



Go for God!

MYSTERIES OF THE BIBLE SERIES (PART 16)
“Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven!”
Matthew Chapter 13

Once again, a “mystery” in Scripture is a previously hidden truth now divinely revealed. In **Chapter 13** there’s a series of seven parables. The word **parable** means, “*to cast alongside.*” A parable is an ***earthly saying with a heavenly meaning.*** These parables are also known as ***the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.***

- **The order of the parables are as follows:**

- (1) ***The parable of the sower (v1-23);***
- (2) ***The parable of the tare among the wheat (v24-30);***
- (3) ***The parable of the mustard seed (v31-32);***
- (4) ***The parable of leaven (v33-43);***
- (5) ***The parable of hidden treasure (v44);***
- (6) ***The parable of the pearl of great price (v45-46);***
- (7) ***The parable of the dragnet (v47-51).***

- **INSIGHT:** These parables are personal, global, and prophetic regarding the future of the church.

> **Mystery #1- The Parable of the Sower (v1-9, 18-23)**

(v1-9) A “sower” is a farmer going forth casting seed to cultivate and reap a harvest! Notice the four soils – (1) ***Hard ground;*** (2) ***Shallow ground;*** (3) ***Untended ground;*** (4) ***Fertile ground.***

(v18-23) **The mystery of the parable of the sower unveiled:**

- (1) ***The SOWER is the WITNESS;***
- (2) ***The SEED is the WORD OF GOD;***
- (3) ***The SOIL is the HEART.***

(v19) Jesus says, “***When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it.***” Not to understand in the Greek is *mee sunientos*, which means *they choose not to understand, a denial of truth.* The “***wicked one***” is the devil. The “***wayside***” is a hardened pathway that is used to walk through the fields. Multitudes walk through life with a hardened heart towards God, and when Jesus Christ is heard they choose not to allow their hearts to become fertile soil and the devil snatches away the seed and replaces it with sin.

(v20-21) The “***stony places***” speaks of a shallow heart; shallow soil on top of stone. This person hears, is attracted for a while, but when “***tribulation or persecution arises because of the word they stumble (or are offended).***”

- The word ***stumble (offended)*** in Gk. is *skandalizo*, which means to **entrap, i.e. trip up, or entice to sin, apostasy** (Apostasy is generally defined as the determined, willful rejection of Christ and His teachings by a once called Christian believer (Heb 10:26-29; John 15:22).

- The word ***tribulation*** in Gk. is *thlipsis*, which is ***pressure***, whether it is peer pressure, worldly or fleshly pressure. People will also walk away from Christ due to ***persecution.*** Notice the seed went in but has ***no root.***

- We are told in **Ephesians 3:17-19** - *that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

(v22) Over time this heart returns to the ways of the world. Thorns that choke out the Word of God are represented as:

(1) The *cares of this world* - 1 John 2:15-17 says, *Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life — is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.*

(2) The *deceitfulness of riches* - 1 Timothy 6:10- *For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. Jesus says that these become unfruitful (read John 15:1-8).*

- It is possible to "believe" and yet not be saved (John 2:23-25). Unless there is fruit in the life, there is not saving faith in the heart."

(v23) We have seen the *hardened heart, the shallow heart, and the worldly heart. Let's discover the fruitful heart! The fruitful heart is fertile soil for the Word of God. Your heart has been broken up by the love of Jesus Christ, you desire to learn His Word, and you now live according to His will. What is this fruit that we are to produce a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty?*

(1) Fruit is the *test of true salvation* (Matt 7:16);

(2) Fruit *includes holiness* (Rom 6:22);

(3) Fruit reveals *Christian character* (Gal 5:22-23);

(4) Fruit is *good works* (Col 1:10);

(5) Fruit is *winning others to Christ* (Rom 1:13);

(6) Fruit is *sharing what we have* (Rom 15:25-28);

(7) Fruit is *praising God* (Heb 13:15).

> Mystery #2 - The Parable of the Tares Among the Wheat (v24-30)

Notice "*The kingdom of heaven is like*" – Like what? Observe the parable:

(1) A farmer sow good seed (wheat) in his field;

(2) An enemy under the cover of darkness sows' tares, he purposely wants to destroy the crop. The enemy wants everything to be gathered and burned. Tares look exactly like wheat until the wheat ripens and is ready for harvest.

(3) Notice in v25 that this subversive event took place "*while men slept.*" Let's read the following exhortations in Scripture to be "watchful" -Matt 26:41(re: temptation); Acts 20:29-31 (re: wolves); 1 Thess. 5:1-11 (re: 2nd coming).

(4) The owner is waiting for the evidence of a ripe harvest to the last stalk, then the rapture will take place and judgment will follow.

- **The explanation of this parable is found in verses 36-43 – Recognize that the tares are the sons of the wicked one. We must beware of Satan's counterfeits:**

(1) Satan has counterfeit Christians (2 Cor. 11:26)

(2) who believe a counterfeit Gospel (Gal. 1:6-9).

(3) Satan encourages counterfeit righteousness (Rom 10:1-3), and even

(4) has a counterfeit church (Rev. 2:90). At the end of the age,

(5) he will produce a counterfeit Christ (2 Thess. 2:1-12). Observe that those who *offend God and practice lawlessness* (1 Cor. 6:9-11; Gal. 5:19-21; 2 Thess. 1:1-10; Rev. 20:11-15) will be cast into the *furnace of fire*; there will be *wailing and gnashing of teeth*.

> Mystery #3 - The Parable of the Mustard Seed (v31-32)

In this parable the *kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed*, that seed represents Christ. The tree itself represents Christendom into the future, but within the tree birds will lodge, these birds represent evil. This is understood through a theological term known as “expositional constancy” meaning the birds are part of the “wicked one” according to the first parable in verses 4 and 19 (that is *the parable of the sower*); which means we would maintain the birds to be wicked in this parable. Notice the birds are “nesting” in the tree; Christianity has become a comfortable place for other religions, cults, ideologies (evolution, humanism, etc.) and compromised beliefs.

> Mystery #4 - The Parable of Leaven (v33)

- Throughout the Bible leaven is used as a symbol of evil, it occurs 98 times.

- Jesus used leaven to picture *hypocrisy* (Luke 12:1), *false teaching* (Matt. 16:6-12), and *worldly compromise* (Matt. 22:16-21).

- Paul used leaven to picture *carnality in the church* (1 Cor. 5:7-8) as well as *false doctrine* (Gal. 5:9). A small amount of leaven is placed in the three measures of meal, the church, and over time the entire church has been corrupted. We find the following warnings in 2 Timothy 4:1-5 (*not able to endure sound doctrine*); 2 Thess. 2:1-11 (*the falling away, apostasy*); Rev. 3:14-22 (*Church of Laodicea, “lukewarm”*).

(v34-35) Matthew quotes Psalm 78:2 on why Jesus speaks in parables.

> Mystery #5 - The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (v44)

It was common practice for people in those days to take their treasures and bury them in their field for safe keeping. The *field* is the world, the *treasure* is Israel according to Exodus 19:5 - *Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people; for all the earth is Mine.* (Also Deut. 7:6; Ps. 135:4). The man is the Lord Jesus who gave everything to purchase the field (the world) to get the treasure (Israel).

- God the Father gave all! - John 3:16 - *For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.*

- Jesus gave all! - John 15:13 - *Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.* Why? For the joy of saving people/Israel from their sins and giving them a brand-new life! - Hebrews 12:1-2 - *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

> Mystery #6 - The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price (v45-46)

- Key phrase: *The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price sold all that he had and bought it.* - The merchant is Jesus and the pearl is the church. Jesus gave all for this pearl!

- A pearl is formed when a grain of sand (or other irritating substance) gets stuck between the oyster's mantle and shell, the oyster secrets nacre. This shiny substance coats the grain of sand, and over the years, forms a lustrous pearl. Listen to this great analogy as put forth by J. Vernon McGee, “Christ came to this earth as the merchant-man. He saw man in sin, and He

took man's sin and bore it in His own body. Our sin was an intrusion upon Him—it was that foreign matter. And He was made sin for us. As someone has put it, I got into the heart of Christ by a spear wound. Christ “. . .*was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities . . .*” (Isa. 53:5). Notice Christ's response to the sinner. He puts around us His own righteousness. He covers us with His own white robe of righteousness. “. . .*we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus . . .*” (Eph 2:10).”

> **Mystery #7 - The Parable of the Dragnet (v47-52)**

(v47-51) The net is cast into the sea of humanity and collects both *good and bad fish*. The good are those who ask Jesus Christ to be their Lord and Savior, in John 5:26-30 - *For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man. Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation. “The wicked are separated from the just”*

- Who are the just? Romans 5:1-2 -*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

- Matthew 24:1-31 tells us when the *end of the age* will come; and Matthew 25:31-46 explains a separating of *sheep and goats*. The bad fish, goats, and tares are cast into the lake of fire (hell) (Rev.19:20; 20:10, 14; 21:8).

(v52) *Every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven (disciples of Christ) is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old.* The New Covenant was concealed in the Old Covenant and the Old Covenant was revealed in the New Covenant. To learn the mysteries of the Bible we must study the whole Bible; and preach the whole Word to the whole world! AMEN!