wrong. The religious leaders of the day got it wrong. Rome got it wrong. And still today people get Him wrong! Do you see Him for who He truly is and call Him Lord, Savior, Master, King? Do you let Jesus set the agenda for your life? And as Mark 8 says, for your death? (Sermon)

J C Ryle - Do we wonder that the relations, servants, and neighbors of godly people are not always converted? Do we wonder that the parishioners of eminent ministers of the Gospel are often their hardest and most impenitent hearers? Let us wonder no more. Let us mark the experience of our Lord at Nazareth, and learn wisdom. Do we ever fancy that if we had only seen and heard Jesus Christ, we should have been His faithful disciples? Do we think that if we had only lived near Him, and been eyewitnesses of His ways, we should not have been undecided, wavering, and half-hearted about religion? If we do, let us think so no longer. Let us observe the people of Nazareth, and learn wisdom.

ILLUSTRATION - **Michel de Montaigne** [16th cent] French Philosopher, Politician, and one of the most influential writers of the **French Renaissance** said, "**at home** he was considered just a scribbling country proprietor, **in the neighboring town** a man of recognized business ability, and farther away a **noted author**." The greater the distance, the greater he became!

Alan Carr - The people rejected Jesus and they rejected His message. His response to their unbelief is to quote a common proverb. In summary, the proverb Jesus told them simply means "familiarity breeds contempt". **ILLUSTRATION** - Preachers who grow up in a church experience this problem all the time. The people in the church know you. They have watched you grow up. They have seen you succeed and they have watched you fail. They cannot get past what they know about to hear what you are preaching. **If you are a preacher, the hardest place you will ever preach is your home church**! **You will find less acceptance there than you will anywhere else**. (Sermon)

Gil Rugh applies the Nazarene's scandal of their hometown Nazarene - Believers Cause Offense in Their Community - This helps us understand what goes on even in our day. Sometimes people have a hard time overcoming what they know about us as ordinary people. When you became a believer in Jesus Christ, your life was transformed. You became a new person. For many believers the transformation is very obvious. If you share that transformation with your family and tell them that you have believed that Jesus Christ died for you and He has made you a new person within, they are amazed and cannot understand what the change has been. They see you as a different person. As you share the truth with your family, they may become antagonized and angry. Such a response makes no sense. Your life has been transformed, and they have to admit you are a different person. But it makes them angry when you tell them about Christ and about their sinful condition and their need of Him as their Savior. Your explanation makes no sense at all to them. They do not want to know what really happened to you. They are looking only at the physical things and are ignoring the spiritual. That is why it is so hard to minister effectively with family members and others who are close to us. Parents look at us and tell us they diapered us when we were babies, put food on the table for us, took us to school on our first day, raised us to be religious, and now we are trying to tell them how to get to heaven. It creates tension and antagonism. This is because they keep looking at physical relationships. Those characteristics blind them to the supernatural things that are going on. That can happen even among believers. When I was in Bible college, one of my professors said, "Don't be surprised if one of your classmates is used by God some day in a special, supernatural way that you cannot understand." He indicated that if that happens, our response will probably be: "I can't believe it. After all, I sat next to him in class and gave answers to him because he was slow. Now the Lord is using him to lead thousands of people to Christ in Africa! It's hard to believe because that is just Joe. He was the clod who spilled ketchup all over his lap when we were having hot dogs." Unfortunately, we begin to zero in on the common things

we know about the person. Such an approach causes us to miss what is going on spiritually. That happens in a body of believers. If the Lord uses somebody in a special way to lead others to Christ, it is easy for us to focus on his problems. We remember the time he lost his temper with his kids. Why should he be getting attention by leading so many people to Christ? We lose sight of the work of God in his life and focus on physical things that tend to pull the person down. (Sermon)

Misunderstood

Read: Mark 6:1-6; 8:27-31

A prophet is not without honor except in his own country, among his own relatives. —Mark 6:4

It's easy to be misunderstood. My wife and I still laugh about her first impressions of me when we were in college. She saw my natural shyness as aloofness. I think we've got that straightened out now. Somehow, I hadn't communicated well to her.

When we're misunderstood, we haven't communicated properly. For instance, the person who wrote this ad for a car fix-it shop didn't mean to convey what he did: "Auto Repair Service. Free pick-up and delivery. Try us once and you'll never go anywhere again." That's not exactly a confidence builder.

Jesus was misunderstood during His ministry, but unlike the examples mentioned above, it wasn't His fault. Even the people who lived with Him and observed Him closely didn't understand His mission. For a long time, they didn't see that He was the God-sent Messiah. That's why His question in Mark 8:29 is so vital. There He asked His disciples, "Who do you say that I am?"

"You are the Christ," Peter replied. At last, he saw clearly who Jesus was—the Messiah, the Savior, the Son of God. When people misunderstand Him today, it's not because He hasn't made clear who He is and what His mission is. By Dave Branon (Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved)

Peter finally understood. Do you?

Our Savior was the God-sent One;
Though He was scorned, misunderstood,
His love would not avoid the cross
To bear our sins and make us good.
—DJD

Jesus is Good because He is God!

Matthew 13:58 And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief.

- Mk 6:5,6 Lu 4:22-29 Ro 11:20 Heb 3:12-19 4:6-11
- Matthew 13 Resources - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Parallel Passage:

> Mark 6:5+ And He could do no miracle there **except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed them**. 6 **And He wondered** (thaumazo) **at their unbelief.** And He was going around the villages teaching.

JESUS' FINAL VISIT TO NAZARETH

And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief - Note that it is not that Jesus could not but that He would not. So not only did He begin to speak in parables because they refused to receive the plain truth He taught (cf John 1:11-12+), but here we see He even curtails His miracles. This makes sense, because the miracles per se never saved anyone but were primarily to authenticate that His message was one spoken with divine authority and thus should be received as from God.

**"A sin (unbelief) of that venomous nature, that it transfuseth,
as it were, a dead palsy into the hands of omnipotency."**
-Puritan writer John Trapp

Wiersbe comments that "This was His final visit to Nazareth; those villagers had no more opportunities. Jesus would be known as

“Jesus of Nazareth,” and His followers would be called “Nazarenes,” but Nazareth would not receive Him. Matthew chose this event as a fitting close to the section “Rebellion against the King.”(Bible Exposition Commentary)

A T Robertson - The “disbelief” (apistian) of the townspeople blocked the will and the power of Jesus to work cures.

Unbelief is the only thing that will drive Jesus away from you.
- Brian Bell

J C Ryle on **unbelief** - The last thing which we ought to notice in these verses is the ruinous nature of unbelief. The chapter ends with the fearful words, “He did not many works there, because of their unbelief.” Behold in this single word the secret of the everlasting ruin of multitudes of souls! They perish for ever, because they will not believe. There is nothing beside in earth or heaven that prevents their salvation. Their sins, however many, might all be forgiven. The Father’s love is ready to receive them. The blood of Christ is ready to cleanse them. The power of the Spirit is ready to renew them. But a great barrier interposes;—they will not believe. “Ye will not come unto me,” says Jesus, “that ye might have life.” (John 5:40.) May we all be on our guard against this accursed sin. It is the old root-sin, which caused the fall of man. Cut down in the true child of God by the power of the Spirit, it is ever ready to bud and sprout again. There are three great enemies against which God’s children should daily pray,—pride, worldliness, and unbelief. Of these three, none is greater than unbelief.

David Jeremiah - **THE DANGER OF UNBELIEF** - **Unbelief** is the greatest obstacle to the expression of faith in the life of Christians. **Unbelief** has ruined the vision of more people than any other single characteristic. One of the reasons so many churches settle for mediocrity is because they are limited by their **unbelief**. We ought to pray every day, both corporately and as individuals, **that God would never limit us through our own unbelief.** Sometimes we set barriers on our lives because we won’t believe great things. Matthew 13:58 tells of Jesus coming to Nazareth and not doing many miracles “**because of their unbelief**.” The greatest problem we face in churches is the problem of **unbelief**. Doubt creeps into the hearts of those who should be walking in faith and trusting God for His provision. **Unbelief** settles into their lives like a dark cloud, **wiping out God’s plan and destroying the opportunity for His miracle-making power to take place**. There will always be confrontation with unbelief for anyone willing to do great things for God. (Sanctuary)

D L Moody - UNBELIEF is as much an enemy to the Christian as it is to the unconverted. It will keep back the blessing now as much as it did in the days of Christ. We read that in one place Christ could not do many mighty works because of unbelief. If Christ could not do this, how can we expect to accomplish anything if the people of God are unbelieving? I contend that God’s children are alone able to hinder God’s work. Infidels, atheists, and sceptics cannot do it. Where there is union, strong faith, and expectation among Christians, a mighty work is always done.

> **Miracles** (powers)(1411)(**dunamis** from **dunamai** = to be able, to have power) power especially achieving power, inherent ability to carry out some act. Dunamis is translated miracles 17 times in the NT. Miracles are defined as an extraordinary work of God, generally though transcending the ordinary powers of Nature; an extraordinary event manifesting divine intervention in human affairs; an event that is contrary to the established laws of nature and attributed to a supernatural cause. **Tyndale Bible Dictionary** defines a **miracle** as "A divine act by which God reveals himself to people."
>
> **Unbelief** (570)(**apistia** from **a** = without + **pistós** = believing, faithful) means literally not believing = faithlessness, distrust, lack of belief. It describes an unwillingness to commit oneself to another or respond positively to the other’s words or actions , in this case the words of the One Who was Himself the Living Word! **Apistia** - Mt 13:58; Mk 6:6; Mk 9:24; Mk 16:14; Ro 3:3; Ro 4:20; Ro 11:20; Ro 11:23; 1 Ti 1:13; Heb 3:12+; Heb 3:19+ = "So we see that they were not able to enter because of **unbelief** (apistia)." Now read Hebrews 3:18+ and notice what parallels with **unbelief**. Did you see it? **Unbelief** equates with **disobedient** (apeitheo). True belief is obedient! See Obedience of faith "**Unbelief** is what locked the doors of the Promised Land to the children of Israel. For all the grumbling, bad attitudes, and discontentment that characterized their demeanor after leaving Egypt, it was their unbelief that kept them at a distance from God's promised reward. Jesus, too, allowed the people's unbelief to tie His hands on His ministry visit to His hometown. The Bible clearly says, "He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief" (Matt. 13:58). The sovereign God has limited Himself to work according to the faith and belief of the people of God." (Adrian Rogers)
>
> > **THOUGHT** - Unbelief and faith are opposites. “If faith is the capacity to receive what God wants to give, unbelief is the willful refusal to receive what God wants to give.” They erected a barrier of unbelief…Have you? In all unbelief there are these two things: a good opinion of one's self and a bad opinion of God. [Horatius Bonar] A. W. Tozer said, “Every man will have to decide for himself whether or not he can afford the terrible luxury of unbelief.”
>
> **Unbelief is stubborn.** You can have the cleverest argument of all, but if unbelief wants to reject your message

it will regardless of the logic of your argument. Unbelief paid no attention to John's righteousness. Unbelief loves its sin and does not accept that which would condemn their sin. In my early ministry, I thought the people of the church would be appreciate the holiness of my conduct. Also I thought the soundness of my message would be appreciated by those working in a large denominational office. I was wrong on both counts. Being righteous and having the right message gains the approval of God, but not necessarily the approval of man. (John Butler)

Unbelief PEOPLE WHO DENY OR REFUSE TO BELIEVE what God has revealed about Himself and eternal life are in a state of unbelief. In describing unbelief the New Testament writers looked back to Old Testament events. Though no specific word for unbelief is used in the Old Testament, there are many illustrations of it. The people in Noah's day were in unbelief and rebellion (Gen. 6:5-7), and so God destroyed them by the Flood. Peter said these people in unbelief were “ungodly” (2 Pet. 2:5). Unbelief was attributed to the Israelites, whom God had delivered out of Egypt, when they hardened their hearts and rebelled against God (Heb. 3:19). They had failed to respond to what they had seen God do on their behalf (3:9; Ps. 95:9). Jude stated that God took the lives of those Israelites who did not believe (Jude 5). At the root of their problem was an unbelieving heart (Heb. 3:12).

Unbelief is the condition of all those who are without Christ, those who have not believed in the salvation provided by Christ through His death on the cross (John 3:36). As unbelievers they are blinded to the light of the gospel (2 Cor. 4:4). This unbelief need not be permanent, as illustrated in the life of Paul. This was not something he overcame by his own efforts. Instead, through God's grace and mercy his heart was opened to receive the message about Christ (1 Tim. 1:13-16). Later Paul reminded believers that the unbelief of Israel is not permanent (Rom. 11:20-23).

Unbelief was also the reason people rejected Christ's miracles during His earthly ministry (Matt. 13:58; Mark 6:6). The word unbelief was used by a father whose son was possessed by a demon. The man asked the Lord to help him overcome his unbelief (9:24). His request did not come because of a rebellious spirit, for he was humbled in the presence of the Lord. But he did sense his need for divine assistance to believe, possibly because of the power of Satan that had been so evident in his son's life for such a long time. Christians may face difficult challenges in life, but God promises victory because of our faith in Christ (1 John 5:4-5) (Wendell Johnson - Theological Wordbook - borrow)

Adrian Rogers - Faith is the greatest asset that we have. **Unbelief** is the greatest stumbling block. **Unbelief** is the chief wickedness. **Unbelief** is the mother sin, the father sin, the parent sin...the sin of all sins is **unbelief**. It was **unbelief** that caused Eve to sin against God in the Garden of Eden. She failed to believe the Word of God. It was **unbelief** that unlocked the doors to the promised land and the Israelites did not go in the Bible says, because of their **unbelief**. It was **unbelief** that tied the hands of Jesus when Jesus was in His own hometown and the Bible says, **He could do no mighty works there because of their unbelief** and the sovereign God has limited Himself to work according to the faith, the belief of the people of God. Did you know the sin that sends people to Hell today? It is not lying, it is not murder, it is not rape, it is not arson, it is not sexual perversion, it is not pride, it is not arrogance, it is unbelief. You see Jesus died for all those other sins.

Stephen Olford - “He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.”—Matthew 13:58

What an amazing, yet solemn, verse this is! **Purge me, O Lord, that I may never be guilty of such unbelief!** Notice that the verse does not say, “He could not,” but rather that “He did not.” It was not a case that His power was limited on this particular occasion, but rather that Christ does not work in the presence of blatant or open unbelief. **Unbelief** is the preeminent fruit of the flesh. It is that which emanates from man's corrupt nature. “The carnal mind is enmity against God” (Rom. 8:7). **Give me the grace to crucify the natural man in me, Lord, until all unbelief is removed**. Amen

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Daniel Akin - Conclusion:

1) The preacher Phillips Brooks (1835-1893) was an American pastor who well said, “Familiarity breeds contempt, but only with contemptible things or among contemptible people” (Wiersbe, 59). The contempt shown by the citizens of Nazareth said nothing about Jesus. However, it said a lot about them!

2) What about you? What about me? Do you show contempt towards the Jesus revealed in Scripture? Do you allow the biblical evidence to slay your biases, reshape your preconceived notions of who Jesus must be for you to accept Him? Believe in Him? Trust Him?

3) Are you “scandalized” by the simplicity of His gospel? The unfairness of its message that says a child-molester or even a serial rapist and murderer on death row can be made right with God by child-like faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

4) Or, have you become so familiar with Him having been raised in church all your life that His words no longer convict? His miracles no longer astonish? His death on the cross for you no longer strikes the cord of “Amazing Grace?”

5) Familiarity can blind us to the greatness and glory of a Savior if we are not careful. Spiritually inoculated at some point in life, we become immune to the real thing! I have seen it far too many times. You do not come to Jesus on your terms. You come to Jesus on His! This prophet was without honor in His own hometown! Please, do not make the same mistake in your heart. The consequences are of an eternal nature. (Sermon)

Limiting God Psalm 78:41KJV - Wade H Horton

INTRODUCTION: God's wise and benevolent purposes are often frustrated. There are many things God would do for men, but there are things that hinder or limit God.

I. INCONSISTENT CHRISTIAN LIVING LIMITS GOD.

A. "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you" (Jeremiah 5:25).

B. "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1, 2).

II. LACK OF FAITH LIMITS GOD.

A. Jesus "did not many mighty works... [in Nazareth] because of their unbelief" (Matthew 13:58).

B. "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed... nothing shall be impossible unto you" (Matthew 17:20).

III. SHALLOW AND SELFISH PRAYERS RESTRICT OR LIMIT GOD.

A. "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts" (James 4:3).

B. The Pharisee in his prayer exalted his own goodness; but it was a selfish, self-centered prayer, and he received no answer (Luke 18:10-14).

IV. A STUBBORN WILL LIMITS GOD.

A. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not" (John 1:11).

B. God extends His gifts, but we must accept them.

C. Jesus invites us to come, but He does not compel us to come (Matthew 11:28-30).

D. He says, "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock" (Revelation 3:20). But we must open the door.

E. The key is on our side. We should by all means let Him in because He is the heavenly visitor.

F. And He is the best visitor we will ever have. For His visit will not be for a day, a month or a year, but for all eternity.

CONCLUSION: Let us quit limiting our heavenly Father; let us simply trust Him to do as He has promised

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CAN GOD, THE ALMIGHTY, BE LIMITED? - Al Bryant

And [they] limited the Holy One of Israel (Ps. 78:41).

God’s wise and benevolent purposes are often frustrated. There are many things God would do for men if permitted.

1. Inconsistent Christian living limits God. “Your iniquities have separated” (Isa. 59:2). “Your sins have withholden” (Jer. 5:25).

2. Lack of faith limits God. We limit the Holy One of Israel by distrust. Jesus at Nazareth “**did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief**” (Mt. 13:58). Many of us lack an adventurous faith. We are afraid to “launch out into the deep” (Luke 5:4). When you say, “My sins are too many to be forgiven,” you have limited God. You have put your sins above His grace.

3. Shallow and selfish prayers limit God. They restrict Him. “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss” (James 4:3). See the parable of the Pharisee and the publican. We often limit God by the narrowness of our prayers. Also by our lack of praying.

4. A stubborn will limits God. “He came to his own, and his own received him not” (John 1:11). “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem … how often would I have gathered thy children … and ye would not” (Matt. 23:37).

To limit God is to set bounds to His operations, to circumscribe or confine Him in His ability to effect certain purposes or works. The penitent sinner often does this when he doubts God’s willingness and ability to save. The Christian in trouble often does this in confining God to a certain mode of deliverance. God extends His gifts, but we must accept them. Jesus invites us to come, but He

can't compel us to come. Jesus stands at the door and knocks, but we must open the door. The key is on our side.

LIMITING GOD - Flawed Memory (Read Psalm 78:40-53) The older we get, the more we forget. This is especially true when it comes to our relationship with God. The people of Israel often remembered what they should have forgotten and forgot what they should have remembered! "They did not remember His power: the day when He redeemed them from the enemy, when He worked His signs in Egypt, and His wonders in the field of Zoan" (Psalm 78:42,43). How amazing. The Jews had seen God perform ten miracles on their behalf in Egypt. Moses even pointed out that this was the hand of the Lord, yet they forgot all about it. After they were delivered from Egypt and living in the desert, the first time they were thirsty, they complained. The first time they were hungry, they complained. Their constant cry was, "Let's go back." What did they remember about Egypt? The bondage? The taskmasters? Being beaten and whipped? Carrying the heavy burdens? They didn't remember those things. They remembered the leeks and the onions and the garlic and the cucumbers. They remembered the things that satisfied their stomachs. They did not remember the spiritual victories that God had given, His deliverance or His guidance. He had fed and led them, protected and provided for them; and they forgot about it. The same is often true of us. We forget what God has done for us, and when we forget, we start to go backward. Forgetfulness has consequences. "**Yes, again and again they tempted God, and limited the Holy One of Israel**' (Psalm 78:41KJV). Imagine--feeble, unbelieving man limiting Almighty God! But that's what happens when we forget Him. Don't limit God in your life today. He has unlimited wisdom and unlimited power, and your life has unlimited potential in His hands. Don't turn back. Look ahead. Don't test Him. Trust Him and remember his mercies. The same God who worked miracle after miracle for Israel is the One who is working for you today. Don't live with a flawed memory. Meditate on God's faithfulness and goodness.(Bible Exposition Commentary)

- Beware in your prayer, above everything, of **limiting God**, not only by unbelief, but by fancying that you know what he can do. —Andrew Murray

Related Resources:

- Spurgeon's sermon on Psalm 78:41KJV - Limiting God
- Other sermons on Limiting God
- The Impoverished Ministry of Jesus - Oswald Chambers
- Limiting God (audio sermon) - Martyn Lloyd-Jones (50 minutes)

QUOTES ON UNBELIEF

If you are an unbeliever when you die, Christ did not die for you.
Ambrose

Living without faith is like driving in a fog.
Anon.

Unbelief in the face of evidence is either stupidity or sin.
Anon.

All unbelief is the belief of a lie.
Horatius Bonar

In all unbelief there are these two things: a good opinion of one's self and a bad opinion of God.
Horatius Bonar

Can any man perish more justly than they who refuse to be saved?
John Calvin

Infidelity is always blind.
John Calvin

Our own unbelief is the only impediment which prevents God from satisfying us largely and bountifully with all good things.
John Calvin

The blindness of unbelievers in no way detracts from the clarity of the gospel; the sun is no less bright because blind men do not

perceive its light.
John Calvin

Unbelief... is always proud.
John Calvin

Unbelief makes us rebels and deserters.
John Calvin

Unbelieving and irreligious men have no ears.
John Calvin

As faith is the greatest grace, so that which is opposite to it must be the greatest sin.
Stephen Charnock

Is not he as much guilty of his own death that rejects a medicine as he that cuts his own throat?
Stephen Charnock

Unbelief was the first sin, and pride was the first-born of it.
Stephen Charnock

When God is not believed we must needs give credit to the devil.
Stephen Charnock

Christ distinguished between doubt and unbelief. Doubt says, 'I can't believe.' Unbelief says, 'I won't believe.' Doubt is honest. Unbelief is obstinate.
Henry Drummond

Disobedience and unbelief are two sides of the same coin.
Ronald Dunn

What loneliness is more lonely than distrust?
George Eliot

Alongside getting faith out of a heart that is utterly hostile and unbelieving, making a silk purse out of a sow's ear or getting blood from a turnip is child's play.
John H. Gerstner

Unbelief is always conceited.
Richard Glover

Unbelief in the biblical view is not passive, an innocent but inaccurate view of the world that has unfortunately 'got it wrong' at a few points. Rather, unbelief is active, driven by a dark dynamism
Os Guinness

God excludes none if they do not exclude themselves.
William Guthrie

Gospel light is justly taken away from those that endeavour to extinguish it.
Matthew Henry

Nothing is more offensive to God than disbelief of his promise and despair of the performance of it because of some difficulties that seem to lie in the way.
Matthew Henry

There are those who will trust Christ no further than they can see him...; as if he were tied to our methods, and could not draw water without our buckets.
Matthew Henry

Unbelief is apt to mistake recruits for enemies, and to draw dismal conclusions even from comfortable premises.
Matthew Henry

Unbelief is at the bottom of all our staggerings at God's promises.
Matthew Henry

Unbelief is at the bottom of what sinners do ignorantly.

Matthew Henry

Unbelief is the great obstruction to Christ's favours.

Matthew Henry

Unbelief may truly be called the great damning sin, because it leaves us under the guilt of all our other sins; it is a sin against the remedy.

Matthew Henry

Unbelief, or distrust of God, is a sin that is its own punishment.

Matthew Henry

Unbelief is the shield of every sin.

William Jenkyn

Unbelief... makes the world a moral desert, where no divine footsteps are heard, where no angels ascend and descend, where no living hand adorns the fields, feeds the birds of heaven, or regulates events.

F. W. Krummacher

Unbelief is a matter not only of the head but of the heart. The unbeliever's trouble is that his heart is not right with God.

R. B. Kuiper

Unbelief is radically all other disobedience.

Robert Leighton

The Bible itself gives us one short prayer which is suitable for all who are struggling with the beliefs and doctrines. It is: Lord I believe, help Thou my unbelief.

C. S. Lewis

When you are arguing against God you are arguing against the very Power that makes you able to argue at all.

C. S. Lewis

No difficulty in believing the gospel is intellectual, it is always moral.

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

As no one can give himself faith, neither can he take away his unbelief.

Martin Luther

Birds lack faith. They fly away when I enter the orchard, though I mean them no ill. Even so do we lack faith in God.

Martin Luther

Unbelief is the mother of sin, and misbelief the nurse of it.

Thomas Manton

Ultimately, the acceptance of the gospel is a moral problem not an intellectual problem.

Will Metzger

Unbelief is not failure in intellectual apprehension. It is disobedience in the presence of the clear commands of God.

G. Campbell Morgan

The natural man does not want to believe that God has spoken.

Tom Nettles

For the most part we live upon successes, not promises. Unless we see and feel the print of victories we will not believe.

John Owen

Unbelief makes God a liar and, worse still, a perjurer, for it accounts him as not only false to his word, but to his oath.

A. T. Pierson

Unbelief is far, far more than entertaining an erroneous conception of God's way of salvation: it is a species of hatred against him.

A. W. Pink

Unbelief is not simply an infirmity of fallen human nature, it is a heinous crime.

A. W. Pink

No maniac ever reasoned more illogically than the unbeliever.
William S. Plumer

The errors of faith are better than the best thoughts of unbelief.
Thomas Russell

If men do not have eternal life it is never because God did not love them, or because Christ was not given for them, but because they did not believe on Christ.
J. C. Ryle

No sin makes less noise, but none so surely damns the soul, as unbelief.
J. C. Ryle

The difficulties of Christianity no doubt are great; but depend on it, they are nothing compared to the difficulties of infidelity.
J. C. Ryle

Unbelief about the existence and personality of Satan has often proved the first step to unbelief about God.
J. C. Ryle

We can never be too much on our guard against unbelief. It is the oldest sin in the world.
J. C. Ryle

Those who deny God are bound to bestow all his attributes on flesh and blood.
Isaac Bashevis Singer

The revelation of the gospel is to a world that is already under indictment for its universal rejection of God the Father.
R. C. Sproul

Those who spurn the gospel challenge not the power of the church but the sovereignty of God.
R. C. Sproul

There are no infidels anywhere but on earth. There are none in heaven and there are none in hell.
C. H. Spurgeon

Unbelief calls itself 'honest doubt', and not without cause, for we should not have known it to be honest if it had not labelled itself so.
C. H. Spurgeon

Unbelief will destroy the best of us. Faith will save the worst of us.
C. H. Spurgeon

Unbelief is so deeply rooted in the human heart that when God performs miracles on earth, unbelief doubts whether he can perform them in heaven, and when he does them in heaven, whether he can do them on earth.
Friedrich Tholuck

If the way to heaven is so narrow, and so few seek it, what will become of those who never seek it?
William Tiptaft

Every man will have to decide for himself whether or not he cannot afford the terrible luxury of unbelief.
A. W. Tozer

Human unbelief cannot alter the character of God.
A. W. Tozer

I do not believe there is anybody who ever rejects Jesus Christ on philosophical grounds. The man who continues in his rejection of Christ has a pet sin somewhere—he's in love with iniquity.
A. W. Tozer

It is unbelief that prevents our minds from soaring into the celestial city, and walking by faith with God across the golden streets.
A. W. Tozer

A great many believers walk upon the promises at God's call in the way to heaven even as a child upon weak ice, which they are afraid will crack under them and leave them in the depth.
Robert Traill

Infidelity is the mother of apostasy.

John Trapp

Faith unlocks the divine storehouse, but unbelief bars its doors.

Curtis Vaughan

Unbelief is the foul medley of all sins, the root and receptacle of sin.

Thomas Watson

Unbelief is the root of apostasy.

Thomas Watson

The root of all apostasy is the primal sin of unbelief.

Geoffrey B. Wilson

Source - Complete Gathered Gold