

I. The King is revealed (1-3)

II. The Kingdom is revealed (4-10)

III. The Opposition to the King (11-13)

A. The Antagonism of the Jews (11-12) Narrative

Matthew 13

B. The Parables of Jesus (13) Teaching

1. The parable of the Sower and the Seed (13:1-23) Why do people respond in different ways to the King and the Kingdom?

- The disciples expected that the true Messiah would receive a dramatic reception among Israel's leaders and his coming would produce dramatic results in changing the social political situation. This was not happening with Jesus. The question was, Why? The parables address this perplexing question - If Jesus was the Messiah, why were the responses to him so varied?

a. The Parable stated (13:1-9)

“¹ On that day Jesus went out of the house, and was sitting by the sea. ² And great multitudes gathered to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole multitude was standing on the beach.

³ And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, ‘Behold, the sower went out to sow; ⁴ and as he sowed, some {seeds} fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. ⁵ And others fell upon the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. ⁶ But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. ⁷ And others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. ⁸ And others fell on the good soil, and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. ⁹ He who has ears, let him hear.’

- The use of parables does not start in Jesus' ministry until after the Jews reject his clear teaching.

b. The Purpose of the Parables (13:10-17)

¹⁰ And the disciples came and said to Him, ‘Why do You speak to them in parables?’ ¹¹ And He answered and said to them, ‘To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. ¹² For whoever has, to him shall {more} be given, and he shall have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. ¹³ Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ¹⁴ And in their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, ‘*You will keep on*

hearing, but will not understand; And you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; 15 For the heart of this people has become dull, And with their ears they scarcely hear, And they have closed their eyes Lest they should see with their eyes, And hear with their ears, And understand with their heart and return, And I should heal them.’ 16 But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. 17 For truly I say to you, that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see {it}; and to hear what you hear, and did not hear {it}.

- The Pharisees had equated their oral traditions (which forbade the harvesting of grain on the Sabbath) with the will of God for everyone.
- The quote from Isa.6 comes from a context where Isaiah was asked to preach a message of judgment on those who were not willing to hear.
- Verse 12 is explained by the Isaiah quote. Those who respond to the signs and miracles with faith will receive more teaching. Those who do not will lose the significance of the little they had.

c. The Parable explained (13:18-23)

18 ‘Hear then the parable of the sower. 19 When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, the evil {one} comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road. 20 And the one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word, and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no {firm} root in himself, but is {only} temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. 22 And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world, and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. 23 And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit, and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.’

- The good news of the gospel will be rejected by most people.

2. The Parables of the Kingdom (13:24-50)

a. The Parable of the Wheat and Weeds (13:24-30)

24 He presented another parable to them, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 But while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares also among the wheat, and went away. 26 But when the wheat sprang up and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. 27 And the slaves of the landowner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’ 28 And he said to them, ‘An enemy has done this!’ And the slaves said to him, ‘Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?’ 29 But he said, ‘No; lest while you are

gathering up the tares, you may root up the wheat with them. 30 Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, ‘First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.’

- People with genuine faith and people with a false profession of faith will exist together between Christ’s two Advents.

b. The Parable of the Mustard Seed (13:31-32).

31 He presented another parable to them, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field; 32 and this is smaller than all {other} seeds; but when it is full grown, it is larger than the garden plants, and becomes a tree, so that *the birds of the air come and nest in its branches.*’

- Christendom, including believers and unbelievers, will grow rapidly from a small beginning.

c. The Parable of the Leaven (13:33)

33 He spoke another parable to them, ‘The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three pecks of meal, until it was all leavened.’

34 All these things Jesus spoke to the multitudes in parables, and He did not speak to them without a parable, 35 so that what was spoken through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, ‘*I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden since the foundation of the world.*’

- The influence of the kingdom will be hard to detect except by looking at the resulting fruit in a life or culture.
- Its influence will effect every area of life.
- The quotation from Ps.78 comes from a Psalm of judgment against those who did not have an ear to hear the Word of God. I Cor.14:20-22 presents a similar situation where “tongues” (uninterpreted) constitutes a judgment on the early church.

d. The Parable of the Wheat and Weeds Explained (13:36-43)

36 Then He left the multitudes, and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, ‘Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field.’ 37 And He answered and said, ‘The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, 38 and the field is the world; and {as for} the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil {one;}; 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. 40 Therefore just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. 41 The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire; in that place

there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then *the righteous will shine forth as the sun* in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.

- The Pharisees had equated their oral traditions (which forbade the harvesting of grain on the Sabbath) with the will of God for everyone.

e. The Parable of the Hidden Treasure (13:44)

⁴⁴ ‘The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure hidden in the field, which a man found and hid; and from joy over it he goes and sells all that he has, and buys that field.

- Christ came to purchase (redeem) Israel, God’s treasured possession.

f. The Parable of the Pearl (13:45-46)

⁴⁵ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking fine pearls, ⁴⁶ and upon finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

- Christ gave His life to provide redemption for the church.
- This parable describes two truths - 1) What Christ did to purchase our redemption, 2) What we should do in repenting and following Christ.

g. The Parable of the Net (13:47-50)

⁴⁷ Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet cast into the sea, and gathering {fish} of every kind; ⁴⁸ and when it was filled, they drew it up on the beach; and they sat down, and gathered the good {fish} into containers, but the bad they threw away. ⁴⁹ So it will be at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the righteous, ⁵⁰ and will cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

- Angels will separate the wicked from the righteous when Christ comes.
- The church will be made up of many, who falsely profess faith in Christ.
- The purification of the church will not take place until the judgment.

3. The Responsibility of those who Understand the Parable of the Householder (13:51-52)

⁵¹ ‘Have you understood all these things?’ They said to Him, ‘Yes.’ ⁵² And He said to them, ‘Therefore every scribe who has become a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a head of a household, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old.’

- Jesus (the scribe of the Kingdom) brings teaching that is a reminder of accepted truths and also some new concepts.
- Christianity has its roots in the Old Testament but it does not echo the theology of the Old Testament. It builds on it.

4. Conclusion to the Parables, continuation of ministry (13:53-58)

53 And it came about that when Jesus had finished these parables, He departed from there.

54 And coming to His home town He {began} teaching them in their synagogue, so that they became astonished, and said, 'Where {did} this man {get} this wisdom, and {these} miraculous powers? 55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then {did} this man {get} all these things?' 57 And they took offense at Him. But Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honor except in his home town, and in his {own} household.' 58 And He did not do many miracles there because of their unbelief."

- Jesus was never accepted in His hometown by those who grew up with him.

Insights and Lessons from this chapter

- In this chapter we see God's Spirit removing clear teaching from those who have lost their ear to hear God. The move seems to have two intents: 1) to mock the hard hearts, 2) to continue teaching the enlightened while not adding more condemnation to the dull of hearing.
- It is clear that the church age in which we live will see a very mixed bag with respect to the Kingdom community. We must be patient and forbearing with the church in light of this fact.
- It is also clear that most people will not respond in a fruitful way to the teaching of the Kingdom. This should not discourage us in that it is predicted.