

Interpreting Jesus' *Parables*

Matthew 13

(Dr. Carl Laney, 2019)

Jesus, the Master Teacher

Controversy Over the King Matthew 11:1-14:12

Jesus has presented His message and authenticated it with miracles.

Now controversy begins, leading to His rejection by the Jewish nation.

Matthew 12 A Key Turning Point

No longer announcing, "the kingdom is at hand."

Matthew 12 *REJECTION*

From this point on in his ministry, Jesus deals with the people as a nation set on the course of rejection.

Questions About the Kingdom

- What will happen to the kingdom?
- Has the kingdom been canceled?
- How will God deal with believers until His kingdom is established?

Rabbis Taught with Parables

- A first century instructional tool
- 4000 rabbinic parables
- Jesus was a Jewish rabbi functioning in a rabbinic world.

Parable of Two Foundations

A person in whom there are good deeds and who has studied the Torah extensively, what is he like?

A man who builds first of stones and then afterwards of mud bricks. Even if a large quantity of water were to collect beside the stones, it would not destroy them. But a person in whom there are no good deeds, though he has studied Torah, what is he like? A man who builds first of mud bricks and then afterwards [of] stones. Even if only a little water collects, it immediately undermines them.

Parable of the Two Cups

A person in whom there are good deeds and who has studied Torah extensively, what is he like?

A cup that has a base. But a person in who there are not good deeds and who has studied Torah extensively, what is he like? A cup that has no base. When the cup is filled it falls on its side and all its contents are spilled.

Parable of the Two Trees

A person whose knowledge is greater than his deeds, what is he like?

A tree whose branches are many but whose roots are few: the wind comes and uproots and overturns it. But a person whose deeds are greater than his knowledge, what is he like? A tree whose branches are few but whose roots are many: even if all the winds were to come and blow against it, they could not move it.

The World of Jesus

“Jesus himself was a Jew and a rabbi who spoke Hebrew, used familiar rabbinic methods of teaching and drew upon Jewish Scriptures and oral rabbinic traditions.”

David Bivin, *Rabbinic Parables*

Hermeneutics of Parables

What is a parable?

From *parabollo* (to compare) and denotes placing one thing beside another to make a *comparison*.

The Problem with Parables

Parables have been subjected to the excesses of *allegorism*.

The Purpose of Parables

- Reveal and conceal
- Warn of rejection
- Perpetuate teaching

The Interpretation of Parables

- Recover the setting
- Discover the problem
- Understand the background

The Interpretation of Parables

- Determine the central truth
- Recognize the kingdom message
- Make personal application

Making Application

- Is there a truth to learn?
- Is there an attitude to develop?
- Is there something to do?

Explaining the Kingdom

- What is going to happen next?
- Has the kingdom been cancelled?
- How will God be working in this age?

Mysteries of the Kingdom

The Shadows

The Substance

The Kingdom of God

Present Age

Tribulation

Age to Come

Inter-Advent Age

Rejection

Acceptance

The Parables

They reveal some of the significant features of the *Kingdom of God* as it is being manifested in this present age.

Parable of the Sower

Four soils and four responses.
Interpreted in 13:19-23

Parable of the Sower

There will be a proclamation of the kingdom with varying responses--depending on the preparedness of the soil.

Parable of the Tares

A counterfeit kingdom will parallel the true kingdom in the present age.

Parable of the Mustard Seed

The mustard seed is the smallest of the garden seeds.

The kingdom may have an insignificant beginning, but will grow to great proportions.

Parable of the Leavening Process

The kingdom will grow by an internal dynamic rather than an outward organization.

Parable of the Hid Treasure

The kingdom is of great value and worth pursuing.

The Parable of the Pearl

The kingdom is of surpassing value. Its' worth surpasses all else in life!

Parable of the Drag-Net

Use of a drag net or seine

Parable of the Drag Net

After the catch, the fisherman must separate the good fish from the bad fish

Parable of the Drag Net

There will be a judgment to separate the good from the bad and take believers into the kingdom

Parable of the Householder

Disciples must search the treasury of God's Word to discover *old* and *new* truths about the kingdom.



"Knowing God through the Bible has become the essence of my life."

A Wetherell Johnson