

KINGDOM REMINDERS

Mt.13
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. Mt.13:1-3a, “And he spake many things unto them in parables,” wherein contained “kingdom reminders.”
 - a. “Parable”: “an illustration drawn from natural things to instruct in spiritual things.”
 - b. Literally, “to place beside.” To place beside in order to compare. It is the placing of a narrative describing an ordinary event in natural life beside an implied spiritual narrative for the purpose of illustrating the spiritual.
2. In Mt.13 Jesus not only taught a series of parables pertaining to the kingdom, which was yet in the future at that time, but he taught why he taught in parables. (That kingdom now exists)
 - a. Mt.13:34,35; Cf. Psa.49:3,4; 78:1,2. He began to veil his teaching in parables.
 - b. Mt.13:10-15.
 - (1) V.10: The question.
 - (2) Vv.11-13: The answer.
 - (3) Vv.13,14: Why do they seeing see not or not perceive? Hear and hear not or not understand?
 - (4) V.15: The answer. They don’t have eyes to see, nor ears to understand! They are willfully ignorant! 2Pet.3:5; Jno.5:39,40. They refused to see and hear and understand the plain truth, and even sought to hinder it being taught. Therefore by parables it was hidden from them to prevent their hindering it.
3. By this method of teaching:
 - a. Jesus veiled the truth from those who did not want it and refused to see and accept it, even tried to hinder it.
 - b. He, on the other hand, unveiled it to those who did want the truth and would accept it.
 - c. His reason for doing so is not arbitrary, but in accordance with a universal law (Vv.11,12), which is applied to these willful unbelievers (Vv.13-15).
 - d. Remember: He explained some of his parables to his disciples. None to his enemies.
4. In this series of parables in Mt.13 he often said, “The kingdom of heaven is like...” and then explained what it is like.

5. Thus we refer to this lesson as “Kingdom Reminders” because we are going to take note of what each parable says the kingdom is like.

II. DISCUSSION

A. THE PARABLE OF THE SOILS, VV.3-9,18-23.

1. As the sower went forth to sow, some seeds:
 - a. Fell by the wayside: those whose heart had been made insensible or somewhat seared; this one hears, but heeds nothing.
 - b. Fell upon stony places: represents those deficient in tenacity of purpose ; short-lived enthusiasm; this one heeds, but is checked by external influences.
 - c. Fell among thorns: those who begin well, but afterwards permit worldly cares to gain the mastery; this one heeds, but is checked by internally influences.
 - d. Fell into good ground: these heed and hold fast till the harvest; till the end.
 - e. In this parable we see something of the connection of the word:
 - (1) With the unthinking soul.
 - (2) With the sentimentally interested soul.
 - (3) With the world-divided or the worldly-influenced soul.
 - (4) With the true-hearted soul.
2. These represent different types of hearers with different types of attitudes toward the word, the seed of the kingdom.
3. Thus we learn that not everyone will be interested in the gospel.
 - a. Some who are receptive initially will not maintain their devotion. They will let things and others unduly influence them and pull them away.
 - b. Some will fall away out of weakness.
 - c. Others will succumb to worldly distraction and the deceitfulness of riches.
 - d. Then there are the “faithful few” who will grow, thrive, and endure, bringing forth much fruit.
 - (1) Fruit bearing is a necessity, Jno.15:1-8.
 - (2) Fruit bearing is rewarded. Cf. Heb.6:10.
4. The latter ones will keep on sowing the seed.
5. Christianity needs three things.
 - a. A sower. This is our responsibility. We are the sowers of the seed. We must made the effort!
 - b. Good seed, the true gospel – the one gospel of Christ. Cf. Gal.1:6-12; Mk.16:15,16.

- c. Honest hearers. Unbiased hearers. Obviously, not all are willing to hear.

B. THE PARABLE OF THE TARES, VV.24-30,37-43.

1. Take note that the field where the seed is sown is the “world,” not the church! V.38a. This includes more than the church, the saved, the obedient servants of the Lord.
2. The “good seed are the children of the kingdom” – those who willingly serve the Lord. V.38b.
3. The “tares are the children of the wicked one” – those who do not choose to serve the Lord, but are, nevertheless subject to him as the reigning King. V.38c.
 - a. Cf. Parable of The Pounds, Lk.19:11-27.
 - (1) Vv.11-13, his servants.
 - (2) Vv.15-26, willing servants.
 - (3) Vv.14,27, unwilling servants.
4. The “harvest is the end of the world” – the final judgment day. V.39
5. The “tares” which the enemy sowed and the “wheat,” which the Son of man sowed (V.37), grow together in the world, which is the realm of the Son of man’s, reign until the harvest at which time they shall be separated. V.30.
6. Thus we are reminded that:
 - a. God is not going to remove all of the evil from the world. Good and evil are in the world and will continue to be till the end of time on earth; we must deal with it; live with it.
 - b. We must be ready to accept that our aim of godly devotion will be undertaken in adverse surroundings.
 - c. The people of God on earth in their holy lives will not supplant all of the world’s ungodliness.
 - d. The continuing presence of evil in the world does not mean that God has failed. For as the text says he will destroy the evil ones, those that offend, and that do iniquity, at the time of the harvest at the end of the world, or at the final judgment, but not until them! (Refutes the idea of both Post and Premillennialism.
 - e. Until then, it remains our job to be faithful and zealous in the cause of Christ, and remain holy in the midst of unholiness.
7. This parable and its explanation are sometimes urged as an argument against church discipline – this is clearly erroneous.
 - a. The field is not the church, but the world.
 - b. The harvest is the final judgment.
 - c. Kingdom here represents the Lord’s rule over all the world, not just the church. Remember the Parable of the Pounds, Lk.19. See also Ac.17:30,31.

- d. This is one place where the word “kingdom” and the word “church” are not used interchangeably.

C. THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED, VV.31,32.

(Different from that known to us; this becomes a tree in time; not an annual plant or vegetable, which is always small!

1. Don't be deceived by appearances. There is great strength and potential in even the smallest of seeds.
2. The gospel, the seed of the kingdom, may seem a despised, weak and impotent power since it preaches a crucified Savior, and a turning of the other cheek, rather than personal revenge. Cf. Mt.5:38,39; Rom.12:17-21; 1Pet.3:21-23. But it is God's power to save when faithfully preached and believed. Rom.1:14-17; Gal.1:6-9; Mt.7:21-23; 2Th.2:10-12.
3. Therefore, the kingdom will prosper and grow strong. We simply need to maintain our confidence in his promise.
4. This parable in setting forth the smallness of the beginning of the kingdom and the magnitude of its growth emphasizes three things:
 - a. The apparent insignificance of its beginning. Started with only a few – 3,000!
 - b. The wonderful extent of its expansion – its growth. Grew by the thousands in a short time; continues to grow.
 - c. The necessary condition of its expansion and growth – it requires that the seed must be committed to the soil, which is the human heart.

D. THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN, V.33.

1. You can't always see how things work. cf. Lk.17:20,21. See Rom.14:17.
 - a. You can see the results of some things working even when you can't see them working: Electricity, wind, etc.
2. So it is with yeast. Place it in the dough and it will surely influence the whole. You can't see it work or how it works. But you see the results of its work – also you can taste it.
3. The work of the kingdom of heaven is not always as visible as we would like it to be, either in an individual or in a community
4. But, rest assured, the gospel will influence this world, silently perhaps, but certainly.
5. So don't give up just because you don't always see immediate results. May see results years later. Cf. Gal.6:9; Example: Marzelle and R.G. Mc Bryde
6. This parable makes us aware of the power, the quickness, quietness, thoroughness and sureness with which the seed of

the kingdom, the gospel of Christ, diffuses itself through human society.

E. THE PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE, V.44.

1. Some folks may not be diligently searching for the truth of the gospel, but will appreciate it when they find it, and will even sacrifice all they have for it.
2. Therefore, we must keep on trying. Keep on sowing the seed. You never know who will be receptive.
3. No doubt some folk sometimes find the truth quiet unexpectedly. I did when I married my wife!

F. THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL MERCHANT, VV.45,46.

1. Some people will come looking and searching for the truth of the gospel. Most of the time it is found only after a diligent and perhaps a prolonged search.
2. This type will not be satisfied until they have found it. When they do they readily recognize its great value.
3. When this person finds it, he will pay whatever price is necessary to buy it. cf. Prov.23:23.
4. How refreshing and how enjoyable it is to find those who are searching for the truth. Their search, of course, does not relieve us of the need to always be seeking such searchers.
5. Every now and then it is easy to teach some one the truth of the gospel. Our job is to try and find them! Some are looking for it! Some are out there!

G. THE PARABLE OF THE CAST NET, VV.47-50.

1. There will always be evil among the good. The parable of the tares emphasized the waiting; this one, the careful sorting.
2. As much as we would like to think that everyone in the church is true to the Lord; there will be some who will be lost on the Day of Judgment.
3. As much as we hate and despise it, we should not be naïve about hypocrisy. Some people are just not what they seem.
4. But God knows the truth. He will judge righteously.
5. So we must not be disheartened.

III. CONCLUSION

1. For all who are zealously focused upon the work of God in the local church, these are invaluable reminders and practical lessons.
2. They remind us that our labor is not in vain.
3. They help us to forge ahead even when we are frustrated.
4. They keep before our minds that, though today's battle may not go our way, we will stand victorious with our God when the war finally ends. cf. Gal.6:9.

5. **In these kingdom reminders:**
 - a. **Its planting principles are given.**
 - b. **Its developments are detailed.**
 - c. **Its final victory is affirmed.**

6. In the parable of:
 - a. The Sower – the need to sow; what to sow; different kinds of soil, hearers.
 - b. The Tares – good and bad exist together till final judgment; a final day of accounting and separation.
 - c. The mustard seed – small beginning, great growth, necessary condition for its growth – seed committed to the soil.
 - d. The leaven – it's working not always visible, nor immediate, but always certain.
 - e. The hidden treasure – truth, even found unexpectedly, is highly appreciated and valued.
 - f. The pearl merchant – same as always searching for the truth and will pay the price for it.
 - g. The cast net – there will always be evil among the good as long as the earth stands; not all are what they seem to be or claim to be; but there is coming a great day of separation.