

CHAPTER FIVE - PART THREE

MATTHEW PARABLES

The mysteries of the kingdom (**Matthew 13:11; Ephesians 1:9; 3:3-6; 5:25-32; Colossians 1:26, 27; 1 Corinthians 2:7**), which is "the offer of the kingdom of the heavens taken from Israel and given to the Church," were presented in parables by Jesus Christ during His ministry. The definition of a parable is *a truth placed alongside a previously revealed truth in order to give additional explanation; a symbolic narrative placed alongside a truth*. These mysteries were hidden from the Old Testament prophets, but were revealed in the New Testament to the Church.

These mysteries, presented in parables, are truths that have its roots in the Old Testament from the beginning, and were unveiled in the New Testament. The Jews did not understand them because their eyes and ears were closed; their hearts were dull. These mysteries however, were understood by the Church, who did not reject the Word of the kingdom but who did indeed "*bear the fruits thereof*" — that is, until Satan attacked, as he sought to subvert the Word of the kingdom and prevent Christians from understanding the message.

The seven parables of **Matthew** chapter **thirteen** concern the removal of the offer of the kingdom of the heavens from Israel (because of their unbelief, disobedience and unfruitful state) and given to the "one new man in Christ," i.e. the Church, those *bearing the fruits thereof*.

The first four parables cover the entire present dispensation, in relation to the offer of the Word of the Kingdom and fruit-bearing amongst Christians. The first parable, Parable of the Sower, lays the foundation in regards to the Word of the kingdom and fruit-bearing, with the following parables presenting additional explanation. The fourth parable provides a brief explanation of the final condition of the Church, a condition reflecting a completely leavened state (a state of deterioration throughout the Church). Conditions of the Church at the end of this present dispensation are described in **Revelation 3:17** as "*wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked*."

The Word of the kingdom, taught by Jesus Himself and the first century

Church at the beginning of the dispensation, will be completely omitted within the Church at the end of the dispensation. Jesus prophesied in **Luke 18:8** that the Son of Man will not find "the faith" being taught in the Church at the time of His return. The work of the leaven throughout the age initiated by Satan would have gradually brought about this change. Today, we are witnesses to this leavened state of the Church --- which means that this present dispensation is near its close.

The last three parables cover the time period from the removal of the Church to the beginning of the Kingdom Age. God resumes His dealings with the nation of Israel on the earth while the Church is in the heavens.

The remaining ten parables in the Book of **Matthew** concern the *qualification* needed to gain a position of rulership in the kingdom of the heavens. It covers the rapture of all Christians to heaven, the Judgment seat of Christ, the determinations of rewards or loss for every Christian, and the structure of the coming kingdom.

PARABLE OF THE SOWER

On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.

Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.

Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.

And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.

But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!" (Matthew 13:1-9)

The Parable of the Sower, the first of four parables which Christ gave outside of the house of Israel, by the sea (*sea* referring to "Gentiles; Gentile nations"), depicts four types of Christians in response to their hearing of the Word of the Kingdom and their fruit-bearing, *with the kingdom of the heavens in view*. Jesus was revealing in this parable a kingdom that was about to be offered to a people other than Israel (because of their failure to produce fruit), to the new creation "in Christ," about to be realized. The parable of the Sower was given to bring light to the existence of this new creation, i.e. the Church, as the recipient to the kingdom of the heavens with respect to fruit-bearing. God would deal with a different nation with respect to the opportunity of bringing forth fruit for the kingdom (**Matthew 21:43**).

In **Matthew 13:18-23**, Jesus explains the Parable of the Sower:

"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

"The Sower" in this parable is identified as the *Son of Man*, a Messianic title — Jesus Christ. The parable reveals that He has sown Christians ("*the seed of Abraham, the seed of Christ*" and by definition "*seed*")

referring to “child” or “children” of God) in the field, meaning in the world. This is also in line with the second parable, The Parable of the Wheat and Tares, where “good seeds” representing individuals, are again sown by Christ in the field (*the field is the world*) and are identified as the “*sons of the kingdom*” (**Matthew 13:38**).

Therefore, Christ has scattered the “seeds” or Christians all over the world to hear the Word of the kingdom and to bear fruit -- to produce good works concerning this message. However, Christians who have no interest in the Word and have been misled by Christian leaders will not understand the message of the Kingdom. These “seeds” or Christians have fallen by the wayside (“away from the right path” or “way on the other side”). And because they do not understand the message, they will reject it completely. They will allow Satan to devour what was planted in their heart concerning the Word of the kingdom and to destroy it. These are Christians sown by the *wayside*.

Some of these individuals may be involved with a Church serving out of their own self-efforts, producing works of the flesh. They see no need to learn God's Word to maturity, but are kept babes in Christ, preferring to follow the traditions and doctrines of men which have no validity to the Word of God. They are satisfied with their pre-conceived notions; they are blind to the Truth. Without realizing, they are following doctrines of demons and are serving the works of the devil. Sadly, they represent a great percentage of Christians within the Church today.

When Jesus Christ preached the kingdom of the heavens to Israel in their blinded condition, they did not heed the message. Most of the Church, also in its blinded condition, will not heed the message either. Unfortunately, the result is that these “*wayside*” believers are left without any hope for the coming kingdom.

The second type of Christian identified in this parable is the “*stony*” believer. These individuals sown into stony places represent Christians who hear the Word of the kingdom, understand it, and receive it with joy. These are Christians who receive this new-found message with great excitement. But because they have no “root,” are not deeply grounded or knowledgeable in the Word of the kingdom, they cannot stand for long against tribulation or persecution. This is symbolized by the sun’s strong heat that torches down on the seed and it withers away (**Matthew 13:6**).

It is a picture of Satan's attack on Christians who hear and receive the Word of the kingdom.

The Word of the kingdom is a message having to do with Christ and His co-heirs ruling the earth in that coming Day, ruling in the stead of Satan and his angels. Therefore, Satan will do everything in his power to prevent this message from ever being heard and received by Christians. Through other Christians, Satan brings about tribulation or persecution in the life of the one who has joyfully received the message. More than likely, this persecution will come from leaders and friends of the Church, exactly as it was with Israel when the offer of the kingdom was rejected by the Jewish religious leaders. There will be leaders or members of the Church who will discourage others from accepting the kingdom message. They will bring down the message of the kingdom by associating it with error, cultism, etc. And because of the joyful believer's lack of knowledge in the faith, he is overcome and he falls away. Satan will devour these believers through these leaders. This is exactly what the scribes and Pharisees did with the Jews. Jesus called them hypocrites and proclaimed,

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in...Therefore, you will receive greater condemnation."
(Matthew 23:13, 14)

The third type of Christian presented is the "thorny" believer. These Christians, who are sown among thorns, represent individuals who hear the Word of the kingdom and receive it for a while, but because of "*the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches*," they bear no fruit. Eventually, they give up on the Word and fall away completely, being overcome by the enemy.

This "world," one of the three enemies of God (**James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17**), is best translated this "age." The parable of the Sower recorded in **Luke 8:14** adds a third hindrance in respect to fruit-bearing for the kingdom — the "*pleasures of this life*."

If one has the love of this world, he cannot fix his attention and keep it fixed on the Word of the kingdom. He is too busy with the things in the world. Christians are to look from the things of this present world system

unto Jesus (**Hebrews 12:1, 2**). Furthermore, Christians are to keep their eyes fixed on Christ as they endure sufferings (tribulations or persecutions). Christ fixed His attention on “*the joy that was set before Him*” as He “*endured the cross, despising the shame*” (**Hebrews 12:2**). The moment one looks back and strays away from the faith, Satan will use the things in the world in his deceiving efforts to bring about one’s fall.

The fourth type of Christian is identified in this parable as a “*good ground*” believer. These Christians sown into good ground represent individuals who hear the Word of the kingdom, understand it and commit their lives to it, thereby producing fruit. They do not allow *anything* to deter them as they progress toward maturity. These Christians are those who are set apart from the world and its lusts. Their eyes are fixed on the goal out ahead, looking unto Jesus and the coming kingdom. These Christians are the ones who will be successful in their race of the faith, each bringing forth fruit in varying amounts — “*some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.*”

These Christians are the only ones who will be allowed to rule and reign with Christ as co-heirs in that coming Day, occupying positions that commensurate with their fruit-bearing.

PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND THE TARES

Another parable He put forth to them, saying, “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.

But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. So the servant of the owner came and said to him, ‘Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?’

He said to them, ‘An enemy had done this.’ The servants said to him, ‘Do you want us then to go and gather them up?’ But he said, ‘No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them.

Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."
(Matthew 13:24-30)

The parable of the wheat and tares is a continuation of the previous parable, the parable of the Sower, with the central focus being *fruit-bearing* for the kingdom. However, in this parable, it deals strictly with "good ground" believers, the fourth type of Christian in the parable of the Sower. Only the "good seed," the good ground believers, are seen bringing forth fruit in this parable and are viewed as the "wheat," the sons of the kingdom. As a continuation to the previous parable, we now are given additional information that affects fruit-bearing for the kingdom.

In the beginning of the parable, Jesus uses the expression, "*The kingdom of heaven is like...*" to compare one thing with another and could be translated to mean, "The kingdom of heaven has become like..." Jesus reveals in this parable that *while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat*. This parable reveals Satan's attack against good ground believers, seeking to prevent their fruit-bearing by destroying the message of the kingdom. And it is among these Christians whom Satan goes about seeking to counter God's plans through sowing tares, that which resembles wheat though it is not wheat, as Satan will do everything within his power to prevent Christians from bearing fruit.

The "good seed" sown by the Lord throughout the world are referred to as "the sons of the kingdom." Sonship implies rulership and therefore only sons can rule in God's kingdom.

And Satan knows that the requirement for Christians to become "first-born sons of God" and to rule and reign in that future Day is that they must bear fruit for the kingdom. Therefore, in order to stop the fruit-bearing, Satan seeks to deceive the Church by placing "copy-cat" individuals in their midst to destroy the kingdom message from those who are producing fruit, the good ground believers.

Within Satan's deceitful plan, he placed tares, "sons of the wicked one," within the Church to destroy the Word of the kingdom. He first did this same exact thing with Israel and succeeded. Israel failed to bear fruit for

the kingdom. The Jewish religious leaders were directly responsible for the nation's rejection of the Word of the kingdom and their King. They had "*shut up the kingdom of heaven against men*" (**Matthew 23:13**). And again, Satan proceeded to do this very same thing within the Church by using Christian religious leaders to bring about the same outcome.

Satan proceeded with his scheme almost immediately after the "one new man in Christ" was born and the good ground believers were beginning to produce fruit for the kingdom. We see that the *Jews who had believed on Christ* (**John 8:31**), who were acknowledged by Christ to be *Abraham's seed* (**John 8:37**), were also identified, *because of their works*, to be of their *father the devil* (**John 8:44**).

Therefore, we can see in these examples that the tares, the sons of the wicked one, are those within the Church — the saved and not the unsaved. It can be seen occurring throughout Christendom even today. The parable makes clear that the wheat and the tares are both saved individuals, as Jesus gives His servants instructions to leave the tares alone until the final judgment:

The servants said to him, "Do you want us to gather them (tares) up?" But he said, "No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest..." (**Matthew 13:28-30**)

In **Matthew 13:30**, the wheat and the tares are seen being dealt with at the same time and place — at the Judgment seat of Christ. The Lord's judgment with both parties is in light of the same view — to judge their works (fruit-bearing) to determine entrance into or exclusion from the Millennial kingdom.

We see a further explanation of this in **Matthew 13:37-43** as Jesus explains the parable of the tares:

He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Scripture never presents the Lord's judgment with the saved and the unsaved being dealt with at the same time and place. The judgment for the Church will come first after their rapture to heaven. The judgment for the unsaved will not take place until the end of the Millennium, before the Eternal Ages. Therefore, this parable clearly shows that both groups, the wheat and the tares are saved individuals being judged at the end of this age and then separated, *the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; the wheat is gathered into his barn (Matthew 13:30). ...the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father (Matthew 13:43).*

Almost from the very inception of the Church, Satan has done everything in his power to destroy the most important message ever made available by God to man. It is a very sad picture to see immature Christians kept so blinded by the works of Satan and his demons. And a great danger exists for those Christians who have been given the knowledge of the kingdom and are producing fruit. They must be kept on guard at all times, for the moment that they take their eyes away from the goal of the kingdom, Satan is there to snatch them away. And it is a very real possibility for these Christians to quickly fall away solely by allowing the flesh and the things of this world to be the center of their attention.

Then there is one other issue that needs to be addressed about the tares whom Satan has sown within the Church. These tares, who are seeking to stop fruitful Christians from bearing fruit, are to be left alone. Christ affirms that they will be dealt with at the end of this age and He alone will deal with them. Fruitful Christians have no part in judging (condemning) them, in bringing reviling accusations against them, engaging in confrontations or in trying to cast them out. Fruitful Christians are to ignore them and continue bearing fruit for the kingdom, keeping their eyes fixed unto Jesus and the coming kingdom.

PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED

Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, which indeed is the least of all the seeds, but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches." (Matthew 13:31, 32)

The parable of the mustard seed is a continuation of the previous parable, the parable of the wheat and tares, with fruit-bearing remaining the central focus. In the previous parable, Satan seeks to stop the good ground believers from bearing fruit by placing tares in the Church to destroy the message of the kingdom. Then, the parable of the mustard seed adds further commentary revealing the outcome of Satan's actions.

The parable of the mustard seed presents how matters would continue with this unholy activity of the placing of tares within the Church. First, the parable demonstrates the mustard seed germinating and producing a natural growth for a while. It depicts a natural growth of this seed, "*the least of all seeds*," which would result in "*an herb*." When full grown, it would become "*the greatest among herbs*" (a bush), resulting in *fruit-bearing*. But Satan's activity of the placing of tares was for the purpose of replacing the natural growth of the seed with an unnatural growth of the seed, thereby stopping fruit-bearing.

The mustard seed represents the good ground believers, the sons of the kingdom, and their development in fruit-bearing. The mustard seed is seen producing a natural growth for a little while. But shortly after the tares are placed, the mustard seed is seen experiencing an unnatural growth, becoming a "*tree*." The mustard seed is seen developing so abnormally that the "*tree*" allowed "*the birds of the air*," the sons of the wicked one, "*to nest in its branches*." In other words, Christians doing the work of Satan (tares) within the Church are seen deceiving fruit-bearing Christians, resulting in their unfruitfulness; and the tares are so successful that they are able to rest in that which they had produced, satisfied with their accomplishment of their deceitfulness.

The "tares" in this parable can be identified as "*false teachers*." And the matter in which these false teachers were successful in stopping the fruit-

bearing was through the teaching and spreading of “*false doctrine*.” It was accomplished through Satan placing false teachers in the midst of fruit-bearing Christians, leading them away from the Truth of the Word, from the Word of the kingdom.

At the beginning of this dispensation, the first century Church proclaimed the message of the kingdom, the salvation of the soul, throughout Christendom. To counter the true message, Satan placed individuals proclaiming a false message in the midst of those Christians who had received the true message. Over time, the false message took over and did its damaging work. These false teachers responsible for corrupting the true message of the kingdom were Christians, who had, at one time, received the message of the kingdom; but then, at a later time, fell away or “apostatized.” “Apostasy” is the Greek word *apostasia*, meaning “to stand away from” which, in this case, refers to a person standing away from a place which he had previously occupied. Both in the Book of **second Peter**, and the Book of **Jude**, warnings are given concerning these apostates or false teachers.

They are spots and blemishes, carousing in their own deceptions while they feast with you, having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls.

They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children. They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness... (2 Peter 2:13c-15)

Note particularly the word “children” and “gone astray” in verses **fourteen** and **fifteen**. This is an indication that these false teachers are “children of God” and therefore Christians, but they have “*forsaken the right way and gone astray*” meaning they apostatized.

A further identification of these false teachers is recorded in **2 Peter 2:18-20**,

For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error.

While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage.

For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the latter end is worse for them than the beginning.

For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, then having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them.

In verse **twenty**, we see that these Christians had escaped the “pollutions of the world” through the “knowledge [Greek word, *epignosis*, meaning ‘higher knowledge’] of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In other words, they had, at one time, come into a mature knowledge surrounding the Word of the kingdom; but then, they fell away and became false teachers, speaking evil and distorting the truth relative to the Word of the kingdom.

These apostates are seen “walking according to their own lusts” — being carnally minded, not spiritually minded. This type of walk produced an abominable message that sought to destroy the Word of the kingdom, particularly the teachings surrounding Christ’s second return and the Millennial kingdom:

“Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” (2 Peter 3:4)

The question in **2 Peter 3:4** poses a state of unbelief, having to do with denying Christ’s return at the end of six days (six thousand years from creation), that which has its foundation in the beginning of **Genesis**. These apostates or false teachers are seen resting on a corrupted form of the foundation that God had established from the beginning, a foundation upon which all subsequent Scripture rests. Then, building on this corrupted foundation, the apostates began to spread “destructive heresies” relative to the Word of the kingdom among fruit-bearing Christians. This was so successful in stopping the fruit-bearing that it completely did away with the Word of the kingdom.

But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them (denying His return and His kingdom to come), and bring on themselves swift destruction. (2 Peter 2:1-3)

This particular type abnormal growth, resulting from the false message of the apostates since the beginning of Church history, was seen running its course throughout this dispensation; and was successful in completing its destructive work at the near end of this dispensation, within the Church today. This abnormal growth of the mustard seed resulted in a *tree*, something it was not supposed to do. A “tree” is used in Scripture to symbolize a *national power* [nation(s), kingdom(s) — as seen in **Daniel 4:10-12; Matthew 21:18, 19**. And this is a position in which the Church occupied, associating with Gentile world power under the present kingdom of Satan.

Even today, Christians can be found involving themselves in the present government in various ways, attempting to gain power in the present kingdom under Satan. But this is not the day when Christians are to rule and reign. That Day lies in the future under the rule and reign of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will take the kingdom from Satan and then place His co-heirs (overcoming Christians) in positions of power and authority. The entire present world system under Satan will be destroyed when Christ returns and those Christians having works associated with the present system will see their works destroyed in the fire as well. But for Christians who have sanctified themselves from this present system of government, they will possess works which will endure the fire and they will be the ones who will exercise the power in the age to come.

PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN

Another parable He spoke to them: “The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.” (Matthew 13:33)

The parable of the leaven is the last of the four parables which Jesus gave outside the house of Israel, by the sea (“sea” referring to Gentiles). This

parable reveals the end result from that which occurred in the first three parables. The parable begins again with “*The kingdom of heaven is like...*” and compares the Word of the kingdom to “*leaven.*” Leaven is a substance, such as yeast, to modify quality, causing gradual change and is used to make dough rise. Leaven was used in the Old Testament to symbolize that which caused corruption and degeneration. Therefore, the Law of Moses did not allow the priests to use leaven in offerings because it showed corruption rather than purity.

And since leaven was always used to symbolize corruption in the Old Testament, Christ used leaven in this parable, for He knew the disciples would understand what it meant. In **Matthew 13:33**, the context used to point to the use of the word leaven has to do with “fruit-bearing.” The previous two parables reveal Satan introducing false doctrine by placing false teachers in the Church to stop fruit-bearing amongst Christians, which caused a rise in the corruption and degeneration of the Word of the kingdom. Then, the parable of the leaven reveals the outcome of the matter. It reveals that the message surrounding the proffered kingdom during the present dispensation would become completely “leavened.” The tares’ perversion of the Word of the kingdom would progressively spread throughout the entire Church bringing about the end of this dispensation.

Christ provides further explanation relative to the manner in which the Word was leavened. “*Three measures of meal*” refers to three measures of grain used to make bread (*bread* in Scripture symbolizes “the Word,” i.e., the Bread of life [**John 6:48**]). “Three” in Scripture is the number of *divine perfection*. Therefore, the three measures of meal is used to refer to the divine message given by Christ at His first coming — the Word of the kingdom.

“...in which the woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.” (**Matthew 13:33**)

The word “woman” when used symbolically in Scripture usually refers to “Israel.” When Jesus first preached the kingdom of heaven it was offered to Israel, but the tares were placed by Satan, the first tares being the Jewish religious leaders (the “woman”). We see this in **Matthew 16:6**:

Then Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees."

And in **Matthew 23:13**:

But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in.

Later, when the offer of the kingdom was taken from Israel because of their unbelief and given to the Church, Satan again placed tares — Christian religious leaders. Since the damaging work of the leaven was *first* accomplished by Israel, this parable therefore references the "woman." The woman then took and hid the three measures of meal, the Word of the kingdom, until it was all leavened. "*Took and hid*" explains exactly what manner they used to destroy the Word of the kingdom. These false teachers mixed heretical interpretations with Truth, so that those who received it perceived it as Truth. In other words, they would secretly distort the Scriptures by placing (hiding) false heresies within the Word of the kingdom. Peter warns Christians to beware of this corruption from false teachers in **2 Peter 2:1-3**:

But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.

And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

Like Satan, these false teachers were cunning, mixing truth and false together so that the Word seemed like the truth to those who heard it. They would take the pure milk of the Word and contaminate it. This is why Paul, Peter, Jude, John and Jesus Himself warned Christians about false teachers. John specifically states to rely on the Spirit of truth for *He will guide you into all truth (John 16:13)*.

The Lord knew exactly how conditions would exist at the end of the leavening process. He Himself warned Christians about these false teachers as we see in **Matthew 7:15**,

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves.

Paul also warned Christians about the peril of being deceived by false teachers, as we see recorded in **Acts 20:29-31**,

For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.

Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

Jude's writing is very similar to that of Peter, both providing extensive warnings of false teachers.

These are grumblers, complainers, walking according to their own lusts; and they mouth great swelling words, flattering people to gain advantage.

But you, beloved, remember the Words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ; how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.

These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having [holding fast to; devoting oneself to] the Spirit. (Jude 16-19)

Because the leaven has done its damaging work through these false teachers, the Church today, relative to teachings surrounding the Word of the kingdom, are in a *completely blind condition*. The teachings from the pulpit today will not utter one word surrounding the Word of the kingdom. Since the conditions of the Church today parallel the Laodicean Church described in **Revelation 3:17** as "*wretched, miserable, poor, blind and*

naked," it is clear to see that we are very near the close of this dispensation.

Christ Himself is pictured *outside the Church, knocking, seeking admission to those who are inside (Revelation 3:20)*. He extends this invitation to individual Christians and not to the Church as a whole, for the Church will reject the message as they have never recovered from the damage done by the tares. But the Lord continues to reach out to the few individuals who will in fact heed His message. If one is willing to hear His voice and open the door, He will come in and dine with him, providing him the Bread of life.

PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field. (Matthew 13:44)

The last three parables in **Matthew** chapter **thirteen** were given after Christ reentered the house of Israel. These three parables, along with the previous four parables, together reveal the events surrounding the Word of the kingdom from the inception of the Church to the beginning of the Messianic Kingdom. The first four parables cover the entire present dispensation relative to the offer of the kingdom amongst Christians, with the message ending in a completely leavened state. The last three parables have to do with events occurring *after* the Church has been removed (raptured) from the earth to heaven. They present matters from the time that God has resumed His national dealings with Israel; hence, the reason why He goes back *inside the house*.

But although these last three parables give prominence to the nation of Israel on the earth, they also have an inseparable connection with the Church in heaven; both Israel and the Church being dealt with at the same time. All seven parables have to do with the offer of the kingdom of the heavens taken from Israel and given to the Church.

In the parable of the hidden treasure, we see that the Man, Christ, found a treasure and hid it in a field. After this, He went out, sold all He had, and

bought the field where the treasure was hidden. In comparing the previous parables, we learn that the “field” is the *world, the earth*, and through comparing Scripture elsewhere, we learn that the “treasure” is identified as *Israel*. Israel is God’s “*peculiar treasure*.” (**Exodus 19:5, 6**)

At Christ’s first coming, He came preaching and offering the kingdom of the heavens only to the house of Israel. This presents a picture of Christ finding the treasure. However, Israel rejected the offer; and, consequently, the kingdom of the heavens was taken from them and given to a new nation “in Christ.” This presents a picture of Israel being set aside and Christ hiding the treasure. Christ’s past, finished work at Calvary, His blood sacrifice on the Cross not only for the sins of Israel but for the sins of the world, is a picture of the Man *selling all that He had*. Then, the purchase (future) of the “field,” the world (the earth), will be realized.

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. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. (John 3:16, 17)

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:13, 14)

This parable, along with the other six parables, deals with the Word of the kingdom, the salvation of the soul. The *purchase* of the field in the parable of the treasure has to do with a redeemed inheritance, the redemption of the earth. This is a *future* work of Christ, made possible because of His past, completed work at Calvary.

There is a parallel between the order of events portrayed in the first six parables in **Matthew** chapter **thirteen** and the order of events portrayed in the first nineteen chapters of the Book of **Revelation**. In the first four parables in **Matthew** chapter **thirteen**, Christ deals with the Church relative to the Word of the kingdom. Then, as Christ reenters the house of Israel, matters in the last three parables turn back to Israel and the redemption of the inheritance. Keep in mind however, that although Israel

is the focus of attention at this time, the Church is still in view relative to this redemption.

In **Revelation** chapters **one** through **four**, Christ deals with the Church relative to the Word of the kingdom. Then beginning in Chapter **five**, matters turn back to Israel and the redemption of the inheritance. However, we must keep in mind again that the Church is still in view relative to this redemption. **Revelation** chapter **five** identifies the One found worthy to break the seals for the opening of the judgments. Christ, loosening the seals, will bring all things in this entire redemptive process to pass. The inheritance (title deed to the earth) will be redeemed by Christ, through judgment. The bride, previously chosen out from among the Church and revealed at the Judgment seat of Christ, will then become Christ's wife, ruling and reigning from the kingdom of the heavens. And Israel will once again become God's wife, ruling and reigning from their land on earth.

PARABLE OF THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it. (Matthew 13:45, 46)

The parable of the pearl of great price is a continuation on the subject of *redemption* from the previous parable, the parable of the hidden treasure. The Man in the previous parable and the Merchant in this parable is the Lord Jesus Christ. In both parables, the Man or Merchant *selling all that he had* points to Christ's past, finished work at Calvary. The purchase in the previous parable is the field, i.e. the world (*the earth*). The purchase in this parable is the pearl of great price which is identified as *the bride of Christ*. The symbolism of the pearl of great price as the bride derives from the fact that the pearl comes from the sea which refers to the Gentiles, i.e., the Church. However, we see that the pearl is not considered to be the entire Church, but to a special few individuals chosen out from among the Church, considering how hard it is to find a "*pearl of great price*" in oysters at the bottom of the sea. There are many types of pearls, some more valuable than others. It is said that you would have to open upwards of 20,000 wild oysters to find one pearl of great price, which is the Tahitian or black pearl.

Therefore, the purchase of the field in the parable of the hidden treasure has to do with Christ's future work of redeeming the forfeited inheritance; and following this, we have presented the purchase of the pearl which has to do with the bride becoming Christ's wife. Christ purchases the bride through His act of redeeming the inheritance. In other words, the inheritance has to be redeemed first, in order for the bride to become Christ's wife.

A type of these two parables can be seen in the Book of **Ruth**. In **Ruth** chapter **four**, Boaz (a type of Christ) redeems a forfeited inheritance, with Ruth (a type of the bride of Christ) becoming his wife through this redemptive act. Once the inheritance is redeemed, Ruth automatically became Boaz's wife. And the same process will take place in the age to come with Christ and His bride. Christ will redeem (purchase) the inheritance and then the bride (formerly chosen through determinations made at the Judgment seat of Christ) will automatically become Christ's wife.

In the beginning of this parable, we find that the Merchant, Christ, is *seeking* beautiful pearls. And from the beginning of this dispensation, Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, has been seeking a bride to rule and reign with Him in His coming kingdom. Christ is presently exercising the office of High Priest on behalf of Christians. He is ministering in the heavenly sanctuary, seated at the right hand of the Father, on the basis of His Own blood, for Christians who sin. Christians who fall into sin have Christ as High Priest to effect cleansing from their sins. And the high priestly ministry of Christ is specifically for *the bride, the heirs of the kingdom*.

Only an overcoming Christian is considered a "pearl of great price." Only Christians who have endured the race of the faith during this present age and have made the proper preparations to meet the Lord will be chosen by Christ as His bride. A type of the bride of Christ can be seen in Ruth. Ruth endured the race of the faith, working in Boaz's field until the time of the harvest, (end of the age) and making the proper preparations for meeting Boaz at the threshing floor (Judgment seat of Christ). She wholly followed the instructions given by Naomi, a type of the Scriptures. She washed herself (confession of sins), anointed herself (allowed the Holy Spirit to lead her), and she put on her best garment (righteous acts; holy

living). And because of this, Ruth was found worthy at Boaz's threshing floor to be his bride.

The same exact process is required of Christians in order to possess the wedding garment and be found worthy to be the bride of Christ, *the pearl of great price*. Those Christians properly dressed will be allowed to participate in the wedding festivities and in Christ's reign over the earth in that Day, as His consort queen.

PARABLE OF THE DRAGNET

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away.

So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.”
(Matthew 13:47-50)

The parable of the dragnet is the seventh parable emitted by Jesus concerning the message of the kingdom of the heavens and completes the events of the redemption of the inheritance. These seven parables reveal the truths concerning Christ taking the kingdom of the heavens from the nation of Israel and offering it to the Church. Events in all seven of these parables are seen in chronological order, from the beginning to the end of this dispensation and in the opening of the Lord's Day --- resulting in 2,000 years since Pentecost. These seven parables do not speak of eternal verities but of the Messianic Era, the 1000 year reign of Christ, at the end of this age. Therefore, it speaks to and involves *all* Christians and never the unsaved.

The “*dragnet that was cast into the sea*” refers to God working among the Gentiles throughout this dispensation and removing from the Gentiles “*a people for His name*” (**Acts 15:14**). Christians, composed of both Jews and Gentiles, have been taken out of the Gentile nations [“sea” referring to Gentiles], to form the “one new man in Christ.” And the removal of Christians has to do with “the kingdom of the heavens.”

Events in this parable and the previous two parables all deal with the last seven years of Man's Day. They occur during the Tribulation and immediately following Christ's return. The phrase "*gathered some of every kind*" depicts all Christians, whether immature or mature, carnal or faithful, good or wicked — all had been removed from the Gentiles.

Once the dragnet was full, "*they drew to shore.*" This symbolizes all Christians who have been removed from the Gentiles, judged, and now, seven years later, brought to shore to be separated. And once separated, the good are gathered into vessels, but the bad are cast away. This is the exact same picture presented in the parable of the wheat and the tares. The parable pictures the harvest (end of the age) followed by the reapers (angels) separating the wheat and the tares:

"First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn" (Matthew 13:30).

At the end of this age, the overcomers previously judged will then enter the kingdom of heaven and the non-overcomers will be cast out of the kingdom for 1000 years.

"The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth [deep sorrow and utter regret]." (Matthew 13:49, 50)

The parable of the dragnet has to do with events occurring seven years following the Judgment seat of Christ, immediately preceding the Messianic Era, based on previous decisions and determinations rendered at the Judgment seat.

The Word of God has revealed all this to his servants beforehand. These mysteries of the kingdom were hidden in the Old Testament, but have been revealed in the New Testament. Christians have been given all there is to know in the Word of God in order to prepare themselves as good ground believers and to keep their eyes unto Jesus, the hope that is set before them — the kingdom of the heavens. The Word says that the condition of the Church and of the world will only deteriorate in the latter times. If you open your eyes and ears you can clearly see these poor conditions present today. We are clearly living in the latter times; the end

times. The time is near when the elect from among the nation of Israel will become God's wife and will rule and reign in Christ's earthly kingdom. At the same time, the elect from among the Church will become Christ's wife and will rule and reign in Christ's heavenly kingdom. And there are so few that understand or accept this message. Yet, God desires that all be saved wholly: our spirit, soul and body.

Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24)

“For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.” (1 Timothy 2:3, 4)

In summary, the previous seven parables explain events leading to the end of this age — to the kingdom of heaven, the salvation of the soul.

PARABLE OF THE UNFORGIVING SERVANT

Then Peter came to Him and said, “Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times? Jesus said to him, “I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents. But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and payment be made.

The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, ‘Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all.’ Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, 'Pay me what you owe!'

So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.' And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done. Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, 'You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you? And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses." (Matthew 18:21-35)

The parable of the unforgiving servant, as well as the following six parables, is with a view to the kingdom of heaven. This parable begins with *"the kingdom of heaven is like,"* a clear indication that the message pertains to the kingdom of heaven and our soul salvation. This parable instructs Christians about being prepared for the coming kingdom by living righteously, specifically about forgiveness, in order to qualify to enter the kingdom. Just as in all the previous parables, *"the certain king"* is Jesus Christ. The king *"wanted to settle accounts with his servants."*

This parable can be compared to the parable of the talents in **Matthew 25:14-30**. Both parables depict a king who *"wanted to settle accounts"* with his servants. Both provide examples concerning "profit" on an initial investment, the investment being the Lord's goods to all His servants. They were to "occupy" till He comes. In other words, they were to trade the goods that the Lord gave them in order to produce a profit. They were to produce good works during the present day with the goods (Holy Spirit and the Word) that the Lord gave them and then account for their works when the Lord returns.

As the king *began* to settle accounts (not yet exercising judgment), a servant was brought to his attention. This servant owed him “*ten thousand talents*,” an enormous debt that would be impossible to repay, meaning he lacked “an enormous amount” of good works in his life. Since the servant could not repay, the master (Jesus Christ) commanded that “*the servant be sold, him and his household and all that he had.*” At this point, the servant had not shown good works nor confessed his sins, therefore the Lord commanded that he and his goods be sold (as a slave of sin). The servant was leading a life of sin, and now would become a slave of sin instead of a slave of God and of righteousness (**Romans 6:15-23**), that which eventually leads to death (**Romans 6:23**).

The servant pleaded with his master to give him time to repay the “ten thousand talents,” which signifies “*all.*” We see here that the servant was confessing his sins to the Lord. And presently, Christ Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father, who makes intercession for us when we confess our sins. He is merciful to forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness (**1 John 1:9**). The king had pity on him and released him of his sin and forgave him.

In this scenario, the servant was forgiven and then given the opportunity to change his ways and repay the debt with good works in his life. But instead “*The servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii...*” The servant deliberately went to seek his fellow servant, his brother in Christ, to harm him and demand immediate payment of what he owed him. And when the fellow servant pleaded for some time to repay, the servant showed no mercy or compassion but threw him into prison. The servant was unforgiving to his fellow repentant brother, being disobedient to God’s commands, again not producing good works.

When other fellow servants saw what had been done, they grieved and came together to inform the master. The master became very angry and called him a “*wicked servant!*” He delivered him to the torturers until he should pay for his wicked ways.

This parable ends with the conclusion of the whole matter --- a Christian will face the same judgment if they do not forgive his brother, regardless of how often he sins against him. The time is near when we will have to give account of our works to Christ. “*So My heavenly Father also will do*

to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses” (Matthew 18:35).

A common (fleshly) act when a brother wrongs another is to retaliate instead of forgive. Anger and resentment builds up which leads to hate. This is a common reaction when one is living in the flesh and for the cares of this world. It is only through committing to live in the Spirit can we truly react differently --- in a loving and compassionate way. Forgiveness must come from the heart, through the Holy Spirit. Humility allows us to forgive. Pride will keep one from forgiving his brother. Paul sums up how a Christian should act towards everyone:

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. (Colossians 3:12-15)

Even to the point of death, Christ asked God to forgive man. Christ forgives us daily. Knowing this, we too must forgive others. How many times? Jesus said unto the disciples,

“I do not say up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven” (Matthew 18:22).

We must forgive the trespasses of our brother until the end. When we have learned to forgive, Christ will forgive us and reward us one day. But if we do not forgive our brother now, neither will Christ forgive us *then*.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matthew 6:14, 15)

PARABLE OF THE TWO SONS

“But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, ‘Son, go, work today in my vineyard.’ He answered and said, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he regretted it and went. Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of his father? They said to him, “The first.””

Jesus said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward repent and believe him.” (Matthew 21:28-32)

In the parable of the two sons, Jesus was speaking to the Jewish religious leaders concerning repentant sinners. This parable has to do with “bearing fruit,” with the kingdom of the heavens in view. The qualification for entering the kingdom is dependent upon faithful obedience to the Word of God. The first son was asked to bear fruit for the kingdom and he refused. However he later felt conviction, repented and did his father’s will. The second son professed adherence to his father but produced no fruit, therefore he did not do the will of his father. The religious leaders were given this parable in order for them to repent. Even though the self-righteous leaders saw the example of repentant tax collectors and prostitutes, they refused to repent. Jesus condemned the leader’s conduct by assuring them that the repentant sinners would enter the kingdom before them. God takes delight when a sinner repents of his actions and is faithfully obedient to the will of God. In order to live humbly in faith and morally upright requires a continual look at oneself. One must have a repentant heart and allow the Holy Spirit to lead.

PARABLE OF THE WEDDING FEAST

And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said: “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son, and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.

Again, he sent out other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted calf are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding."' But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them.

But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy. Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.

So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.

So he said to him, 'Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 'For many are called, but few are chosen.' (Matthew 22:1-14)

The parable of the wedding feast covers a time period of two thousand years, from the Lord's first advent to just before His second return, at the end of the Tribulation, with the kingdom of the heavens in view. This parable begins with a king (God the Father), seeking to find a bride for his son (Jesus Christ). He is arranging the wedding festivities whereas he sends forth his servants to call on those who were invited (Israel), but they would not come. This is representative of the Lord's offer of the kingdom of the heavens to Israel during the Lord's first advent and their rejection of it.

He then extends another invitation (re-offer of the kingdom to Israel), but those invited still would not come. They not only ignored the call, but they mistreated the king's servants and killed them. When the king was made aware of what happened, he was furious. He sent forth his armies to destroy the murderers and to burn their city.

After Israel's climatic rejection, followed by Christ's departure from the house of Israel, Israel was set aside as a nation and found unworthy for the kingdom of the heavens. Therefore, the king sent other servants to invite a different group to the wedding festivities, the one new man "in Christ," the Church.

"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it." (Matthew 21:43)

Before the parable of the wedding feast was emitted, our Lord had revealed in **Matthew 21:43** that the kingdom of heaven would be taken from Israel and offered to the Church. However, the requirement for those chosen to enter the wedding festivities as the bride would be those who brought forth spiritual "fruit." Hence, those "chosen" will be those selected individuals who are *called out* of the called (Church), those *bearing the fruits thereof*.

Those who consist of "the called," whether good or bad, represent *all Christians*. We see this in **2 Corinthians 5:10**:

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

The good, who had prepared themselves for Christ, bearing fruit, were properly clothed, wearing their wedding garments. *The bad* did not take the offer seriously and were not prepared; therefore, they did not possess the wedding garments. The wedding garment is "*the righteous acts of the saints*," recorded in **Revelation 19:8**.

When the wedding festivities were about to begin, the king comes in to see the guests and notices a man not wearing the wedding garment. "Works" had been tried and judged *seven years prior* at the Judgment Seat of Christ to determine the bride. Now, seven years later, due to prior decisions and determinations at the Judgment Seat of Christ, the separation is about to take place to identify the bride and begin the wedding festivities. The exact same picture is presented in **Matthew 13:24-30**, in the parable of the wheat and the tares, and in **Matthew 13:47-51**, in the parable of the dragnet. Since the man had no wedding garment, he showed no "righteous works." Having not made the preparations, the man was not allowed to

participate in the wedding festivities. In the antitype, this separation will take place at the end of the Tribulation, immediately *before* Christ's second return, in heaven.

Apparently, the man had accepted (through faith) the invitation (spirit salvation) to come to the wedding but never prepared a garment for himself; he had no righteous works prepared during his lifetime. As a result, he was bound hand and foot, cast into outer darkness outside of the wedding festivities where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth.

This parable covers the timeframe from the beginning of this dispensation to the end of the Tribulation, immediately before the opening of the Messianic Era and provides a complete word-picture of the events surrounding the selection of the bride of Christ. It begins with the offer of the kingdom to Israel, the rejection of that offer, and the kingdom of the heavens taken from them and offered to the Church. The message of the kingdom was rejected by Israel twice in which the second time they mistreated and killed some of the apostles (**Acts 4:21; 5:40; 7:54-59**). This angered the Lord who allowed the Romans to destroy the city of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 A.D.

The invitation was then given to those in the "highways," referring to Christians, those who would, in turn, do that which Israel had failed to do — *bring forth the fruits thereof* [fruits relating to the kingdom]. After Israel was set aside the early part of 63 A.D., the disciples were commissioned to deliver the message of the kingdom of the heavens to the Church. This is fully revealed through the Apostle Paul, seen throughout his Epistles in the New Testament. And just as this parable prophesies, some will heed this call and some will not. At the end of the age, those prepared to meet Christ wearing their wedding garment will enter the kingdom and those unprepared will not enter but be cast to outer darkness for 1000 years. They will not participate in the wedding festivities as the bride of Christ, but will be separated from His presence. "*For many are called, but few are chosen*" (**Matthew 22:14**). Many Christians will be called to the wedding feast, but few will be qualified to enter.

The future marriage of Christ and His bride will occur following the separation of the overcomers from the non-overcomers. A type of this marriage is pictured in the Book of **Ruth**, chapter **four**. Boaz purchased Ruth through the process of redemption, so also Christ purchased His

bride through the process of redemption. Ruth became Boaz's wife automatically through this redemption and so also will the bride. The ones chosen out from among the Church who will be found worthy to inherit the kingdom will automatically become the bride of Christ. Following this redemptive process, the wedding festivities of Christ and His bride will occur in the kingdom of heaven. This can be seen in **Revelation 19:7-9**:

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” Then he said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.”

In the same manner that Ruth had to prepare and make herself ready for Boaz, so also will the bride have to prepare to meet Christ at His Judgment Seat in order to qualify as His bride. Preparation for meeting Christ at His judgment seat can be seen in **Ruth 3:3**, where she is instructed to *wash thyself...anoint thyself...put on your best garment*. The confession and putting away of sins, abiding in the Spirit, and living righteously through faith in Christ till the end will grant us to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright (*the righteous acts of the saints*), at the wedding festivities of our King.

ONE TAKEN, THE OTHER LEFT

In **Mathew 24:3**, the disciples had approached Jesus privately, asking what will be the sign of His second coming and of the end of the age. And the reason that Jesus wanted them to know the signs of His coming was so that *“no one deceives you”* -- because of false Christs and false prophets. He revealed the signs of the Tribulation, followed by the Great Tribulation, and His second coming in **Mathew 24:29**.

Then, in **Mathew 24:36-44**, Jesus presents a picture of Christians who, after the rapture and immediately before the Judgment Seat of Christ, will either be “taken” [alongside Christ] or “left” [turned away]. *In this parable, the issue of Christian preparedness for His second coming and the Millennial kingdom is in view*. Just as in the days of Noah, many will

not be prepared for Christ and His kingdom. In **Matthew 24:38, 39**, Jesus revealed that before the Flood many were *eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage* (not focusing on Christ), *until the Flood came, and took them all away*. And this will be the exact occurrence at the end of this age. Many Christians who were not watching (preparing) for the Lord during their lifetime will be “left” [turned away], and will lose their life in the age to come. The few who were watching (preparing) during their lifetime will be “taken” [alongside Christ] in the heavenly kingdom as His intimate companion.

“Then two men will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. Two women will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. (Matthew 24:40-42)

Many within Christendom refer this passage above to the rapture (saved will be taken to heaven, unsaved will be left on earth), however this cannot be. Jesus is speaking *only* to Christians, warning them to be prepared for His coming. And this does not refer to a selective rapture, as God deals with all Christians at the same time. *All* Christians will be removed to the Judgment seat of Christ in heaven (**2 Corinthians 5:10**) at the same time (**1 Thessalonians 4:16**). In addition, this parable concerns the Messianic Era, not the Eternal Ages. Unsaved individuals do not and cannot prepare for Christ, for their spirits are dead. Only believers, the saved, are able to prepare (by and through the Holy Spirit) for His second coming. But many Christians will not be prepared to meet the Lord at His judgment seat on that Day. They will be “left” [Greek: *turned away*]. Only the faithful Christians who have prepared with good works will be “taken” [*received alongside Christ*] in the kingdom.

FAITHFUL SERVANT AND THE EVIL SERVANT

“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.

Assuredly, I say to you that he will make him ruler over all his goods. But if that evil servant says in his heart, ‘My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat his fellow servants, and

to eat and drink with the drunkards, the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites. There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 24:45-51)

Jesus gave ample warnings but indicated that no man will know the exact day and hour of His return, so all must be ready. Immediately following this discussion of readiness, the parable of the faithful servant and the evil servant was emitted. As in the previous parable of the wedding feast, this parable also reveals the “chosen (called out) from the called,” except that it expounds on the requirements needed to inherit the future kingdom, as well as the consequence for being unprepared.

The “faithful and wise servant” is a mature Christian, one who has the “*epignosis*” or higher knowledge of the Word of God as it pertains to the message of the kingdom. The master, who is Christ Jesus, is seeking this faithful and wise servant to make him ruler over His household, the household of believers. This faithful and wise servant is to give “food” to His household in “due season,” which is the time just before the return of the Lord. Jesus begins this parable with a question which denotes a negative answer, knowing that His search will result in very few qualified individuals. To qualify, one must have the higher knowledge (*epignosis*) of the Word and be faithful in ministering this knowledge to other Christians until death or rapture. Who will give the food, the meat? The majority of the modern day pastors and teachers of the Church will not qualify. They only know and offer “milk” to their congregation, week after week. Sadly, the Church is kept as “babes” in Christ, never growing or understanding the knowledge of the truth, thereby never anticipating or preparing for the “blessed hope” of Christ’s return and the coming kingdom.

This same parable, the faithful servant and the evil servant, given in **Luke 12:41-48** refers to the servant as a faithful and wise “steward.” The Greek translation (Strong’s #G3623) for “*steward*” is “house-distributor; manager, overseer.” Therefore, mature Christians are to distribute the knowledge of the kingdom to the house of believers, i.e. the Church. In **1 Corinthians 4:1, 2**, reference is made to the “stewards of the mysteries of God:”

Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.

As stewards, mature believers are *required* to manage the message and ministry of the Word of the kingdom, a message in which God has entrusted to them. This includes pastors, teachers, and ministers within the Church. But this does not exempt all other Christians from spreading the Word of the kingdom, for *all believers* are required to be found faithful in this work and service for Christ in whatever capacity God has given them.

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28:18-20)

When Christ returns, those who are found faithful with the ministry of the Word of the kingdom will be blessed---“*he will make him ruler over all his goods.*” This pertains to the heavenly inheritance of the kingdom — ruling and reigning with Christ during the Messianic Era.

The consequence of not abiding as faithful and wise servants will result in loss of the inheritance. We see this presented with the “evil servant,” still God’s servant meaning he is a saved individual, but is a carnal or apostate Christian. This Christian, as in the parable of the wedding feast, makes light of Christ’s return and rejects it altogether.

A comparison Scripture of **Matthew 24:48**, “*My master is delaying His coming,*” can be found in **2 Peter 3:3, 4**, which centers on false teachers:

“...knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, and saying, ‘Where is the promise of His coming?’”

It is evident in the evil servant’s life that he cares not for Christ. He is an apostate teacher, speaking against Christ’s return. He lives for the world, the flesh and the devil as he “*begins to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and*

drink with the drunkards, ... therefore, ...the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him and at an hour that he is not aware of...” (Matthew 24:49)

This is similar to the previous parable, the parable of the wedding feast in **Matthew 22:5, 6**:

“But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business. And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them.”

For those evil servants who ignore the future return of Christ and speak against it, He will come as *“a thief in the night”* and their judgment will result in great remorse, as they will suffer the greatest loss ever imaginable. Christ *“will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites.”* This loss refers to a division between soul and spirit, as the non-overcomer will be separated from Christ and will lose his soul in the age to come. *“His portion”* meaning *“his position”* will be appointed with the hypocrites outside of the kingdom.

This parable warns Christians that judgment will be carried out at the Judgment seat of Christ and although the unfaithful will want to inherit the blessing, they will be rejected. Like Esau, they will seek repentance with *“weeping and gnashing of teeth,”* but they will find none from their Lord (**Hebrews 12:16, 17**).

We have learned two of the requirements for entering the kingdom of heaven yet future: first is to move on to maturity, possessing the higher knowledge of the Word (the Word of the kingdom) and second is to produce fruit for the kingdom. As stewards of His Word, we are to minister this kingdom message to other Christians until the end. If we anticipate the *“blessed hope”* of His return and of entering the kingdom, as the Spirit leads us, we will be strong and dedicated in pursuing this service for Christ. In addition, with this higher knowledge, God reveals the signs of the near time of His return, so that to us, He does not come as a thief:

But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this Day should overtake you as a thief. You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore, let us not

sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober. (1 Thessalonians 5:4-6)

PARABLE OF THE WISE AND FOOLISH VIRGINS

“Then the kingdom of heaven shall be likened to ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Now five of them were wise, and five were foolish.

Those who were foolish took their lamps and took no oil with them, but the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps. But while the bridegroom was delayed, they all slumbered and slept.

And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps. And the foolish said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.’ But the wise answered, saying, ‘No, lest there should not be enough for us and you; but go rather to those who sell, and buy for yourselves.’

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut.

Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open to us!’ But he answered and said, ‘Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.’

Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.” (Matthew 25:1-13)

As in the parable of the faithful servant and the evil servant, this parable depicts two types of Christians, those who are foolish and those who are wise. The parable of the foolish and wise virgins begins with *“the kingdom of heaven shall be likened”* therefore; the Messianic Kingdom is in view. This parable is a pictorial representation of the removal of all Christians from Earth to heaven, to the Judgment Seat of Christ. “Ten” virgins represent *all* virgins, as the number ten is the Biblical number for

“ordinal perfection.” And they were all “virgins,” meaning all Christians. The foolish virgins have only one portion of oil in their lamps, but the wise have a double portion of oil — one in their lamps and the other portion in their vessels. “Oil” in Scripture denotes the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the single portion of oil in the lamps speaks of the Holy Spirit which is freely given to all ten virgins the moment they believed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:13, 14)

The single portion of oil thereby signifies the receiving of the Holy Spirit upon acknowledging our belief in the Lord. Through the Holy Spirit, we now are able to mature in the Word of God and produce fruit --- in preparation to meet our Bridegroom. In this parable, maturity in the Word and preparedness for Christ is known as having a double portion of oil, which only the wise virgins possessed. The foolish virgins never went beyond the single portion of oil, the Holy Spirit remaining dormant in them, and therefore never progressed unto maturity or produced any fruit for the kingdom. This is similar to the parable of the wedding feast, in that only the wedding guests who were prepared and possessed a wedding garment (righteous acts of the saints) were allowed into the wedding feast.

Then, reference is made that all the virgins *slumbered and slept* while the bridegroom was delayed, meaning all ten servants were passing through a time of darkness (signified by the word “midnight”) in this world while their Bridegroom was away.

“Midnight” in Scripture always denotes judgment, and in this parable, a cry is heard providing a warning to be ready for judgment:

And at midnight a cry was heard: ‘Behold, the bridegroom is coming; go out to meet him!’ (Matthew 25:6)

This pictures for us the time preceding the rapture and subsequent judgment of all Christians. It is a warning (“*midnight cry*”) for Christians to be prepared. The double portion of oil that the wise virgins possessed had to be

purchased by the One selling, the Holy Spirit, in order for them to enter the wedding. This typifies the works of the believer emanated by the Holy Spirit during their lives. The double portion of oil (denoting wisdom from the Holy Spirit) involved both faith and works. They had to purchase daily from the Holy Spirit with the price of a surrendered life (dying to flesh and living in the Spirit), the price of faithful obedience to the Word of God, and the hope of His appearing.

When the ten virgins arose and began to trim their lamps, the foolish virgins did not have enough oil and were told to go buy for themselves. But it was too late, for only the wise virgins who were prepared were allowed to go in with Him to the wedding as the bride of Christ. *And the door was shut* — speaks of being shut out of the kingdom. Afterwards, the foolish virgins cried out repeatedly to the Lord to open the door.

But he answered and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.” (Matthew 25:12)

A comparison to **Matthew 25:12** can be seen in **Matthew 7:21** during the Sermon on the Mount when Jesus began speaking to the multitudes, saying:

Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?” And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’ (Matthew 7:21-23)

Only believers call Christ, “Lord,” therefore it cannot be said that these were unsaved individuals. The meaning “*I never knew you*” refers to those Christians who were not faithfully obedient to the Lord. Many think they know the Lord and can achieve salvation on their own merit and self-works rather than abiding in Christ and producing works emanated by the Holy Spirit. This is referenced in **1 John 2:3-6**:

Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

Another similar example to this parable is noted in **Luke 13:24-30** when Jesus was teaching the way to the kingdom to the surrounding cities of Jerusalem:

And He said to them, “Strive to enter through the narrow gate, for many, I say to you, will seek to enter and will not be able. When once the Master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where you are from,’ then you will begin to say, ‘We ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets.’”

But He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’ There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God. And indeed there are last who will be first, and there are first who will be last.”

Once a believer has been judged and found unworthy at the Judgment Seat of Christ, his soul-life will be separated from Christ for one thousand years. The door of opportunity to respond to Christ is closed and access into His presence cannot be permitted.

The Word of God provides ample warnings concerning our future judgment, as seen recorded in **Hebrews 10:26-31**:

For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries...For we know Him who said, “Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,” says the Lord. And again, “The Lord will judge His people.” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

Fear Him, heed His call and be prepared!

PARABLE OF THE TALENTS

“For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.

Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord’s money.

After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, ‘Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.’ His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

He also who had received two talents came and said, ‘Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them. His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’

“Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.’

“But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.

So take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away.

And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matthew 25:14-30)

The parable of the talents has to do with fruit-bearing and judgment relative to the kingdom of the heavens. This parable covers a time period of two thousand years, from Christ’s ascension to the Judgment Seat of Christ. It provides a complete word-picture of the events surrounding the Judgment seat of Christ. The man traveling into a far country is Christ. Before He left, He called three of His servants (Christians) and gave to them His goods.

This parable reveals the different portions of business that Christ has entrusted to His servants when He delivered His goods. The Greek word for “goods” is *huparchonta*, meaning his “personal possessions.” What are Christ’s personal possessions? We know that *“the Lord is the Spirit” (2 Corinthians 3:17)* *“and because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts” (Galatians 4:6)*. The goods are the treasures contained in the Holy Spirit and His Word pertaining to glory in the kingdom. These are His personal possessions.

The gift of the *indwelling* Holy Spirit is bestowed upon *all* Christians, but the portions of goods depends on what the Lord entrusts each individual — *“according to his own ability.”* They are to take the goods entrusted to them for the purpose of producing good works (fruit for the kingdom).

These goods are to be used by the Lord's servants under the perfect leadership of the Holy Spirit, who is indwelling in their spirit. This truth can be seen by comparing the parable of the ten virgins with the parable of the talents. The faithful, productive servants in the parable of the talents are synonymous with the five wise virgins possessing the extra supply of Oil in the parable of the ten virgins. That is to say, faithful, productive servants are those wise servants *filled with the Holy Spirit*, allowing the Spirit to govern and control their affairs.

The Holy Spirit, as He indwells those comprising the “*one new man*” in *Christ*, makes known the purpose for His presence in the world today; and once this purpose begins to be realized — once Christians become aware of *the true nature of the Holy Spirit's present ministry and begin to manifest an interest in that which is uppermost in the mind of the Father* — they find themselves coming into possession of choice treasures from the things that belong to the Son, who is *the heir of all things*.

God has set aside two days, two thousand years, to call out the rulers who are to reign as co-heirs with His Son during the coming age. These co-heirs will constitute the bride of Christ, who will reign as consort queen, seated on the throne with Him. And the Holy Spirit is in the world today procuring the bride.

It is those Christians who manifest an interest in and respond to the Holy Spirit's call as He searches for the bride who find themselves in the position of Rebekah in **Genesis 24:53**. These are the ones who come into possession of “*jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing*” (the “treasures,” i.e., the wedding garment and the crown).

Those Christians who understand the true nature of the Holy Spirit's mission in the world today, allowing the Holy Spirit to do a work in their lives within this same framework, would have to be looked upon as the ones possessing *the most capacity in the realm of “ability”*; and within this group there would be varying degrees of “ability,” with some Christians being more zealous in their faithful servitude than other Christians.

“Lesser ability” within this same framework would correspondingly come about through *lesser capacity* as individuals possess lesser degrees of a work of the Spirit in their lives, in keeping with the purpose for the present dispensation.

Those Christians using the “*jewels of silver and jewels of gold*” to bring forth an increase during the present time will see their works described after *the same fashion*, as “*gold, silver, precious stones,*” at the judgment seat of Christ. However, those Christians failing will have nothing to show but works described as “*wood, hay, straw*” (1 **Corinthians 3:12-15**). Then the “*clothing*” would undoubtedly point to *the wedding garment, made up of righteous acts* (**Revelation 19:8**), and Christians have been granted the privilege of clothing themselves through the proper use of the Lord’s goods in their possession.

In this parable, all three servants were saved, since the Lord called them “*his own servants.*” All three servants were given different amounts of goods, according to each servant’s personal abilities. Then the Lord journeyed to heaven, sitting at the right hand of the Father, to prepare a kingdom. The first servant received five talents, the second servant received two, and the third servant received one talent. The first two servants went and were fruit-bearing using the goods they were given for good works --- to increase the kingdom of heaven.

The first two servants doubled their amount of talents whereas the third servant did nothing with the talent he was entrusted. Rather, he hid his talent, producing no fruit for the kingdom.

At the end of the dispensation, Christ will return for His servants and remove them to heaven, to the Judgment Seat of Christ, so that each one can give an account of their works to Him. This will occur immediately after the rapture and resurrection of the Church. Do you recall the reenactment of the Judgment Seat of Christ with the servant Brave Heart in the beginning of this book? He had produced good works for the building of the kingdom and therefore was able to enter in. Likewise, these two servants who produced fruit were standing in front of the throne and were told,

“Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your Lord.” (Matthew 25:21)

The third servant had a different fate awaiting him at the Judgment Seat. He was lazy and unfaithful, but made the excuse that the reason he did nothing was because he feared the Lord. The Lord corrected him because if he really had feared his Master, he would have at least deposited the money in the bank. In other words, he should have entrusted the Holy Spirit with his talent. This servant was a Christian who did not do what the Lord commanded him to do, which is, *“occupy till I come.”* He not only ignored the Lord’s will, but also sought diligently to talk his way out of judgment.

And because this servant knew his Master’s will and did nothing, the Lord rebuked him, calling him a *“wicked and lazy servant.”* His talent (the Lord’s goods) was taken away and given to the overcomer. He lost his soul and he was cast into outer darkness for 1000 years; darkness outside of the kingdom. This was far worse than any judgment ever experienced on earth and caused the disapproved Christian to weep, wail and gnash his teeth with utter regret and deep grief.

PARABLE OF THE MINAS (Pounds)

“A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, ‘Do business till I come.’ But his citizens hated him, and sent a delegation after him, saying, ‘We will not have this man to reign over us’.

And so it was that when he returned, having received the kingdom, he then commanded these servants, to whom he had given the money, to be called to him, that he might know how much every man had gained by trading.

Then came the first, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned ten minas.’ And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you

were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina earned five minas.’ Likewise he said to him ‘You also be over five cities.’

Then another came, saying, ‘Master, here is your mina, which I have kept put away in a handkerchief. For I feared you, because you are an austere man. You collect what you did not deposit, and reap what you did not sow.’

And he said to him, ‘Out of your own mouth I will judge you, you wicked servant. You knew that I was an austere man, collecting what I did not deposit and reaping what I did not sow. Why then did you not put my money in the bank, that at my coming I might have collected it with interest?’

And he said to those who stood by, “Take the mina from him, and give it to him who has ten minas.’ (But they said to him, ‘Master, he has ten minas.’) ‘For I say to you, that to everyone who has will be given; and from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

But bring here those enemies of mine, who did not want me to reign over them, and slay them before me.’” (Luke 19:12-27)

The parable of the minas (pounds) and the parable of the talents depict God’s dealings with Christians throughout this dispensation until the Judgment Seat of Christ with fruit-bearing in view. These parables deal with millennial verities, the 1000 year reign of Christ, as revealed in its beginning phrase, “*For the kingdom of heaven is like...*” In the parable of the minas, the man traveling to a far country (heaven) is Christ. Before he left, he called *ten* of his servants (the number “10” showing “ordinal completion” and means “all” in Scripture) and delivered *ten* of the minas (all of His goods), one mina to each servant.

In this parable, the “*certain nobleman*” is Christ who is preparing a kingdom and will return for His servants.

“I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I

am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.” (John 14:2a-4)

All of the servants were entrusted with the same amount, with one mina, which is the goods contained in the Holy Spirit and His Word. The servants were judged strictly on the basis of their use of the minas during the absence of the Lord. Therefore, all believers are entrusted with allowing the Spirit to bring them to maturity in the Word, from the “milk” to the “meat” doctrines (the “meat doctrine” is the higher knowledge of the Word surrounding the second coming of Christ, or the “gospel of glory”). The basis of judgment lies on whether the servants use the Holy Spirit to guide them into all truth (by and through the study of the Word) and allow the Spirit to lead them unto good works (requiring faithful obedience to the Word). This parable reveals the overall scope of both the Lord’s servants and the Lord’s business — *“Do business till I come.”*

“It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you...However, when He, the Spirit of truth has come, He will guide you into all truth...and He will tell you things to come.” (John 16:7, 13)

“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire (during the kingdom age) and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.” (John 15:7, 8)

Both parables provide examples concerning “dividends” on the Lord’s investment, the investment being the Lord’s goods to all His servants. They were to *“occupy till I come.”* In other words, they were to trade the goods that the Lord gave them in order to produce a profit. They were to produce good works during the present day with the goods (Holy Spirit and the Word) that the Lord gave them and then account for their works when the Lord returns.

In the parable of the minas, all of the servants had gained by trading and some had gained more than others, except one. The first servant gained ten minas, and therefore was rewarded with ruling over ten cities. The second servant gained five minas, and was rewarded with ruling over five cities. Therefore, each servant was rewarded the exact measure to which he had profited by trading. And this example clearly shows that some

Christians will be awarded higher positions than others during the Millennial reign of Christ.

In like manner, there will be some Christians who will be awarded a more severe punishment than others. The last servant mentioned in this parable had not produced a profit. The unfaithful servant's excuse for "putting away the mina in a handkerchief" reflects a negative view of the nobleman. If the servant had really feared the master, he would have done something with the mina. As it was, the servant failed to obey the nobleman or even to understand him. Because of this, the mina (Lord's goods) was taken away from him resulting in loss of reward. And the "citizens" who did not want the nobleman to reign over them were slain, considered enemies of the master. These "citizens" represent those who not only ignore the Lord's will, but who publicly reject the Lord — they are apostates and false teachers.

In both parables, the central message is "faithful obedience" to the business which the Lord has entrusted, with a view to His return and His kingdom to come --- *to receive for himself a kingdom and to return*. The day will come when Christ will return for His servants and "*settle accounts with them*" at His Judgment Seat. In the parable of the talents, there were different levels of rewards given dependent on the use of the Holy Spirit and the goods entrusted. Likewise, there will be different levels of loss, dependent on one's lack of use of the Holy Spirit or their total rejection and falling away from the Lord.

These parables reflect a truth which will soon be realized. The basis of judgment will be "works" — not for salvation of the spirit, but rather, works executed *after* salvation of the spirit for future rewards into the kingdom, for the salvation of the soul. We have learned in these parables that it is possible for Christians to be spiritually saved and not have a single good work to account for at the Judgment Seat of Christ on that Day. For our own profit, we must yield our life in obedience to the Word of God and be determined to run the race of "the faith" with patient endurance till the end. Faithful obedience is the key to entrance into the Millennial Kingdom.

