

THE PARABLES OF JESUS, #022 A Chronological Study

*"To Him who opened His mouth in parables and
uttered things hidden since the creation of the world."*

Psalm 78:2

The Mysteries of the Kingdom



"The Head of the Household" Matthew 13:51-52

THE TEXT [**Matthew 13:51**]:

"51 "Have you understood all these things?" They *said to Him, "Yes."

So, let's have a quick look at "these things," what Jesus was referring to:

Matthew 13 - The Parables:

The Sower, The Seeds, The Soils, The Sovereignty of God

The Tares In The Wheat, The Interference of Evil

The Mustard seed, The Pattern of Go Forth and Multiply

The Growing Seed, The Ordained Pattern of Kingdom Growth

The Leaven, With Growth Comes Responsibility for Purity

The Hidden Treasure, The People of the Kingdom, Value Not Looked For, but found

The Pearl of Great Value, The People of the Kingdom, Value Looked For and found

The Fishnet, Righteousness Will Be Rewarded - Evil Will Be Dealt With

The Head of the Household - God's Kingdom is full of Old and New truth. Knowledge of the Scriptures requires both: The Old is in the New Revealed, the New is in the Old Concealed [*St. Augustine*].

It is all about The Kingdom of Heaven (The Sovereignty of God on Earth)

The Text

Mt. 13:51 "Have you understood all these things?" They *said to Him, "Yes."

COMMENTARY:

Have you understood all these things?

Jesus has almost finished up His "Kingdom" parables with "The Fishnet" and how all we humans will be collected up and then separated into two groups - those who believe in and love Jesus, and those who don't. The righteous, who are so by proclamation of the Almighty Father, and the wicked who have chosen "not God." Each with their own eternal destination.

Some important truths don't become apparent until you run into someone who by age or happenstance has acquired extensive knowledge about a subject that is of interest to you. In the short time between being saved @ 24 and going off to Bible College to learn about my newly acquired faith, I developed a desire to really get to know the Word of God. I knew that it was the Holy Spirit working in my life and I was desperate to know more. I listened to preachers, Christian radio programs, and immersed myself into my Bible. Then I went off to Bible College... nearly everyone around me knew so much more about everything biblical and I found that I was already years behind in what I needed to know. The magic moment came when I met my first old timer Bible professor. There was a richness to every statement he made. His extensive knowledge and years of study and teaching brought God's word to life for me.

Why do I bring this up some 50 years later? Well, that's what this parable is all about. It's there to show us what I found out so long ago. There are those who God has set apart to bring forth great richness and understanding of the Scriptures. In this parable Jesus tells His New Testament disciples... that it was some of those who were educated in the "Law of God," the Old Testament covenants, who would come to Jesus as their savior and would be the ones who were able to explain the intricacies of the New Testament based upon their knowledge of the Old Testament.

It is appalling that so many Christians are so poorly educated in the Old Testament. It is a shame that most churches do not have a dedicated teaching plan for all ages that doesn't just focus on the New Testament teachings but also delves deep into the Old Testament. Not just the famous stories about the famous people, but the true meaning of The Law; the sacrificial nature and eventual fulfillment of those sacrifices; the priesthood

that would eventually become the Royal Priesthood of believers; the importance of Jerusalem; the fulfillment of all of the prophecies of those great men and women of that ancient past. It's all written down and available for the present... and so few take the time to know and understand it.

Yes, there were bad Scribes and teachers in the Jewish religious system of Jesus' day, but there were also those who knew those Scriptures inside and out who would, in time, fall at Jesus' feet and worship Him as their Messiah as well. It is this parable that states, by Jesus, that it is these converted teachers and scribes of the Nation of Israel in His day that would be able to take the Old Covenant, the Old Testament, and the New Covenant and New Testament, and see how they not only compliment each other, but also see their Messiah, the Anointed One, the Christ, as the fulfillment of all of God's promises to His people. They would have the deep knowledge and through the filling of the Holy Spirit of God they would be enabled to teach the richness of the Scriptures to those who belong to Jesus, especially the vast numbers of new Gentile believers who had little or no education in the Old Testament.

And then Jesus asks His disciples, "Have you understood all these things?" [Matthew 13:51a].

In their innocence they smile and nod saying, "Yes." Most of them have spent a nearly full three years with Him. Some of them have even performed miracles in His name. The Gospels reveal that they often didn't understand. While the disciples were not understanding, these words were recorded by Matthew for all those who would follow after the establishment of The Church.

Jesus has asked them:

Mt 15:16 "Are you still lacking in understanding...."

Mt 15:17 "Do you not understand...."

Mt 16:9 "Do you not yet understand...."

Mt 16:11 "How is it you do not understand...."

"All these things?"

They, the Disciples, smile and nod saying, "Yes." Of Course! How very human, we are all acting like little gods, and of course we understand all that Jesus said... NOT! Almighty God spoke and we tiny humans think we understand all that He has said and done. Even His own disciples didn't understand why He was here on earth, or why the religious establishment hated Him, or why He kept on talking about being put to death and leaving

them. "Peter will object to the Lord's crucifixion (Mt 16:21-23) and all the disciples will flee upon Christ's arrest in Gethsemane (Mt 26:47-56).

And on and on into the beginnings of His Church: Death, Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost.

In all of this we too need to remember that all we who believe, even the most educated and intelligent, do see the truth, albeit through a glass darkly. Our knowledge will not be mature until we are with Christ in Glory." ⁱ

The Head of the Household, The Old has its Place in the New.

And then He says something that must have been extremely shocking to them - especially since the Gospel writers kept reminding us about the Sadducees, who didn't believe in resurrection and the existence of spiritual beings. Then there was the Pharisees who were seeking to kill Jesus, and the hated Scribes who parceled out "the Law" and "kept the books."

THE TEXT [Matthew 13:51b-52]:

52 And Jesus said to them, "Therefore every SCRIBE [teacher of the Law] who has BECOME A DISCIPLE OF THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN is like a head of a household, who brings out of his treasure new things and old."

This is one of the most important verses in the bible for New Testament believers. Knowledge of the Old Testament is essential to the understanding of the New Testament.

The **Scribes**, those who copied and understood the Old Testament writings, those who listened to Jesus and His teachings and believed... they became fully forgiven and the Holy Spirit would bring the meaning of the Old Testament to their minds as fulfilled in Christ Jesus, the "Anointed One." They would become... "Like a head of a household, who brings out of his treasure things new and old."

"A scribe's treasure is his knowledge and understanding of the scriptures. Out of his wealth of scriptural knowledge this kingdom-seeking *scribe* will bring forth treasures that are both *new things and old*. In other words, his understanding will beautifully affirm timeless truths that he and others have long understood. And his kingdom-oriented insight will uncover new understandings of scripture that have always been present but could only be seen in light of *the kingdom*. These truths were always there but they were

and are largely invisible or unappreciated by those who do not understand *the kingdom.*" ⁱⁱ

They knew the Word of God up and close. Once converted they could teach that which would be the New Covenant through the eyes of the Old Covenant and the whole Old Testament. Think of some of the world's most enlightened and productive Christian Pastors, Professors, and leaders who have come before us and taught us. Those who stand before us now are "Standing on the shoulders of Giants!" Those like the Scribes who were saved out of Judaism and ushered into the beginnings of the Church after Jesus' resurrection. Those who knew the Old Testament, now enlightened by the teachings and miracles of Jesus, the Messiah. Certainly, as they say in the scientific world, "an Aha moment!" A moment of sudden inspiration, insight, recognition and comprehension. **Jesus is the Messiah! (The anointed One, The Christ).**

Jesus uses His words carefully. These who were scribes were now, through conversion, disciples OF the kingdom. Once saved and freed from all that which was wrong in their religious system they became changed and now... no longer disciples of that broken evil system but disciples of the Kingdom of God with a **new expectation** of that kingdom "Promised" to Abraham and His future generations of believers. This still happens today - bible educated Jews saved by their rightful Messiah, Jesus.

So, as Jesus closes out His kingdom parables He's telling them not to forsake their brothers who had labored under the old system - the Lord will still keep sowing the seed (the Word of God). The seed that falls on the fertile good soil (those who will believe). Their Job is to plow, plant, water, trim, fertilize, love and care for every new plant (believer) and use every resource they can to bring the crop to maturity and then, the harvest - and that's now our job as well.

J. Dwight Pentecost reminds us that: "The Kingdom Promises are Not Canceled." As we surveyed the parables of Matthew 13, we found that in light of Israel's rejection of the person of Christ, He foresaw postponement of the millennial form of the kingdom from Israel's point of view. He announced the introduction of a new form of the kingdom, one that would span the period from Israel's rejection of Christ until Israel's future reception of Christ at the Second Advent. This present age--with its new form of the kingdom--is characterized by the sowing of the Word to which there will be varying responses, depending on the sowing of the seed on the soils (the parable of The Soils, lesson 14, Mt. 13:1-23).

The harvest that results from the sowing is the result of the life that is in the seed that was sown (the parable of the Seed Growing, lesson 17, Mk. 4:26-29). Concurrent with the sowing of the Word, there is a false counter sowing (the parable of the tares, lesson 15, Mt. 13:24-30). The new form of the kingdom had an insignificant beginning, but will grow to great proportions (the parable of the Mustard Seed, lesson 16, Mt. 13:31-32). The power in the kingdom is not external but internal (the parable of the Leaven, lesson 18, Mt. 13:33-43) God will gather a peculiar treasure to Himself through this present age (the parable of the Hidden Treasure, lesson 19, Mt. 13:44, and the Pearl of Great Price, lesson 20, Mt. 13:45-46). The present form of the kingdom will end in a judgment to determine who are righteous and eligible to enter the future millennial form of the kingdom, as well as who are unrighteous and will be excluded from the millennial kingdom to come (the parable of the Fish Net, lesson 21, Mt. 13:47-50)."

"This revelation of the new form through which the theocracy would be administered in this present age was followed by a specific prophecy: **"I will build My church"** (Mt 16:18). The nature and function of the church is not explained there, but will be revealed in the historical development in the Book of Acts, with its doctrines explained in the Epistles." ⁱⁱⁱ

For the believers in our age we need to realize that the Kingdom of God has been there all the time - He is ever sovereign. There's a wonderful modern song out there called "Skyscrapers" by a group called "OK-go." Two older dancers doing the Tango (wonderfully edited) while the singer sings, "You were right there all the time." He uses a city with skyscrapers that he never noticed as a metaphor for his love of someone. It's not a Christian song, but it is a beautiful image of when we find Christ. He was, and is, right there "All The Time."

A Summary:

So I say to all of us... In your quest to "grow up in the Bible and in your faith," seek out those believers (teachers, writers, etc.) who have a great knowledge of the Old Testament and the New Testament. Find those who are intimate with the Old Covenants and that most precious New Covenant and study under them. They can show you, from the Scriptures, how to grow in faith, grow in the knowledge of Jesus the Christ, and grow and be ready for your final entry into the Kingdom of Heaven and be under your loving King, ruler, and brother - Jesus.

"When [people are] made over again... they come running irresistibly because they would not have it any other way. You can put all kinds of

obstacles in their path, but they are men of violence. They are going to take the kingdom by force! When they find this pearl they are going to sell everything they have to get it. That hidden treasure is going to be theirs. They are going to thump on that door until it is opened. They are going to have it because they hunger and thirst after righteousness." ^{iv}

Is that you? Are you hungering and thirsting after the Word of God. Do you see the importance of being a member of The Kingdom of God? Are you willing to put aside some of the daily hum-drum activities of your life in order to focus upon Jesus - as your friend, as your savior, as your King, and as your God?

And if you're reading this as one who is like the man walking in a field and finds a great treasure - are you willing to sell all in order to possess - not just the treasure, but the field as well - to possess both Christ and His creation that is full of others who need Him too?

Or you could be reading this as one who is like the woman looking for a Pearl of great price and finds it - are you willing to sell all in order to possess it... This wonderful Pearl who is Jesus?

If so, here's a statement from a wonderful pastor and a dedicated teacher of the Bible, Dr. James Boice;

"Do you understand all these things? No doubt there is much you do not understand, just as there is much I do not understand. But do you believe what you do understand? Are you prepared to act upon your understanding and come to Jesus? Just admit that you are a sinner, in rebellion against God, deserving of His judgment. Believe that, in spite of those facts, God has sent His Son to be your Savior, so, commit yourself to Jesus, promising to follow Him as your Master and Lord. Jesus Himself said, "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them"

[John 13:17 NIV]. ^[iv]

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS WITHOUT ANSWERS

- 1. What is Jesus point in asking, "Have you understood all these things?"**

 - 2. #9 above tells us to look to those who Know their Bibles - both Old and New Testaments - Why?**

 - 3. Why does Jesus tell about these Scribes?**
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FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS

1. What is Jesus point in asking, "Have you understood all these things?"

Jesus is giving His disciples a great overview of The Kingdom of Heaven: God in heaven's absolute authority over His earthly domain. Where He sows His seed in order to grow and multiply His people - where His Son Jesus is King, ruling from heaven. He has given us 9 parables in this one chapter of the book of Matthew gospel. These 9 parables teach us of: 1 - The Sovereignty of God; 2 - The Interference of Evil; 3 - The pattern to go forth and multiply; 4 - The Ordained pattern of Kingdom growth; 5 - With growth comes responsibility for purity; 6 - The people of the Kingdom who found it unlooked for; 7 - The people of the Kingdom who looked for it and found it; 8 - Righteousness will be rewarded, Evil will be dealt with; 9 - Look to those who Know their Bibles - both Old and New Testaments.

2. #9 above tells us to look to those who Know their Bibles - both Old and New Testaments - Why?

A reminder that this little verse here in Matthew is one of the most important verses to consider in the Bible and in the life of the believer. The New Testament is built upon the foundation of the Old Testament. Each chapter from the beginning is packed full of wisdom, knowledge, and information that looks forward to Jesus the Messiah, the Anointed One, The Christ and His death upon the Cross to bring about the salvation and freedom from sin for all those who would read, or listen. Faith in God - Jesus, comes by believing, that comes by hearing, and the power of God's Holy Spirit. We are responsible to know Him, and largely that is done through knowing His Word.

3. Why does Jesus tell about these Scribes?

This is a basic principle. It's not just about Scribes. It's about Scribes who become *"A Disciple of the Kingdom of Heaven."* Jesus is the King of that Kingdom, so becoming a disciple of the King makes you a disciple of that Kingdom. Those who are steeped in the Word of God, who also belong to the King... are of great value... for they can pull important information from the Old Testament and see that importance as it is revealed in the New Testament - *"Bringing out of his treasure new things and old."*

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Jeremiah 18:15
"Don't stumble from the Ancient Path"
2023-09-20

ⁱ <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/treasures-new-and-old> 6/10/2008

ⁱⁱ TheBibleSays.com <https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/matt/matt-13/matthew-1351-52/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Pentecost, J. Dwight, "Thy Kingdom Come," (1915-2014) Victor Books, Scripture Press USA, Canada, England, 1984. He taught for 58 years at Dallas Theological Seminary. Previously he was a pastor near Philadelphia, he taught at the Philadelphia Bible Institute (later named Philadelphia College of Bible, Philadelphia Biblical University, and now Cairn University), received his doctorate in theology at Dallas Theological Seminary and join the DTS faculty until his death in 2014.

^{iv} Boice, James M., "The Parables of Jesus." 1983, Moody Publishers, Chicago.