

Jesus: No Spin Matthew Chapter Thirteen: Secrets Revealed

personal / group study for use with the message of January 3rd and 4th, 2009

"The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you..." (Matthew 13:11).

The opposition is mounting, but there are still many people who gather around Jesus to hear His teaching. Jesus tells a number of parables, parables make truth understandable. The parables begin with something the listener understands or can see, and illustrates something the listener may not yet understand in God's kingdom. The parables of Jesus conceal the mysteries of God from those who are too lazy or too blind to see, while revealing the truth to those who wish to discover it.

Introduction.

In Matthew chapter 13, there are parables that Jesus speaks to the crowds and there are parables that Jesus speaks to His disciples only. Jesus spoke in parables to reveal truth to those "with ears to hear" and to conceal truth to those who refuse to hear. God's reign in the hearts of men, will influence the whole world! Jesus is nearing the end of His earthly ministry; His teaching becomes more and more pointed. Remember to watch for the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy as you read and study this passage.

Read.

Matthew 13:1-58

The Parable of the Sower

" 1That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. 2Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. 3Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. 4As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. 6But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. 7Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. 8Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. 9He who has ears, let him hear."

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

11He replied, "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. 12Whoever has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.

13This is why I speak to them in parables:

" Though seeing, they do not see;

though hearing, they do not hear or understand. 14In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

" 'You will be ever hearing but never understanding;

you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

15For 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.' 16But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. 17For 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.

18"Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: 19When 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. 20The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. 21But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. 22The 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. 23But 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."

The Parable of the Weeds

24 Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. 26 When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

27 "The owner's servants came to him and said, 'Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?'

28 "An enemy did this," he replied.

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

29 "No," he answered, 'because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.' "

The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Yeast

31 He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. 32 Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."

33 He told them still another parable: "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."

34 Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. 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."

The Parable of the Weeds Explained

36 Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field."

37 He answered, "The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one, 39 and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

40 "As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. 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. 42 They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

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.

45 "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

The Parable of the Net

47 "Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. 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. 49 This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous 50 and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

51 "Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked.
"Yes," they replied.

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."

A Prophet Without Honor

53 When Jesus had finished these parables, he moved on from there. 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. 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? 56 Aren't all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" 57 And they took offense at him.

But Jesus said to them, "Only in his hometown and in his own house is a prophet without honor."

58 And he did not do many miracles there because of their lack of faith."

**All scripture taken from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.*

Questions.

*"And this is my prayer: that your **love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight**, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, **filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.**" *Philippians 1:9-11**

ThinkAboutIt...

1. In the first story three quarters of the seed did not grow. How receptive are you to God's Word?
2. The kingdom of God, His reign in the hearts of men, will grow from a very small beginning to something that will influence the whole world! Are you influencing your little part of the world?

ReflectOnIt...

3. Read through this chapter, take note of each time Jesus says, "the kingdom of heaven is like". What is the kingdom of heaven like? Record your observations?
4. What motivates a follower of Jesus toward a life of discipleship? Duty? Love? Desire for rewards? Explain.
5. In what way do the words from Isaiah describe the people who have come to hear Jesus? (13:14, 15)
6. In the story of the wheat and the weeds, who is responsible for pulling the weeds? What happens to them?
7. When Jesus returned to his home town, the people were amazed by Him! But they rejected Him. Why?

RespondToIt...

8. In Matthew 13:11 these truths are called secrets of the kingdom of heaven. What one secret was revealed to you that has an impact on how you live your life? How have you responded to what has been revealed?
9. What can you do for people who are growing as weeds among wheat? Should you root them out and throw them away? What can you do for people who aren't seeing or hearing or understanding?

Matthew 13:44-46: The treasure hidden in a field and the pearl of great price are examples of how incredibly valuable the kingdom of God is. Jesus gave up everything, even His life, to purchase you so you could be part of the kingdom of heaven.

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