

Understanding the Bible

Matthew

Tom Wilson

DRAFT

A Bible Study Guide

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The back cover caricature of the author was drawn by the well-known artist Jan van Haasteren as a favor to Els Rooswinkel, who maintained a web site dedicated to puzzles with artwork drawn by Jan. I originally created a version of this web site and handed it over to Els, who developed the site far beyond its initial content. In appreciation of my effort, Els asked Jan to draw me.

The latest edition of this e-book is available via <https://thechurchoforlando.org>.

Draft Edition		This draft is intentionally incomplete (see the Preface)
— Update A	4/18/26	Chapter 13 and most of Chapter 25



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Preface

This draft has been made available in an incomplete form to provide the material that is referenced by completed study guides. Material not referenced might also appear in the draft simply because it is nearly complete. The content of this draft may not be fully developed nor polished.



Dedication

To Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior, without whom nothing would be possible

Colossians 1:16—For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him

To Dahlia, my wife and my helper in all things

Genesis 2:18—And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.

To all the members of the body of Christ

2 Corinthians 13:11—Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

CHAPTER

1

Matthew 1 (planned)



CHAPTER

2

Matthew 2 (planned)



CHAPTER

3

Matthew 3 (planned)



CHAPTER

4

Matthew 4 (planned)



CHAPTER

5

Matthew 5 (planned)



CHAPTER

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Matthew 6 (planned)



CHAPTER

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Matthew 7 (planned)



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Matthew 13

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This chapter has a few parables that also appear in *Mark* and *Luke*. Comparative studies of these parables appear in *The Language of Prophecy* study guide [7]. Each appropriate passage will have a 👍 in the heading's margin. When conclusions are drawn from the comparative study, a 👉 will appear in the margin when the supporting discussion is absent in this study guide.

13.1 Verses 1-9: The Parable of the Sower



Matthew 13:1-9

- 1 The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side.
- 2 And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.
- 3 And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;
- 4 And when he sowed, some [seeds] fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:
- 5 Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:
- 6 And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.
- 7 And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:
- 8 But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.
- 9 Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Jesus began to teach a series of parables about the coming kingdom. He explains this parable in verses 18-23 after explaining why he spake in parables in verses 10-17.

Parables use symbolic language to teach a truth. In this parable, the following symbols are used:

1. a sower (verse 3),
2. seeds (verse 4),



3. different soil types (verses 4-8), and
4. fowls (verse 4).

Also, the different yields (verse 8) might also mean something. We will discuss this passage further in Section 13.3. Verse 9 is basically explained by the next passage.

13.2 Verses 10-17: The Purpose of Parables



Matthew 13:10-17
10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?
11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.
12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath.
13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.
14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive:
15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and [their] ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with [their] eyes, and hear with [their] ears, and should understand with [their] heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.
16 But blessed [are] your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear.
17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous [men] have desired to see [those things] which ye see, and have not seen [them]; and to hear [those things] which ye hear, and have not heard [them].

In verse 10, Jesus was asked why he was teaching in parables. In verse 11, he explained why he talked in parables: he wanted the disciples to know what he wanted to reveal, but he didn't want the unbelievers to know it. Israel had a history of being hard-hearted (i.e., not believing what God said). Esias, which is simply the Greek form of Isaiah, prophesied on the matter because God knew that Israel's unbelief would persist. Jesus reached a point in his ministry that he stopped talking as clearly as he was before (this was essentially the accusation of chapter 12). Then he began talking to the masses in parables. This would end up further hardening their hearts: they were told truth, yet they wouldn't believe it.

Verse 12 says "whosoever hath", which might be a reference to *faith*:

Romans 10:17
17 So then faith [cometh] by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

So, Jesus was saying this: If you believe, you will have more to believe. If you believe not, you might even turn from what you already believed.

Verse 13 essentially explains why: they don't believe what they see and hear. Therefore, they do not understand. Verses 14-15 quote the following:

Isaiah 6:9-10
9 And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.
10 Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.

In verse 16, Jesus emphasized that the disciples would see and hear what he was teaching about the kingdom. Verse 17 said that the prophets who spoke about the kingdom never got the same opportunity. That is suggested by this verse:

Isaiah 64:4
4 For since the beginning of the world [men] have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside thee, [what] he hath prepared for him that waiteth for him.

The *The Language of Prophecy* study guide [7] goes into more detail about why parables are used in the bible.



13.3 Verses 18-23: The Parable of the Sower Explained



Matthew 13:18-23

18 Hear ye therefore the parable of the sower.
 19 When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth [it] not, then cometh the wicked [one], and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side.
 20 But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it;
 21 Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.
 22 He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.
 23 But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth [it]; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

This parable doesn't highlight who the sower is. But, we can just conclude that it is anyone who sows the seed. The seed is the word of God. More particularly, it is the gospel of the kingdom (mentioned in verse 19) since that will align with much of the gospel accounts. Jesus wasn't the only one preaching the gospel of the kingdom.

There are four places that the seed falls. The way side isn't a proper soil for sowing. It hasn't been prepared: The word is rejected by immediate unbelief. The ground essentially represents the condition of the heart of the individual. The fowls represent the devil. We can expand that to include all of the devils.

Some suggest that "the wicked one" is the antichrist based upon this verse:



2 Thessalonians 2:8

8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:

However, Jesus' audience wouldn't have had that scripture. It is true that the antichrist will be present during the tribulation, but this parable was applicable since the kingdom began to be preached by John the Baptist (i.e., before the tribulation).

In verse 20, note that the seed springs up: The word was received. The three accounts give you important words as to why: tribulation, persecution, affliction, and temptation. The hearer does not endure in the word. That is important:



1 Peter 1:25

25 But the word of the Lord endureth for ever. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you.

John 8:31

31 Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, [then] are ye my disciples indeed;

Matthew 24:13

13 But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

In scripture, a thorn can represent an apostate¹—someone who once believed something but no longer does. The three accounts detail what this means: care of this world, deceitfulness of riches, lusts of other things, and pleasures of this life. The believer produces no fruit because he returns to unbelief.



All of the previous soil types align with this verse:

1 John 2:16

16 For all that [is] in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

The *wayside* aligns with the pride of life.

¹ Refer to "The Four Trees" in the *The Language of Prophecy* study guide [7].



Psalms 10:4

4 The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek [after God]: God [is] not in all his thoughts.

The devil's sin was pride, as his heart was "lifted up":

Ezekiel 28:17

17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

These do not receive the word because they think that they know better.

The *stony ground* aligns with the lust of the flesh:

Matthew 26:41

41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed [is] willing, but the flesh [is] weak.

Among thorns aligns with the lust of the eyes.

Genesis 3:6

6 And when the woman saw that the tree [was] good for food, and that it [was] pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make [one] wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

The good ground produces fruit from the seed. But note that there are different yields: 100...60...30. Not all good soils are the same! Is it the soil (i.e., the heart), or something else that causes the variation? The comparative study in the *The Language of Prophecy* study guide [7] has a side study that explains the variations.

Let's note that the outcome of the sowing isn't really dependent upon the seed; it is determined by the soil.

Some incorrectly assume that the four soils indicate that one-fourth of the people fall into each category. We will see why that is probably not true shortly. Let's confirm that the 4 soil types do not represent one-fourth of the people:

Zechariah 13:7-9

7 Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man [that is] my fellow, saith the LORD of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.
8 And it shall come to pass, [that] in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off [and] die; but the third shall be left therein.
9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It [is] my people: and they shall say, The LORD [is] my God.

A "third part" suggests one-third of Israel will believe (i.e., they are the good ground). "Two parts" would be the sum of the other three soil types.

13.4 Verses 24-30: The Parable of the Wheat and Tares**Matthew 13:24-30**

24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field:
25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.
26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.
27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares?
28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?
29 But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.
30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

The parable of the wheat and the tares tells the believers in the kingdom church what they can expect leading up to Christ's return. The parable was given in public, whereas the explanation was given in private. But notice that the householder was aware of the tares (verse 27). We will address this passage further in Section 13.6.

13.5 Verses 31-35: The Parables of the Mustard Seed and the Leaven



This short passage will be divided into three parts.

13.5.1 The Parable of the Mustard Seed

Matthew 13:31-32

31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field:
32 Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.

Let's list the symbols that we know:

1. A man: probably the Son of man (the parable of the wheat and tares)
2. A field: the world (the parable of the wheat and tares)
3. Fowls: ministers of Satan (parable of the sower)

In the parable of the sower, the sower sowed seeds. In this parable, he apparently sowed just one seed.

Here are the new symbols to solve:

1. The grain of mustard seed
2. The tree
3. Lodging in the branches / under the shadow

What is the "grain of mustard seed"?

Matthew 17:20

20 And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Luke 17:6

6 And the Lord said, If ye had faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye might say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou plucked up by the root, and be thou planted in the sea; and it should obey you.

The "grain of mustard seed" is *faith*, the faith of believers in the kingdom. In these verses, mountains or trees can symbolize kingdoms. Faith is necessary in God's kingdom:

Hebrews 11:6

6 But without faith [it is] impossible to please [him]: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and [that] he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

A mustard plant is an herb. A mustard seed should grow into a small bush. But this seed grows into a tree, which is not the natural growth:

Genesis 1:11-12

11 And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, [and] the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed [is] in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.
12 And the earth brought forth grass, [and] herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed [was] in itself, after his kind: and God saw that [it was] good.

Herbs and trees produce after their kinds. We will see why this unnatural growth occurs shortly.

While a tree can represent a kingdom, it more completely represents the leader and his kingdom. This tree represents the antichrist and his kingdom. While Jesus intended for his church to come from faith, it is taken over and turned into something else. As we already know, the fowls, or birds of the air, represent the ministers of Satan and all three trees have them present. The likely reason that this bush becomes a tree is explained in the next parable.



13.5.2 The Parable of the Leaven

This parable accompanies the previous one because they go together.

Matthew 13:33

33 Another parable spake he unto them; The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

Here are the symbols that we must understand:

1. The leaven
2. The woman
3. Three measures of meal
4. Hiding the leaven in the meal

Leaven is a substance added to bread dough that causes it to expand or rise. *Yeast* is an example of leaven. It symbolizes pride and sin. We have verses that tell us what it symbolizes:

Matthew 16:6

6 Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

Matthew 16:11-12

11 How is it that ye do not understand that I spake [it] not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees?
 12 Then understood they how that he bade [them] not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.

Mark 8:15

15 And he charged them, saying, Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, and [of] the leaven of Herod.

Luke 12:1

1 In the mean time, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware ye of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

So, leaven represents bad doctrine:

1. Pharisees: hypocrisy, legalism, and self-righteousness
2. Saducees: skepticism and unbelief
3. Herod: corruption, materialism, and worldliness

These align with the three types of bad soils in the parable of the sower.

Galatians 5:9

9 A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump.

Side Study 13.1: What a Woman Symbolizes

A woman can symbolize Israel:

Revelation 12:1

1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

The woman is mentioned several times throughout Revelation 12.

A woman can also symbolize a corrupt religious system:

Zechariah 5:7-8

7 And, behold, there was lifted up a talent of lead: and this [is] a woman that sitteth in the midst of the ephah.
 8 And he said, This [is] wickedness. And he cast it into the midst of the ephah; and he cast the weight of lead upon the mouth thereof.

Revelation 17:1-6

- 1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:
- 2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.
- 3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.
- 4 And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication:
- 5 And upon her forehead [was] a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.
- 6 And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

When you put the two together, the woman represents a corrupt religious system that is within Israel itself.

The three measures of meal appears here:

Genesis 18:6

- 6 And Abraham hastened into the tent unto Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead [it], and make cakes upon the hearth.

It is generally associated with one of Israel's offerings and there was not supposed to be leaven in it:

Leviticus 2:1

- 1 And when any will offer a meat offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be [of] fine flour; and he shall pour oil upon it, and put frankincense thereon:

Leviticus 2:4

- 4 And if thou bring an oblation of a meat offering baken in the oven, [it shall be] unleavened cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, or unleavened wafers anointed with oil.

Leviticus 2:11

- 11 No meat offering, which ye shall bring unto the LORD, shall be made with leaven: for ye shall burn no leaven, nor any honey, in any offering of the LORD made by fire.

This parable helps explain the parable of the mustard seed. Faith is involved, but many believe the wrong things. The bush grows into a tree because of the bad doctrine—the doctrine of devils:

1 Timothy 4:1-2

- 1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

13.5.3 Prophecy and Parables**Matthew 13:34-35**

- 34 All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them:
- 35 That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world.

The last verse partially quotes Psalms 78:2. The psalm declares Israel to be a parable (the past generation declaring to a future generation):

Psalms 78:1-8

- 1 Give ear, O my people, [to] my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth.
- 2 I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old:



- 3 Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us.
 4 We will not hide [them] from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done.
 5 For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children:
 6 That the generation to come might know [them, even] the children [which] should be born; [who] should arise and declare [them] to their children:
 7 That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments:
 8 And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation [that] set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God.

But, shouldn't we expect to find clear truth in the bible? Not always—we must study to understand. Simple reading will often not suffice.

13.6 Verses 36-43: The Parable of the Wheat and Tares Explained

Matthew 13:36-43

- 36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.
 37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;
 38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked [one];
 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.
 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.
 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;
 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.
 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

So, the sower is the Son of man, or Jesus. While others sowed seed in the first parable, it is Jesus who builds his church:

Matthew 16:18

- 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Now, the presentation of the parable says that the enemy came “while men slept”. The explanation does not expound upon this. Sleeping is normal in the cycle of daily life, but it suggests action that would not be observed.

Jude 4

- 4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

The field is the world. We are told that the good seed, or wheat, are the children of the kingdom (i.e., the believers). This differs from the first parable where the seed was the word of God (i.e., the gospel of the kingdom). The enemy is the wicked one, or the devil. The tares are the children of the wicked one.

Other scriptures highlight who someone's spiritual father was:

John 8:38-40

- 38 I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.
 39 They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.
 40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.

John 8:44

44 Ye are of [your] father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

Abraham's works reflected righteous faith. The devil's works included murder and lying. Matthew 23:13-33 provides a strong rebuke of the scribes and Pharisees. It ends with this verse:

Matthew 23:33

33 [Ye] serpents, [ye] generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

1 John 2:19

19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would [no doubt] have continued with us: but [they went out], that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

The harvest is the end of the world. The end of the world will be Christ's coming:

Matthew 24:3

3 And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what [shall be] the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?

The reapers are the angels.

Matthew 24:30-31

30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.
31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.

The next passage aligns with this judgment:

Matthew 24:40-41

40 Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left.
41 Two [women shall be] grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left.

Those taken are the tares.

As the kingdom approaches, some will receive the word of God. At the same time, there will be many who do not. Both believers and unbelievers will coexist. Distinguishing the believer from the unbeliever may seem impossible. But when Christ returns, the unbelievers will be gathered and destroyed. The remaining believers will go into the kingdom.

13.7 Verses 44-46: The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

The remaining three parables were given in private (after the parable of the wheat and tares was explained). The next two have meaning that align with Jesus' death on the cross. These two will be paired together.

13.7.1 The Parable of the Hidden Treasure**Matthew 13:44**

44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

Let's identify the symbols that we know. The *field* is the world and the *man* is Jesus (2nd parable). We have the following questions:

1. What is the treasure?
2. Why is it hidden?
3. Why does the man sell all he has and buy the field?

Let's start with identifying the treasure:



Exodus 19:5-6

- 5 Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth [is] mine:
6 And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These [are] the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

Psalms 135:4

- 4 For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, [and] Israel for his peculiar treasure.

So, the treasure is Israel. They are “hidden” because they are scattered:

Psalms 83:3-4

- 3 They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones.
4 They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from [being] a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance.

Deuteronomy 4:27

- 27 And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you.

Notice that they are hidden, found, and hidden again (the latter is probably still in the future).

Jesus forsook all to buy the world:

John 3:16

- 16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Hebrews 12:2

- 2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

2 Corinthians 8:9

- 9 For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

Jesus died for the nation whether they believed or not.

13.7.2 The Parable of the Pearl of Great Price**Matthew 13:45-46**

- 45 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls:
46 Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

As in the previous parable, the man is Jesus, and he sold all that he had. Israel are viewed as God's jewels:

Malachi 3:16-17

- 16 Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard [it], and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.
17 And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.

A pearl is produced by great irritation (persecution) by something that is unclean (the heathen—both unbelieving Jews and Gentiles). The believers are likened to a living stone, which is a pearl:

1 Peter 2:4-9

- 4 To whom coming, [as unto] a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, [and] precious,



- 5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.
- 6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.
- 7 Unto you therefore which believe [he is] precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,
- 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, [even to them] which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.
- 9 But ye [are] a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

God bought Israel in the past:

Exodus 15:16

16 Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be [as] still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, [which] thou hast purchased.

Deuteronomy 32:6

6 Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? [is] not he thy father [that] hath bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee?

Psalms 74:2

2 Remember thy congregation, [which] thou hast purchased of old; the rod of thine inheritance, [which] thou hast redeemed; this mount Zion, wherein thou hast dwelt.

And he purchased (or, redeemed) them again:

Acts 20:28

28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

2 Peter 2:1

1 But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.

Jesus bought the world and regained Israel. But, the pearl denotes that it will consist of only his church.

13.8 Verses 47-50: The Parable of the Net

While this parable goes with the preceding six, it really stands alone in that it does not have a corresponding parable paired with it. *Seven* symbolizes the kingdom during the last 1000 years of history (refer to the *Biblical Time* study guide [1]). This parable deals with the Gentiles.

Matthew 13:47-50

- 47 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind:
- 48 Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.
- 49 So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just,
- 50 And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

We have the following symbols to solve:

1. the net
2. the sea
3. the kinds (of fish)
4. when the net is full
5. the good and the bad



6. the vessels

There are other curious things that we won't pursue: Who are "they" in the parable? It says "they drew to shore", so it implies that there is a boat.

It seems like a good idea to associate this parable with Matthew 4:18-19, where Jesus says the apostles will be fishers of men, the parallel account in Luke 5:4-6, where the net broke due to the number of fish, and John 21:6-11, where there is another miraculous catch of fish. But, the problem with these stories is that they do not involve any separating of the fish. The passage in *John* gives a number of great fish, but no mention of kinds. Those passages involve the apostles ministry to Israel. This parable does not.

Many assume that the net is the gospel of the kingdom, but let's see that we are not dealing with Israel here first. Then we will figure out what the net might be. Let's see what the sea represents:

Isaiah 57:20
20 But the wicked [are] like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.

Revelation 17:15
15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

So, the sea appears to symbolize the nations and not Israel. Fish represent men (in general):

Habakkuk 1:14-17
14 And makest men as the fishes of the sea, as the creeping things, [that have] no ruler over them? 15 They take up all of them with the angle, they catch them in their net, and gather them in their drag; therefore they rejoice and are glad. 16 Therefore they sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag; because by them their portion [is] fat, and their meat plenteous. 17 Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?

Ecclesiastes 9:12
12 For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so [are] the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.

Hosea 4:3
3 Therefore shall the land mourn, and every one that dwelleth therein shall languish, with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven; yea, the fishes of the sea also shall be taken away.

Zephaniah 1:3
3 I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.

This next verse refers to a time in the kingdom, but it does mention *kinds* of fish:

Ezekiel 47:10
10 And it shall come to pass, [that] the fishers shall stand upon it from Engedi even unto Eneglaim; they shall be a [place] to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many.

So, the net is the instrument with which the fish are caught. It shouldn't represent a *gospel* since the net catches good and bad. We will come back to the net once again.

Verse 48 mentions "when it was full". It may be that verse 49 says when that is: the end of the world. It might also answer the "they": the angels. We already saw in the parable of the wheat and the tares that the angels mentioned there and the same as in Matthew 24:30-31. But, we also have this verse:

Matthew 25:31
31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:



This is the first verse of the passage about the judgment of the nations (also called the *sheep and goats judgment*). This appears in Section 25.3. That mentions Jesus sitting on his throne; this parable also mentions some that are sitting down.

The *good* are gathered into vessels (possibly typifying the kingdom). Then the *bad* are cast away. This is the same order as the sheep and goats judgment. It is the opposite order of the wheat and the tares.

13.9 Verses 51-52: New and Old Treasures

Matthew 13:51-52

51 Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord.
52 Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe [which is] instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man [that is] an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure [things] new and old.

A scribe handled the word of God. So, the treasure here is the word of God. The “old” would be prophecies about the kingdom from the old testament. The “new” would be the teachings that Jesus was presenting.

13.10 Verses 53-58: Jesus Rejected at Nazareth

Matthew 13:53-58

53 And it came to pass, [that] when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.
54 And when he was come into his own country, he taught them in their synagogue, insomuch that they were astonished, and said, Whence hath this [man] this wisdom, and [these] mighty works?
55 Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?
56 And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this [man] all these things?
57 And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house.
58 And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

After the parables of the mysteries of the kingdom were completed, Jesus returned to Nazareth. He taught in the synagogue, and what he said amazed everyone. However, they didn’t really believe because he was just the son of a carpenter.

Note what *Mark* says:

Mark 6:3

3 Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him.

Jesus was a carpenter like his (step-)father was. Both passages say that Jesus had brothers and sisters. Obviously, Mary had other children. This fact is studied in more detail in the appendix of the *How to Study the Bible – Volume 1: Basic Topics* study guide [2].

Jesus’ power was not diminished by the people’s unbelief. He didn’t do many mighty works because the people wouldn’t come out to him. This is far different from the disciples’ own unbelief hindering their bestowed power; we will see that in Chapter 17.



CHAPTER

14

Matthew 14 (planned)



CHAPTER

15

Matthew 15 (planned)



CHAPTER

16

Matthew 16 (planned)



CHAPTER

17

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Matthew 25

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This chapter contains three teachings that concern Jesus' return. Two of these continue what was being taught at the end of chapter 24:

Matthew 24:44-46

- 44 Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh.
 45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?
 46 Blessed [is] that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.

The first teaching focuses on the wise servant; the second teaching focuses on the faithful servant. They are to be ready since they don't know when Jesus will return. Those that are ready are blessed; those that are not ready are cursed.

Israel is supposed to be God's servants. Most of Jesus' teachings deal with service rather than salvation. Most of Israel would confess that they have a covenant with God, but few are obedient to it.

25.1 Verses 1-13: The Parable of the Ten Virgins

This teaching focuses on the wise and unwise servants. Refer to the chapter introduction as to why this is a continuation of the previous chapter's teaching.

Matthew 25:1-13

- 1 Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.
 2 And five of them were wise, and five [were] foolish.
 3 They that [were] foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them:
 4 But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.
 5 While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.
 6 And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him.
 7 Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.
 8 And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.
 9 But the wise answered, saying, [Not so]; lest there be not enough for us and you: but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.



- 10 And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage: and the door was shut.
- 11 Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.
- 12 But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.
- 13 Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh.

In verse 1, the word *then* links you to the end of the previous chapter. The key points from Matthew 24:36-51 are:

- No one knows when the return will be, so you must be ready.
- There are two servants: the wicked servant will be taken and the faithful servant left.
- The wicked servant is cast out of the kingdom.

So, this teaching tells how the kingdom will begin and who will enter in. It continues the idea of the two kinds of servants.

Now, who are the “virgins”? These are not maids that will marry the bridegroom (there won’t be multiple wives). They are tribulation saints. A particular group of these saints is described here:

Revelation 14:4-5

- 4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, [being] the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.
- 5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

When this passage mentions being defiled, it speaks of spiritual fornication:

Revelation 14:8

- 8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

Revelation 2:14

- 14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

Revelation 2:20

- 20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

This all concerns turning from idolatry back to God. God will send the antichrist to separate the believers from the unbelievers. But the believers must also keep the commands of Jesus.

So, why are there 10 virgins? The number *ten* could symbolize the 10 commandments, but *five* usually symbolizes the law. Regardless, there is less focus on the law during Jesus ministry and more focus on his new teachings. But, *ten* can also symbolize the Gentiles. (refer to *How to Study the Bible – Volume 2: Intermediate Topics* study guide [3] for the meanings of some numbers). This makes sense if we consider that the Jews are scattered among the Gentiles. This is a key commandment before Jesus ascends to heaven after his resurrection:

Matthew 28:19-20

- 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:
- 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.

What do the lamps represent (still in verse 1)?

Isaiah 62:1-2

- 1 For Zion’s sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp [that] burneth.

2 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the LORD shall name.

So, the (burning) lamps represent the righteousness of the believers. We will consider what the oil means shortly. Keep in mind Israel's purpose under the law:

Deuteronomy 4:6-8

6 Keep therefore and do [them]; for this [is] your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say, Surely this great nation [is] a wise and understanding people.
 7 For what nation [is there so] great, who [hath] God [so] nigh unto them, as the LORD our God [is] in all [things that] we call upon him [for]?
 8 And what nation [is there so] great, that hath statutes and judgments [so] righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?

Finally, verse 1 also mentions the bridegroom. Who is that?

Matthew 9:14-15

14 Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?
 15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.

So, Jesus is the bridegroom. There is no mention of where the bridegroom was; he simply is not present. Other teachings address this.

Verse 2 says that there are 5 that are wise and 5 that are foolish. Rather than drawing attention to what *five* symbolizes, we should just note that half are wise and half are foolish. This takes us back to the previous chapter where "the one shall be taken, and the other left".

Verses 3-4 makes the distinction between the wise and the foolish: whether or not they took oil with them. This is an issue of preparedness. There is oil in the lamp, but not all have extra oil in vessels.

While oil can typify the Holy Ghost, it does not in this parable. The simple reasoning is that you cannot go out and buy more of it (i.e., verse 9). Let's see some verses about the oil for lamps:

Exodus 27:20

20 And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always.

Leviticus 24:2

2 Command the children of Israel, that they bring unto thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually.

Here, the oil was to be provided so that the lamp in the tabernacle was always burning. It required diligence and work to provide it. Likewise, the virgins were not to let the lamps go out. There needs to be light in a time of darkness (i.e., the tribulation).

Jesus taught that there would be a delay before his return. Verse 5 relates that. Because of the delay, the virgins fell asleep. When the cry of his return came in verse 6, they all went to meet him. In verse 7, they trimmed their lamps, which would suggest cutting the wick to product a brighter light without smoke. We might simply think of this as preparing how you look before you stand before your master.

Verse 8 tells us of the foolish virgins whose lamps have gone out because they have no oil. They want to get oil from the wise, but the wise do not give theirs. Instead, they are told to go buy more oil (verse 9). We shouldn't think that their is a very minimal time between this and meeting the bridegroom. Surely, a very small amount of oil would satisfy an immediately following of the former by the latter.

Verse 10 says that while the foolish virgins were scrambling to get more oil, the bridegroom appeared. The wise entered into the marriage and the door was shut. When the foolish virgins came to the door (verse 11), they were not let in. This particular detail concerning the door being shut and those without not being able to get in is also taught here:

Luke 13:23-29

- 23 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them,
 24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able.
 25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:
 26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets.
 27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all [ye] workers of iniquity.
 28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you [yourselves] thrust out.
 29 And they shall come from the east, and [from] the west, and from the north, and [from] the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God.

Note that it says that they would not be in the kingdom.

This passage explains why the servants are not known (verse 12):

Matthew 7:21-23

- 21 Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.
 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?
 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

It is unlikely that unbelievers would be able to do miraculous works. So, these are believers. Yet, they did not the Father's will.

Finally, verse 13 says that the servants will not know the day or the hour. Here are related passages:

Revelation 3:2-3

- 2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.
 3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

Revelation 16:15

- 15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed [is] he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

1 Thessalonians 5:2-3

- 2 For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.
 3 For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

25.2 Verses 14-30: The Parable of the Talents (planned)**25.3 Verses 31-46: The Judgment of the Nations**

When this teaching becomes a reality, the tribulation will be over. God will have dealt with Israel and the broken covenant. His servants will have been rewarded or punished. Now, it is time to deal with the Gentiles.

Matthew 25:31-46

- 31 When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:
 32 And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth [his] sheep from the goats:
 33 And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left.
 34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:

- 35 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in:
- 36 Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.
- 37 Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed [thee]? or thirsty, and gave [thee] drink?
- 38 When saw we thee a stranger, and took [thee] in? or naked, and clothed [thee]?
- 39 Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?
- 40 And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done [it] unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done [it] unto me.
- 41 Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:
- 42 For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink:
- 43 I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not.
- 44 Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?
- 45 Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did [it] not to one of the least of these, ye did [it] not to me.
- 46 And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.

Verse 31 says that Jesus will return to sit on his throne. What throne is that?

Luke 1:32

- 32 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

Jeremiah 3:16-17

- 16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit [it]; neither shall [that] be done any more.
- 17 At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD; and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem: neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.

Verse 32 says that the nations will be gathered. That first happens at Armageddon:

Revelation 16:16

- 16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

Zephaniah 3:8

- 8 Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination [is] to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, [even] all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy.

Zechariah 14:2

- 2 For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city.

Isaiah 34:2

- 2 For the indignation of the LORD [is] upon all nations, and [his] fury upon all their armies: he hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter.

Joel 3:2

- 2 I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and [for] my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

Joel 3:9-14

- 9 Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:
- 10 Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I [am] strong.
- 11 Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD.
- 12 Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about.
- 13 Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness [is] great.
- 14 Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the LORD [is] near in the valley of decision.

Verse 34 begins the judgment of the sheep. This is the only place in scripture where Gentiles are symbolized as sheep. That is a symbol usually reserved for Israel. The connection is made because of the Abrahamic covenant, which is finally coming to pass as intended. This is Gentile salvation going into the kingdom. It isn't by the gospel of the kingdom nor the gospel of Christ. Verse 34 says that this kingdom has been prepared since the foundation of the world (that's prophecy and not mystery). The best analogy is demonstrated in the movie "Schindler's List".

The passage also describes the condition of the believing Jews during the tribulation. They are in dire need of the basics of life.

Verse 41 begins the judgment of the goats. Of course, their fate is the opposite of that of the sheep.

Verse 46 summarizes the fates of the two groups: Those that blessed Israel were eternally blessed with life. Those that cursed Israel were eternally cursed with punishment. Of course, this is part of the earliest promise to Abraham:

Genesis 12:3

- 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Today's world wants to exalt the goat: GOAT = Greatest Of All Time. Of course, the goat in scripture is sometimes not a good symbol.

This ends the long discourse that began at the beginning of the previous chapter.

CHAPTER

26

Matthew 26 (planned)



CHAPTER

27

Matthew 27 (planned)



CHAPTER

28

Matthew 28 (planned)





Reference Materials

Completed and draft e-books are available via <https://thechurchoforlando.org>.

- [1] *Biblical Time*, Tom Wilson, e-book; First Edition, 9/7/25
- [2] *How to Study the Bible – Volume 1: Basic Topics*, Tom Wilson, e-book; partial Draft Edition, TBD
- [3] *How to Study the Bible – Volume 2: Intermediate Topics*, Tom Wilson, e-book; partial Draft Edition, 2/25/26
- [4] *Luke*, Tom Wilson, e-book; First Edition, planned
- [5] *The Biblical Angels*, Tom Wilson, e-book; First Edition, Revision A, 9/11/24
- [6] *The Biblical Creation*, Tom Wilson, e-book; First Edition, 1/1/24
- [7] *The Language of Prophecy*, Tom Wilson, e-book; partial Draft Edition, 1/8/26
- [8] *The Revelation of God*, Tom Wilson, e-book; Draft Edition, 1/19/25 (first edition coming soon)



Index of Bible Verses

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