

Seeking My King & His Kingdom

Lesson #19 Parable of the Wheat & Tares

The Beginning Of The Kingdom In Mystery:

1. Preaching of the Word and the planting of the "Seed" in the hearts of man.
2. Seed = Word of God
3. 4 different soils of the heart and 4 different responses.

The Parable of the Seed Growing of Itself is recorded in Mark 4:26-29.

He was also saying, "The kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seeds on the ground.

²⁷ He sleeps and gets up night and day while the seeds sprout and grow, although he doesn't know how ²⁸ the ground produces grain by itself—first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. ²⁹ But when the grain is ripe, he immediately starts cutting with his sickle because the harvest time has come."

Recall: The Seed = The Word of God

1. The growth of the plants = The working of God's Word in individual hearts.
2. The seed sown will spring to life of its own accord.
3. The crop grows without the farmer's intervention.

God can accomplish His purposes even we are absent or unaware of what He is doing.

The gospel is the power of God to produce regeneration in the individual.

4. The goal = The ripened grain

a. The Word will bring forth its fruit and the Lord of the harvest will be glorified.

5. Early church illustrates this parable.

I Cor. 3:6 I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow.

a. We cannot force spiritual life or growth on others.

Conclusion: The way God uses His Word in the heart of an individual is mysterious and completely independent of human effort. May I be faithful in "sowing the seed," praying for a harvest and leave the results to the Lord.

Opposition To The Kingdom Arises

Parable of the Tares Among The Wheat [Only in Matthew]

Matt. 13:24-30 He presented another parable to them: "The kingdom from heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ While people were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds [tares] among the wheat and went away.

²⁶ When the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, the weeds [tares] appeared, too.

²⁷ "The owner's servants came and asked him, 'Master, you sowed good seed in your field, didn't you? Then where did these weeds come from?'

²⁸ "He told them, 'An enemy did this!'

"The servants asked him, 'Do you want us to go and pull them out [gather them up]?'

²⁹ "He said, 'No! If you pull out the weeds, you might uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, "Gather the weeds first and tie them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

Question: How long is the conflict between good and evil?

Until the harvest at the end of this age

a. Some are puzzled by verse 30: Let both grow together until the harvest, and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, "Gather the weeds first and tie them in bundles for burning [bind them in bundles to be burned], but gather the wheat into my barn.'"

Berean Study Bible = First, collect the weeds and tie them into bundles in order to be burned; then gather the wheat into My barn.

πρὸς = in order = Strong's 4314

1. Preposition of direction = a motion towards a goal or destination; in view of; in light of; toward

- The tares are gathered together in bundles NOT TO BURN them before the wheat is harvested, but to have them separated and in readiness to burn after the wheat has been gathered in the Heavenly Barn.

The Parable of the Tares Explained - Matt. 13:36-43

³⁶ Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

³⁷ He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.

³⁸ The field is the world. The good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked *one*. ³⁹ The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. ⁴⁰ Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom everything that causes others to sin, [all causes of offense: persons by whom others are drawn into error or sin] and those who practice lawlessness, ⁴² and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth in that place.

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!

1. The field is the WORLD. Note: Matt. 13:24 = HIS Field [I Cor. 10:26; Ps. 24:1]

Note: This demolishes the argument of those who claim that the field is the Church and that the "wheat" and "tares" represent "true" and "false" professors.

There are 2 sowers: Son Of Man; His Enemy, the Devil who is cunning & cowardly

2. The Sower of the good seed is the Son of Man.

3. He plants "men" [children of the Kingdom] who are converted through trusting the Word.

He deals with the Character Of The Seed rather than the reception of the seed.

- God gave Stephen [God planting good seed] the power to perform miracles as part of God's plan to use Stephen to bear witness to the leaders of Israel.
 - b. Stephen's powerful testimony would be the climax of the church's witness to the Jews.
- Results of Stephen's Death:

a. For Stephen = Coronation

Rev. 2:10 ...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

- He saw the glory of God and the Son of God standing to receive him to heaven. Acts 7:56
Luke 22:69 Hereafter shall the Son of man sit on the right hand of the power of God.
- Our Lord sat down when He ascended to heaven, but He stood up to welcome to glory the first Christian martyr.
Luke 12:8 Whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God:
- Stephen's use of "the Son of Man" [Messianic title: Dan. 7:13-14] was one more witness that Jesus is indeed Israel's Messiah.

b. For Israel = Stephen's death meant condemnation. This was their 3rd murder.

- They Permitted John the Baptist to be killed. When they allowed Herod to kill John, the Jews sinned against God the Father who had sent John. [Matt. 21:28-32]
- They Asked for Jesus to be killed. When they asked Pilate to crucify Jesus, they sinned against God the Son. [Matt. 21:33-46]
- They Killed Stephen themselves. When they stoned Stephen, Israel sinned against the Holy Spirit who was working in and through the apostles. [Matt. 10:1-8]
Acts 7:51 You stubborn people with uncircumcised hearts and ears! You are always opposing the Holy Spirit, just as your ancestors used to do.
- Judgment came in 70 AD when Titus and the Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem.

c. For the Church = Stephen's death meant Liberation.

- They had been witnessing to the Jew first since Pentecost, but now they would be directed to take the message out of Jerusalem to the Samaritans [Acts 8] and to the Gentiles. [Acts 11:19-26]

Acts 8:1-4 Now Saul heartily approved of putting Stephen to death. That day a severe persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and everyone except for the apostles was scattered throughout the countryside of Judea and Samaria. ² Devout men buried Stephen as they mourned loudly for him. ³ But Saul kept trying to destroy the church. Going into one house after another, he began dragging off men and women and throwing them in prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word. The Son of Man began to scatter the seed and the growth of the church throughout Judea and Samaria through the agency of Saul of Tarsus

- The opposition of the enemy helped prevent the church from becoming a Jewish "sect" and encouraged them to fulfill the commission of:

Acts 1:8 But you'll receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you'll be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Note: Wherever God sows His "good seed", Satan will eventually sow his counterfeits.

Acts 8:5-24 Account of Philip and Simon the Sorcerer

1. Philip went to Samaria to preach Christ to them. He performed many miracles and drove out unclean spirits.
2. The people were amazed at the things Simon did and considered him "the great power of God."
3. Simon's sorcery was energized by Satan and used to magnify himself. Philip's miracles were empowered by God and used to glorify Christ.
4. Simon began to lose his following as the Samaritans listened to Philip's messages, believed on Jesus Christ, were born again and baptized.
5. It says "Simon believed." However, his faith was in the miracle he saw Philip perform. There is NO indication Simon repented of his sins.
6. Simon not only wanted to perform miracles, but he wanted the power to convey the gift of the Holy Spirit to others and was willing to pay for this power!
7. Peter's words to Simon give every indication that the sorcerer was not a converted man. Simon was "in the gall of bitterness" and "the bond of iniquity."
8. Simon is an example of one who heard the gospel, saw the miracles, gave a profession, and was baptized. Yet he never gave any evidence of being born again. He was one of Satan's clever counterfeits [tares.]
9. If Peter had not exposed the wickedness of Simon's heart, he would have been accepted as a member of the Samaritan congregation.

Note: "People were amazed at Simon's magic, but they were converted to Christ by Philip's ministry."

Note: The scattering of the seed has continued down through the centuries.

Matt. 28:18-20 All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

d. For Saul = Stephen's death eventually meant Salvation.

- Saul never forgot the event. [Acts 22:17-21] Stephen's message, prayer and glorious death prepared Saul for his own meeting with the Lord. [Acts 9]
- Saul would one day see the same glory that Stephen saw, behold the Son of God and hear Him speak!
- *God never wastes the blood of His saints.*

4. Christ is "planting" true believers in various places that they might bear fruit.

John 12:23-26 Jesus told them, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. ²⁴ Truly, I tell all of you emphatically, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone. But if it dies, it produces a lot of grain. ²⁵ The one who loves his life will destroy it, and the one who hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life.

²⁶ If anyone serves me, he must follow me. And where I am, there my servant will also be. If anyone serves me, the Father will honor him."

Note the Contrasts in Jesus' Challenge to us: loneliness or fruitfulness; lose your life or keep your life; serve self or serve Christ; please self or receive God's honor.

Jesus used the image of a seed to illustrate the spiritual truth: There can be no glory without suffering, no fruitful life without death, no victory without surrender.

1. A seed by itself is weak and useless. When it is planted, it "dies" and becomes fruitful.

2. There is both beauty and bounty when a seed "dies" and fulfills its purpose.

The only way it can achieve its goal is by "being planted."

3. God's children are like seeds. Each is small and insignificant, but each has God's life in them.

4. However, that life can never be fulfilled unless we yield ourselves to God and permit Him to "plant us." We must die to self so that we may live unto God. [Rom. 6; Gal. 2:20]

5. The only way to have a fruitful life is to follow Jesus Christ in death, burial and resurrection.

Wiersbe: God does not expect us to be comfortable, but He does expect us to be conformable.

Rom. 8:29 God has predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son.

Consider: If I am looking for a comfortable life, I will protect my plans and desires, save my life and never be planted. But if I yield my life and let God plant me, I will never be alone but will have the joy of being fruitful to the glory of God.

5. The "field" was not left to the "wheat." [good seed]

6. The Devil came and sowed "tares."

Gal. 1:6-10 I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you by the grace of the Messiah and, instead, are following a different gospel,

⁷ not that another one really exists. To be sure, there are certain people who are troubling you and want to distort the gospel about the Messiah.

⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that person be condemned! ⁹ What we have told you in the past I am now telling you again: If anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that person be condemned! ¹⁰ Am I now trying to win the approval of people or of God?

Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be the Messiah's servant.

a. Satan encourages a counterfeit righteousness.

Rom. 10:1-3

b. Satan has a counterfeit church.

Rev. 2:9

c. At the end of the age, Satan will produce a counterfeit Christ.

II Thess. 2:1-12

7. This sowing of the "tares" was done, not while the Sower slept, for He never slumbers or sleeps, but while the "men" He left to look after the Field slept. Sowing of tares is still alive.

a. Satan has counterfeit Christians [II Cor. 11:26] who believe a counterfeit gospel.

b. He does not have to cover the entire field with his "weed seed." He knows how fast it will spread.

- c. The tares so closely resemble wheat that its true nature cannot be seen until it has matured. Both good and bad seed mature in this world.
- d. Satan has used fragments of God's truth and founded false religions and counterfeit Christianities that preach distortions of truth which lead many astray.
- e. The world's churches are in constant rebellion against God, refusing to keep His commandments and rejecting the absolute authority of His Words.
- f. The world's ministers pervert the Word of God with infusions from pagan religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism, or other mystics of New Age.
- g. Through syncretism and false doctrine, these churches accomplish the will of their evil father: deceit and destruction. [John 8:44]

8. The "tares" are called the "Children of the Wicked One."

Important note: The Devil cannot "change" the "wheat." He can only sow "tares."

He can sow in such large quantities as to completely change the aspect of the whole field.

- a. Satan has planted his own seeds [tares], sowing false brethren and even ministers within God's church. God is permitting this intrusion of well-camouflaged counterfeits until the end of the age when He will separate the wheat and the tares.

9. When the servants saw what was done they said, should we go and gather them up?

10. The master said, "No, lest while you gather up the tares you root up the wheat with them."

Spurgeon: Magistrates and churches may remove the openly wicked from their society;

the outwardly good who are unworldly worthless they must leave; for the judging of hearts is beyond their sphere."

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. He allows the tares to remain until the 2nd Coming of Jesus when His angels will separate the wheat from the tares.

Point #1 True sowing will be imitated by false counter-sowing.

Point #2 There will be a side-by-side development and growth as a result of the 2 sowings.

Point #3 The harvest is set at the "end of the age" [Matt. 13:39-40] when Jesus Christ comes to establish His Kingdom on earth. The judgment at the end of the Mystery Kingdom will separate the two, with the wheat brought into the Messianic Kingdom and the tares excluded. [Judgment of the Sheep & Goats in Matthew 25:31-46.]

The difference between wheat and tares [planted by Satan] isn't always obvious.

- a. Wheat has always been a vital, life-giving substance, possessing both nutritional and healing properties. Called "the staff of life"
- b. Tares or darnel have a detrimental quality. Darnel comes from the French and means "drunkenness" because it has an intoxicating effect when consumed.

- Tiny black seeds in tares cause dizziness and nausea when consumed.
- When darnel is ground into flour, baked in bread and consumed while hot, the eater may experience symptoms similar to drunkenness, including trembling, followed by an inability to walk, hindered speech and vomiting.
- Darnel is commonly infected by the ergot fungus which can cause hallucinations when consumed in small doses, but in large doses can do heavy damage to the central nervous system.
- The Greeks and Romans supposed the darnel and the fungus to cause blindness.

Farmers tell of 2 ways tares come to be in their fields.

1. They are left over from last year's crop. When they prepared the soil for the coming year, they were not careful to remove the tares, so they keep growing.
2. Some come from buying cheap or bad seed which is not pure.

Consider: Both ways of getting tares in a field are completely preventable.

As the time for the "harvest" approaches the differences between the wheat and the tares will become clearly apparent.

- They can only be distinguished when the wheat and the tare mature and produce fruit.
- The mature wheat bows over. Mature tares stand straight, proud and tall.

The One who planted the good seed which bears fruit will come back to harvest His wheat and not one grain of tare [darnel] will be found in His barn.