

The Key To The Bible

The Mysteries of the Bible Revealed

The 7 Kingdom Parables of Matthew 13

UNLOCKING THE KEY TO THE BIBLE

The Kingdom Parables of Matthew 13

Jesus plainly states that the parables of Matthew 13 are "*given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven*" (Matthew 13:11). He begins each parable by saying, "*The kingdom of heaven is like unto,*" and then He shares a glimpse into the realm of His kingdom by giving seven parables in order to enable the believer to understand what "*the kingdom of heaven*" is.

These seven parables are a key unlocking the "*mysteries of the kingdom.*" A correct definition of these parables will supply an understanding of what Christ is accomplishing in the world today and what His intention for the future is.

These parables cannot refer to "*Heaven,*" our eternal home, nor can they refer to the "*Church*" of which Christ is the Head. We will see in this study that New Testament Scriptures conclusively refute both of these definitions.

The believer should never be satisfied with these explanations, but rather search for a correct definition, or there will be little in Scripture that he will adequately understand.

The dictionary can help to understand what a "*kingdom*" is. It states that a "*kingdom is a royal authority, a sovereign power, a rule, a dominion.*" The term "*kingdom*" refers mainly, not to territory, but, rather to authority...not to locality, but to sovereignty. Thus, "*the kingdom of heaven*" is when and where Christ rules and reigns. It is Christ's sovereignty and authority. It is not necessarily a "*place,*" but, rather, it is Christ's dominion over those who submit (willingly) to Him.

An illustration of this concept is the nation of France. France was once a "*kingdom,*" however; today it is a "*republic.*" Yet there has been no territorial change. The country is the same and it is inhabited by the same people, but it is no longer a "*kingdom*" for the simple reason that it no longer acknowledges the sovereign authority of any king! Instead of a king, it is governed by the public, therefore is a "*republic.*" The public is the rulers!

Keep in mind that the term "*kingdom*" is not a localized sphere of territory, but, rather, it speaks of the sovereignty of a ruler!

Matthew 13 opens with the words, "*The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside.*" This statement clearly looks back to the preceding chapter, where the steps in Israel's rejection of their King, Jesus Christ, is traced for us.

The 12th chapter of Matthew begins with the Pharisees challenging the Disciples of Christ because they "*plucked ears of corn on the Sabbath day,*" this is followed by the Lord's vindication of His disciples. Next we are told, "***Then*** the Pharisees went out, and held a council against Him, how they might destroy Him" (verse 14). This is the **first** time we read of anything like this in Matthew's Gospel.

Next, in verses 22-24, we are told, "***then*** was brought unto Him one possessed with a demon, blind, and dumb, and He healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw." This is the most remarkable miracle Jesus performed up to this point in His ministry. Then, we are told, "*all the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the Son of David?*" - that is, the Messiah Himself!

Following this we are told, "*But when the Pharisees heard it, they said. This fellow doth not cast out demons, but by Beelzebub the prince of demons.*" Then, Jesus pronounces the sentence upon them for the **unpardonable sin**.

Next we are told, "***Then*** certain of the Scribes and Pharisees answered, Master, we would see a sign from Thee" (verse 38). Christ's response was that the only sign which would be given to that evil and unfaithful generation would be the "*sign of the prophet,*" that is, "*as Jonah was three days in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days in the heart of the earth*" (verses 39-40).

Following this, Jesus solemnly pronounced the coming judgment upon that wicked generation:

Matthew 12:43-45, "*When an unclean spirit goes out of a man, he goes through dry places, seeking rest, and finds none. Then he says, 'I will return to my house from which I came.' And when he comes, he finds it empty, swept, and put in order. Then he goes and takes with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. So shall it also be with this wicked generation.*"

The twelfth chapter closes by telling us that while Christ yet talked, one said unto Him, "*Behold Thy mother and Thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with Thee.*" Jesus' reply was, "*Who is My mother? and who are My brethren?*" Then He stretched forth His hand toward His followers and said, "*Behold My mother and My brethren! For **whosoever shall do the will of My Father** which is in heaven, the same is My brother and sister, and mother.*"

NOW, the opening words of chapter 13 supplies the first key in understanding what follows . . . "*The **same** day...*"

The same day - the Pharisees had taken council to destroy Jesus! *The same day* - Christ warns them, for the first time, of the unpardonable sin - rejecting Him!

The same day - Christ severs fleshly ties that united Him to the Jews and declares that henceforth He would be united to His followers by a *spiritual* bond!

THAT SAME DAY, Christ teaches for the *first* time, the meaning of His "kingdom." Matthew 12 makes known the cause that led up to His teaching on chapter 13 . . . that cause being, Israel's rejection of their King, and His rejection of them.

Even Jesus' action of "going out of the house and setting by the seaside" speaks of God, temporarily, turning away from the Jews and turning unto the Gentiles.

The "**house**" is a place of ordered relationship and natural ties. The Jewish nation is referred to as "*the house of Israel*." Jesus now, leaves and goes "*out of the house*." Symbolically, it was a confirmation of His words at the close of chapter 12, the link which bound Him to the Jews was now severed, and He takes His place by the "*seaside*." Both the Old and New Testaments refer to "*waters*" as being symbolical of "*multitudes and nations*." (Revelation 17:15 and Daniel 7:1-2)

NOW, with all this being deeply symbolic, Jesus speaks many things unto them "*in parables!*" **THIS IS THE VERY FIRST TIME JESUS TEACHES IN PARABLES!** Up to this time Jesus' message was plain, clear, direct and easily understandable.

Now, after the happenings of chapter 12, Christ offers Himself - and His kingdom - to "*whosoever shall do the will of My Father which is in heaven*." He had offered Himself and His kingdom to the people of Israel. His message was unmistakable. He had come as the King of Israel, to restore the Kingdom of David. The first 12 chapters of Matthew are a graphic portrayal of this Kingly offer, ending, in chapter 12, with Israel's rejection of Jesus as their Messiah.

Jesus begins, then, to teach in "*parables*." For the **first time**, Jesus clothes His message in deep mystery! His disciples are confused and come to Him in amazement and ask, "*Why speakest Thou unto them in parables?*" (verse 10)

Jesus' amazing answer, "*Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom . . . but to them it is not given.*"

JESUS IS ABOUT TO REVEAL A NEW TRUTH . . . something hidden up until this time. This truth would be revealed **only to His followers**. This new revelation Jesus calls "*the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven*."

The truth concerning the "*kingdom of heaven*," or "*the kingdom of God*," [these two phrases are used interchangeably in Scripture] was no "*mystery*" to the Old Testament saints. All the writers of the Old Testament, beginning with Moses and ending with Malachi, had abundantly prophesied it. They fully expected that when Messiah came He would set up this "*kingdom*."

The time will come, of course, when Christ will indeed set up His literal kingdom on earth, however, during this present dispensation, Christ's kingdom is a *spiritual* kingdom, Christ's rule and reign within the believer's heart.

Even Jesus' disciples expected this and asked Him repeatedly about it, even after the resurrection they asked again, "Lord, will You at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel?" (Acts 1:6)

The reason for all this misunderstanding was their ignorance concerning the "mystery form" of the kingdom. They failed to realize that at Jesus' first coming, He would be rejected and go back to heaven, to return to earth at a later time to set up a *literal* kingdom on earth.

However, between the first coming of Christ and His second coming lay an age of mystery when His kingdom would be in the hearts and lives of those who would do His Father's will!

This intervening age was not seen or understood by the prophets of old, nor by the disciples. It was a mystery that God did not see fit to reveal until after the rejection of the King. Remember the men on the Road to Emmaus whom Jesus walked with after He rose from the dead? They did not recognize Him as they walked together. Luke 24:18-21 states, "One of them, named Cleopas, asked Him, 'Are you the only one living in Jerusalem who doesn't know the things that have happened there in these days?' 'What things?' He [Jesus] asked. About Jesus of Nazareth,' they replied. 'He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people. The chief priests and our rulers handed Him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified Him, but we had hoped that He was the one who was going to redeem Israel.'"

JESUS GIVES SEVEN PARABLES IN MATTHEW 13 EXPLAINING THE KINGDOM

1. The parable of the sower
2. The parable of the tares
3. The parable of the mustered seed
4. The parable of the leaven
5. The parable of the hid treasure
6. The parable of the precious pearl
7. The parable of the dragnet

It is important that one understands the "*Triple Approach*" in order to grasp the meaning of Christ's parables. This simply means that Scripture often has (1) A primary interpretation, (2) A practical application, and (3) A prophetic revelation.

In the study of the parables of Matthew 13, Jesus reveals (1) God's plan for Israel and the Church - *The primary interpretation*, (2) God's kingdom in the believer's life - *The practical application*, and (3) The prophetic view of God's plan, or *The prophetic revelation*.

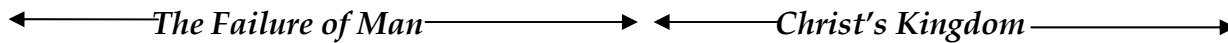
The seven links of understanding the kingdom of heaven



Jesus speaking to the multitude

Jesus speaking to His Disciples

Christ's Kingdom established and Satan's hindrance		Difficulties faced Throughout the Church Age		Christ's purpose In establishing His Kingdom		<i>The end!</i>
SOWER	TARES	MUSTARD	LEAVEN	TREASURE	PEARL	FISH NET
Planting of Early Church	Satan's Counterfeit	Great growth – but <i>outward</i> corruption	Rise of Babylonism - <i>inward</i> corruption	<i>Israel</i>	<i>Church</i>	The final destiny of good and evil
				Christ reveals the hidden		



Our main concern in this present series of studies is "*Practical Application*" of Christ's Kingdom Parables -- how they are to be applied to our daily life! What do they mean to me personally?