

The Mysteries Of God Part 9

Mystery # 17—The Mystery Of The Kingdom

Matt 13:11

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.

This mystery is unfolded through seven parables found in Matthew 13:10-16.

First we must state the difference between the “kingdom of heaven” and the “kingdom of God”. These are two totally different kingdoms. The kingdom of heaven refers to the Lord’s one-thousand year righteous reign on this earth (Rev. 20:6; 5:10). The kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom, entered by the new birth (John 3:3). It does not come with observation for it is “within you” (Luke 17:20-21). It is a kingdom of “righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Rom. 14:17). It is not in the physical realm as the kingdom of heaven will be. The kingdom of heaven is so called because it will be the literal reign of heaven on this earth.

The 7 parables

The Parable Of The Sower

Matt 13:3-9

- 3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;
- 4 And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:
- 5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:
- 6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.
- 7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:
- 8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.
- 9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

The first mystery of the kingdom is that the Gospel is to go to all the world. The kingdom of God is composed of both Jew and gentile. The message was originally confined to God’s vineyard but now the message of God is sown in “the field” or the world. We are required to carry the Gospel of Jesus Christ into the whole world (Matt. 28:19; Acts 1:8).

1. The way side---We are told in verse 2 that the seeds sown by the way side are devoured by fowls. Fowls represent demons in Scripture. This seed is sown in the hearts of men and demonic forces snatch it away. The wayside represents the

- careless crowd. They hear the Word but it means nothing to them. Satan easily causes them to forget what they have heard. (2 Cor. 4:4)
2. **Stoney Places**---In verse 5 we find that some of the seed falls on stoney places. Here the seed becomes sun withered. This person hears the Word and even rejoices over it, but when persecuted for what he claims to believe, he suddenly changes those beliefs (vs 20-21). He then becomes offended by what once gave him joy (Psm. 119:165). Trials and tribulation always show the true colors of professing Christians.
 3. **Thorns**---Here the Word is choked out before it can accomplish much (vs 22). This is the covetous crowd, for the thorns represent the care of this world and the deceitfulness of riches. Verse 22 tells us the recipient of the seed (“he”), when engulfed by the things of this world, becomes unfruitful. Mark 4:19 says the Word itself, being choked, becomes unfruitful. Luke 8:14 ties it all together: they “bring no fruit to perfection.”
 4. **Good Ground**---Here are the fruit bearers, the real believers (Matt. 7:20). All true believers bear some fruit (vs 23). These are the concerned. They keep the Word. (Luke 8:15)

Not everyone that hears the simple Gospel will accept it (2 Cor. 11:3). This is a mystery in itself.

The Parable Of The Wheat And Tares

Matt 13:24-30

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:

25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.

26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?

28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?

29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Here the seed is not representative of the Word but rather the product of the seed. God sows his saints (1 Pet. 1:23; James 1:18; James 1:21; Matt. 13:36-38). While God sows His children throughout the world, we also discover that wherever God sows His children

that Satan will also be sowing his children. Churches are filled with religious unbelievers. Satan's tares not only fool God's wheat at times, but they are even fooled themselves. That is why at the Great White Throne Judgment these false believers will be shocked to learn they are not one of His (Rev. 20:11-15; Matt. 7:21-23). The mystery is that things are not always what they seem to be. The church is filled with true possessors and simple professors. In Matt. 13:30 we see that the wheat and the tares continue side by side until the harvest or the rapture of the church. Immediately before the gathering of the wheat into God's barn, the tares will be bundled together. This shows prophetically that there will be a great ecumenical movement to bring all of the religions together during the end times before the rapture of the church. We find that all of these false professors will eventually be burned (cast into hell) vs. 40.

The Parable Of The Mustard Seed

Matt 13:31-32

31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:

32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

We already have established the meaning of the birds in our study. These of course represent demonic forces. The mustard tree actually grows to be a small tree with the black mustard attaining a height of six feet. This parable refers to the fact that the larger the church becomes as a whole in history that the more it becomes increasingly infested with the powers of darkness. Apostasy will be so rampant when the Lord returns that He does not expect to find any real faith anywhere (Luke 18:8). There will be a famine for the true Word of God (Amos 8:11-12). When the apostasy hits a climatic point then the antichrist will be revealed (2 Thess. 2:3; 1 Tim. 4:1). Today's church overall is a joke. It is nothing more than a social gathering.

The Parable Of The Leaven

Matt 13:33

33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

This parable has 4 key participants in a woman, leaven, meal & 3 measures.

- 1) The woman—a symbol of apostate religion. Remember from our study of Jezebel over the church of Thyatira? She is “the mother of harlots and abomination of the earth” (Rev. 17:5).
- 2) The Leaven---this is interpreted by Jesus in Matt. 16:6-12 as false doctrine or heresy. He states to beware of it. True Christians are not to fellowship with those that hold false doctrines (2 Jn. 7-11; Amos 3:3)

- 3) The Meal---Under the law, meal was one of the five offerings. It was called the meat-offering (Lev. 2:14) The meal offering was holy and it was for food for the priests, to be eaten by them (Lev. 2:3), and it was eaten without leaven (Lev. 6:14-17). Thus, the meal represents true doctrine that the saints are to feed on for spiritual nourishment (Heb. 5:14-6:2; 1 Pet. 2:2).
- 4) The Three Measures---There are 3 major division or branches of professing Christendom today. Roman Catholic, Greek Orthodox, and Protestant. There are others but an examination of their beliefs will show that they are simply a reflection of the main three, and even those main three overlap to a great extent. These 3 divisions represent the 3 areas of teaching where leaven, i.e., false doctrine, is generated.
 - a) Pharisaism: religious ritual, private interpretation, tradition. “Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition,” Mark 7:9.
 - b) Sadduceeism: logic and rationalism, skepticism of the supernatural, humanistic.
 - c) Herodianism: worldliness.

These three schools of thought lead to privately reinterpreting the Scriptures which results in heresy.

Clearly this parable illustrates how apostate religion will mingle false doctrine in with true doctrine until the whole body of Christian beliefs is totally corrupted. The end result will be a totally apostate church—The Laodicean church.

1 Cor 5:6

6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?

1 Cor 5:7-8

7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened.

For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

We must protect ourselves and our churches from leaven, by earnestly contending for the truth (Jude 3). If we are not vigilant (1 Pet 5:8) in maintaining purity in doctrine (2 Tim. 4:3; Titus 2:1), we will find the leaven even among ourselves (Acts 20: 28-31).

We should note that leaven also represents sin (1 Cor. 5:8). The parable therefore reveals that there is sin in the church.

The Parable Of The Hid Treasure

Matt 13:44

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.

The field here represents the world. The man who bought the field is the Lord Himself. He sold all that He had in order to buy the field (2 Cor. 8:9; 1 John 4:14; Phil 2:5-8; 1 Pet 1:18-19; John 3:16). The treasure represents scattered Israel. Note that the man hid the treasure in the field. Israel is dispersed throughout the world, scattered among the gentiles. (Jer. 30:11) The man then went and bought the field. This purchase took place on Calvary, where our Lord not only bought us with a price, but He also purchased back His lost creation (John 3:16). When He comes back to receive His purchased possession (Eph. 1:14; Rom 8: 19-23), His “peculiar treasure” (Ex. 19:5) Israel will be reestablished in her God-given land forever. The cost of Israel’s redemption was the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Parable Of The Pearl

Matt 13:45-46

45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:
46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Here we have a Man, “the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim. 2:5). We have a pearl—ONE pearl, the jewel of God, the church of Jesus Christ. We also have a great price, the price God paid for the church—“his own blood” (Acts 20:28). Some facts about the pearl are:

- 1) A pearl has unity. It is one, as is the body of Jesus Christ, the church (1 Cor. 12:13).
- 2) A pearl is formed by layering of concentric rings (accretion). So it is with the church, God adding “to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47).
- 3) A pearl is formed within a living organism (concretion). “So we, being many, are one body IN Christ,” Rom. 12:5. We are “knit together” in the body of Christ (Col. 2:19)
- 4) A pearl is begun by a painful process. It is caused by an irritation, such as a grain of sand. Secretions are produced to cover and isolate the irritant. The church was begun by a painful process: the blood of Jesus was shed to cover the sin of man which irritated God.
- 5) A pearl is the only gem (stone) that is ruined by any kind of division. The “gates of hell shall not prevail against” the Lord’s church (Matt. 16:18). We as Christians cause many divisions within the local body because of our worldly and childish actions. (Psm 133)
- 6) A pearl stays in the mud until taken up. Spiritually, our Lord picked us up out of the miry clay (Psm. 40:2) and set us in heavenly places in Christ Jesus (Eph. 2:6). Physically, He will one day lift us up from this present evil world (Gal. 1:4) and take us bodily to that glorious eternal world.
- 7) A pearl is a favorite gem for the crowns of kings. We Christians are precious stones (1 Peter. 2:5) in the crown of King Jesus, where we will shine “as the stars forever” (Dan. 12:3).

The Parable Of The Net

Matt 13:47-50

47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:

48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.

49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,

50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

The mystery here is ecumenicalism, the integrating of all denominations and “Christian” beliefs under one great big religious umbrella. The net represents the kingdom. The kingdom is now dragging into itself that which does not belong. Just as a fishing net engulfs whatever is in its path as it is dragged along, so it has been with the church as it has moved through history. Thus, we actually find the wicked “among the just”. Church rolls bulge with names that are not “written in heaven” (Luke 10:20).

There may be bad fish in the net with the true believers, but God would have us identify them and separate from them (Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 3:14)..We as a church do not need to compromise. While the current programs established by the ecumenical movement today are bringing record setting numbers of people into the church. The only problem is that many of them that are caught in this ecumenical net are lost.

Finally, in concluding our study, consider the parallels between the Kingdom parables and the 7 churches of Revelation.

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| 1) The Sower | Ephesus: the early church which turned the world upside down. |
| 2) Wheat/Tares | Smyrna: Satan beginning to infiltrate. |
| 3) Mustard Seed | Pergamos: “where Satan’s seat is.” |
| 4) Leaven | Thyatira: Roman Catholicism, the mass, heresy. |
| 5) Hid Treasure | Sardis: reformation. Scattered Israel (hid treasure) is a picture of scattered believers (the reformers) |
| 6) Pearl | Philadelphia: the church which “hast kept my word” |
| 7) The Net | Laodicea: the lukewarm, ecumenical church of good and bad. |

I hope everyone has enjoyed and learned from this study concerning the mysteries of God. Just remember that God expects each and every believer (especially those in leadership) to know and teach this great mysteries. Continue to review the mysteries so that you will continue to be good stewards of the mysteries of God.