

**THE SEVEN  
PROPHETIC PARABLES  
OF CHRIST**

**Earl R. Borders**

*Published by*  
**The Church of God, Inc.  
675 North Cedar Street  
Newark, Ohio 43055**

## -PREFACE-

It is with great joy that I present to you this book, which is entitled, *The Seven Prophetic Parables of Christ*. For a great while, I have had a burden to see the saints be provided with materials that expound the precious prophetic Truths, especially as they relate to the Gospel Day. It has always been my desire to see brethren more capable than I step forth, see the need, and produce these writings. Unfortunately, this has not occurred, and the Lord has intensified my burden to publish these precious Truths in written form.

The contents of this book were originally aired as messages which were preached on our weekly radio broadcast. In an effort to place these Truths in the hands of the church, we have elected to forgo the editing process and provide them to you basically as they were originally transcribed. Due to the nature of teaching these Truths in the form of a weekly program, you will notice some review and repetition. Since we feel the need for printing these Truths is so paramount, we trust that you can overlook both the lack of editing as well as any repetition, and that you will be able to gain benefit from the content.

I would also like to thank Brother Lloyd T. (Tom) Fowler who has spent numerous hours transcribing these radio messages so that this work might be possible.

Any errors which you may find are mine. For any good that may be accomplished, all the praise, honor, and glory should be ascribed to our Lord.

So, for your edification and for the glory of God, I present to you *The Seven Prophetic Parables of Christ*.

Yours in Christ,

Earl R. Borders  
Newark, Ohio  
February 1999

## DISCLAIMER

**NOTE:** These transcribed messages are taken directly from the broadcast tapes, as nearly as possible, word for word. They are not edited, except for punctuation for easier reading purposes. Due to time restrictions, it is not possible to edit them and be able to offer them this quickly in booklet form.

I have used **BOLD CAPITAL LETTERS** for emphasis, as nearly as possible, as they are emphasized in the broadcast messages. Also, the words taken from the Greek, Hebrew, and Latin languages are in *CAPITAL ITALICS*. I have determined, as nearly as humanly possible, along with Bro. Earl R. Borders, to ensure that they, and their meanings, are correct. Also, titles of books and articles are in *CAPITAL ITALICS*.

Each **PART** within each **CHAPTER** represents a separate broadcast message on that "parable." This also included the chapter on the "*Introduction to the Parables.*"

THE TRANSCRIBER  
Bro. L. T. Fowler

# The Seven Prophetic Parables of Christ

		<b>33 A.D.</b>
<b>Parable of the Sower</b> <b>Matthew 13:3-8 and 18-23</b> <b>THE MORNING-TIME CHURCH</b>	<b>237</b> <b>Years</b>	<b>270</b>
<b>Parable of the Tares</b> <b>Matthew 13:24-30 and 37-43</b> <b>THE MORNING-TIME APOSTASY</b>	<b>260</b> <b>Years</b>	<b>530</b>
<b>Parable of the Mustard Seed</b> <b>Matthew 13:31-32</b> <b>THE ERA OF PAPAL ROME</b>	<b>1000</b> <b>Years</b>	<b>1530</b>
<b>Parable of the Leaven</b> <b>Matthew 13:33</b> <b>LUTHERANISM—JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH</b>	<b>200</b> <b>Years</b>	<b>1730</b>
<b>Parable of the Treasure</b> <b>Matthew 13:44</b> <b>METHODISM—JUSTIFICATION AND HOLINESS</b>	<b>150</b> <b>Years</b>	<b>1880</b>
<b>Parable of the Pearl</b> <b>Matthew 13:45-56</b> <b>First Portion of the Evening Time</b> <b>JUSTIFICATION, HOLINESS, UNITY</b> <b>AND THE CHURCH OF GOD MESSAGE</b>	<b>50</b> <b>Years</b>	<b>1930</b>
<b>Parable of the Net</b> <b>Matthew 13:47-50</b> <b>Final Portion of the Evening Time</b> <b>A DAY OF SEPARATION AND GATHERING</b>	<b>?</b>	<b>End of Time</b>

# Table of Contents

## Chapter One

---

### **An Introduction to the Parables**

Part One . . . . .	1
Part Two . . . . .	9
Part Three . . . . .	18

## Chapter Two

---

### **The Parable of the Sower**

Part One . . . . .	27
Part Two . . . . .	36
Part Three . . . . .	45
Part Four . . . . .	54

## Chapter Three

---

### **The Parable of the Tares**

Part One . . . . .	63
Part Two . . . . .	72
Part Three . . . . .	81
Part Four . . . . .	90

## Chapter Four

---

### **The Parable of the Mustard Seed**

Part One . . . . .	98
Part Two . . . . .	107
Part Three . . . . .	117
Part Four . . . . .	126
Part Five . . . . .	135

**Chapter Five**

---

**The Parable of the Leaven**

Part One . . . . . 151  
Part Two . . . . . 157  
Part Three . . . . . 165  
Part Four . . . . . 172

**Chapter Six**

---

**The Parable of the Treasure**

Part One . . . . . 182  
Part Two . . . . . 191  
Part Three . . . . . 199

**Chapter Seven**

---

**The Parable of the Pearl**

Part One . . . . . 208  
Part Two . . . . . 216  
Part Three . . . . . 225  
Part Four . . . . . 233  
Part Five . . . . . 241  
Part Six . . . . . 250

**Chapter Eight**

---

**The Parable of the Net**

Part One . . . . . 259  
Part Two . . . . . 268  
Part Three . . . . . 276  
Part Four . . . . . 285  
Part Five . . . . . 293  
Part Six . . . . . 301  
Part Seven . . . . . 310  
Part Eight . . . . . 319  
Part Nine . . . . . 328

**Chapter Nine**

---

**The Delivering Up of the Kingdom . . . . . 337**

## CHAPTER ONE

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PARABLES - PART ONE

*Matthew 13:34 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.*

In looking into this portion of Scripture text, here we see the sacred penman, Matthew in this instance, revealing to us one very predominant manner in which Christ conveyed precious Truth. This was through the employment of what he denoted in verse 34 as parables. As we view the surrounding context of Matthew, Chapter 13, we see housed in this chapter, seven parables of Christ.

In this first message we want to begin, by the help of God, to study an introduction to the parables. Now as we begin to consider this passage, immediately questions loom to mind, such as:

- What merit is there to a study such as this?
- Does this passage have any relevance today?
- Can these parables provide any help or guidance, to me, in my life?

I say, my friend, a resounding yes! This is a very pertinent and relevant study, not only to our society as a whole, but to you as an individual, especially in the day and time in which we are living.

Now, why is that? Well, let me pose some questions.

- Are men in religious confusion today?
- Do the minds of men wonder why things are the way they are today? Christ said in Matthew 16:18, "I will build my **CHURCH**" in the singular.
- Then where did all these other organizations come from?
- What is their origin?
- When, how, and why did they arrive?
- Why is there so much confusion and conflict?
- How can I know who is right?
- And, what composes or comprises The Church—the real Biblical Church?

I ask, are these valid questions? I say, these are very valid, very pertinent questions yet today, and our text deals with them. Our studies of these parables will address these inquiries and shed Biblical light on these matters. We must ever be reminded, dear heart, that regardless of the question posed, or the situation faced, that God's eternal Word holds the answer for us.

In Psalm 119:130, here the divine penman declares, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; [Then he, my friend, defines what light is.] it giveth understanding unto the simple." Biblical light is understanding, a gaining of understanding of precious truth that is contained or housed within the Scriptures. I say, dear heart, "The entrance of thy words [the psalmist declared] giveth light." The Lord desires that we not be in darkness.

In Psalm 119:105, here the Psalmist declares, "Thy **WORD** is a **LAMP** unto my **FEET**, and a **LIGHT** unto my **PATH**." This is teaching us, my friend, that the Word of God, first of all, it says "is a lamp unto my feet." It will give us a divine revelation of the position in which we are standing. It will show us where we are. And then he goes on to say it is "a light unto my path." This is teaching us, my friend, that He will show us which way we are going and how we are moving. And, He will show us, if we persist in that path, persist in that manner, where our ultimate outcome will be. So, my friend, God has set forth His Word to give us light, or as He says, to give us understanding, so that we can know what God would have us do, and how He would have us conduct the affairs of life. I say, dear heart, the Lord desires that we have a knowledge of Truth.

In John 8:32, in the words of Jesus, He says, "And ye shall know the truth." Now, the word "and" begins that verse and it is a conjunction referring us back to John 8:31, and tells through what avenue Truth is to come to you and me. In John 8:31-32, He says: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; [A semicolon, and goes on to say,] And ye shall know the And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." I say, dear heart, He brings up the thought here of being free. Freed by Truth. Free from what?

Someone may say, "Well, He is talking here about being free from sin." No sir! He is talking about those who John 8:31 says "which believed on him." Those who have already begun. My friend, it is the blood that makes one free from sin. In 1 John 1:7, he tells us, "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from **ALL SIN**." So it is the blood that



cleanses or frees from sin. But here (John 8:31-32), He talks about Truth or, predicated on verse 31, "the Word," making us free. So, that does truth make us. So, my friend, He is teaching us here that there is a way whereby man can know the Biblical truth. He is teaching us that man can be free from, not only sin, but all falsity and everything that is not Scripturally sound.

Now the question arises, just as Pilate of old mused, and asked, "What is truth?" (John 18:38). The question arises, what is truth? And through what avenue is it available to you and me? In John 17:17, here He says, "Sanctify them through thy truth: [What is it?] thy word is truth." This is teaching us here, my friend, that the Word of God is the truth of God. And, my friend, as the Spirit of Truth reveals the Word to us and gives us an understanding, we gain a knowledge of Truth. And we get set free, by that revelation, from everything that is not Scripturally sound and that is false.

In John's Gospel, in Chapter 16, Jesus is speaking right prior to His seizure in the Garden and His departure to go to Calvary. In John 16:13, He tells the disciples, "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth is come, [And we found what that Truth is. It is the Word (John 17:17)]. So the Spirit of Truth takes the Word of Truth and reveals the Word to us. My friend, He gives us understanding that sheds light on our mind to where we understand and perceive through a divine source and gain a knowledge of Truth. And as we gain that knowledge of Truth, we get set free, I repeat, from everything that is not Scripturally sound and from everything that is false. Dear heart, it is God's will that every individual understands Biblical Truth.

In 1 Timothy, Chapter 2, the Apostle Paul penned what God's perfect will is. In 1 Timothy 2:4, he says, "Who **WILL** have all men to be saved, **AND** [a conjunction] to come unto the knowledge of the truth," I say, dear heart, it is one thing to be saved, and totally another, to have a divine revelation of Truth. God's will is that you and I have both. Today too many are falling far short. They will claim an experience of salvation, but they fail to go on into the fullness of Truth and gain the knowledge and understanding that God would ordain that they have. This is a very dangerous thing because, in Hosea's prophecy, God speaking through him, says, "My people are **DESTROYED** for lack of knowledge" (Hosea 4:6). I say, when we consider the words there of the prophet, it puts a very high premium on having a knowledge of Truth, on having a

Biblical **UNDERSTANDING**, and on having a divine revelation of what real Truth is.

I repeat, in Paul's writings to Timothy, he told us there that God not only wanted us to be saved but to come to a knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). I say, my friend, He not only wants us to have salvation, but it is His will that we have both **SALVATION** and a **KNOWLEDGE** of the Truth. Because only a divine revelation will enable you and me to stand in a position where we can continue to have our experience maintained, where we can retain the experience that we have been entrusted with.

In 1 John 1:7, it says, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another." I want us to see, dear heart, that there are several truths contained in this verse. First, he says, "if we walk," letting us know, my friend, that "walk" is something that requires activity. It is something that requires action. It is not something that you can do once and for all. It is something that is continual. It is something that is progressive. When he says, "if we," he is letting us know, my friend, that it is our portion of salvation to keep pace with light and Truth. This is a part that we must play. There are some things that God will not do. He will not walk for us.

My friend, it says, "if we walk." We must keep pace with Truth. We must keep pace with light. The Scripture says to: "work out your own salvation . . . For it is God which worketh in you" (Philippians 2:12-13). God works it in, but it is your responsibility, my friend, to work it out.

I want you to see, he lets us know that our fellowship is contingent upon our walking in light. He says in 1 John 1:7, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship." Our fellowship, my friend, with Christ and with the Father, is contingent on you and me walking in light and walking in obedience to the Truth that He has revealed to you and me. Our fellowship, in the truest sense, is not with one another, but it is with the Father, and with His Son, Jesus Christ, (1 John 1:3). And as we walk in accordance to the Word of God, and keep pace with light, then our fellowship meets in Heaven. If you are in the light, and I am in the light, then our fellowship meets and we have it one with another (1 John 1:7)

Now let us examine some of the highlights about our Scripture text. In Matthew 13:34, it says, "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables." The first question that arises is, why? Well, the disciples posed the same question in Matthew 13:10, when they asked, "Why speaketh thou unto them in parables?" And Jesus replied in Matthew 13:11, "Because it is given unto you. "Now, we need to stop to consider who the antecedent of this word *you* is, because it is very vital to our study. It refers back to Matthew 13:10, when he says, "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" So the antecedent of *you* is in Matthew 13:11).

Here it proves to us and He expressly declares that it is not given to the masses. It is not given to the hordes of humanity to understand spiritual truths. In Matthew 11:25, Jesus prayed and said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. "Now this portrays several truths to us. Number one, that to be a qualified candidate for Truth, one must, first, be a babe or have experienced a birth. A babe is one who has had life imparted to him—one who has experienced birth. And I say, to be in a position to receive spiritual truth, you must first of all experience a spiritual birth and be enjoying that spiritual life that comes through the Holy Spirit of God.

In John 3:3, that very renowned Scripture text, here Jesus says, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Or, in other words, spiritual realities and truths are hidden from him who has no birth. Because he who has no birth, has no sight. So here He teaches us that the first prerequisite, my friend, for one to be able to perceive spiritual realities and truths, is that you must be born again.

Now, I also want you to notice that one may have been born again at some past point of time, and yet not be in a position where he can receive Truth today. Jesus employed a present-tense word. In John 3:3, He says, "Except a man **BE** born again." This is teaching us that this experience is a continual, constant state of being. The Apostle Paul, my friend, reiterated this same truth in 1 Timothy 2:4, when he says, "Who will have all men to **BE** saved, [He does not want

people to just get saved, He wants them to maintain it as a continual and constant state of being. But, the first prerequisite is that you must have this birth. You must have this life imparted to you. And **THEN** it says,) and to **COME** to a knowledge of the truth." You cannot come to a knowledge without first having been saved.

In 1 Corinthians 2:14, Paul tells us, "But the natural man receiveth **NOT** the things of the Spirit of God: [And it goes on to define to us in very clear tones, why that is. It says,] for they are foolishness unto him: neither **CAN** he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Or the Greek, my friend, lets us know "they are spiritually judged." So I trust that we can see the first prerequisite, the first requirement to gaining an understanding of these truths, is to be born again (John 3:3)

Matthew, Chapter 11, also portrays another truth to us, when it says, "and hast revealed theme unto babes" (Matthew 11:25). He says there "thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, but hast revealed them unto babes." I say, my friend, He is teaching us here that this truth is conveyed through the avenue of revelation. It comes through the avenue, not of education, but of revelation. In Galatians 1:12, the Apostle Paul says, "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by **REVELATION** of Jesus Christ." And in Ephesians 1:17-19, Paul says, "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory, may give unto you the **SPIRIT** of wisdom and **REVELATION** in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened." How? By the Spirit, and by receiving it through a revelation of the Spirit.

So we have found that Truth is for a select group of people. Matthew 11:25 says, "unto babes." Matthew 13:10 says, "disciples." And the Latin word from which the word *disciples* comes is ***discipulus***. This is the same root word that our English word *discipline* comes from. So we know He is speaking of ones who are committed to observe the discipline of Christ. And we have found that the avenue through which it comes is revelation.

Now what is the nature of the language of our study? In Matthew 13:34, it says there, very clearly, "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables." In Matthew 13:35, He says, "I will open my mouth in parables." He is quoting

Psalm 78:2, which says, "I will open my mouth in a parable." Now what is a parable? It comes from the Greek word **parabole** and it means "a placing beside, to lay beside, or to compare." It signifies a placing of one thing beside another with a view to comparison. Jesus employed this manner of teaching throughout His ministry. As a matter of fact, through the four Gospel accounts, there are thirty-seven distinct parables. So, we must be reminded, as we go through our series, that the object He employs is not to be viewed literally and at face value. But they must be viewed as word vehicles to convey spiritual truths.

Now, lastly, what realm do these particular prophecies deal with? In our text, in Matthew 13:35, it says, "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." Or if you will, go back to the Psalm that Matthew is quoting. In Psalm 78:2-3, it says: "I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us." It says, "our fathers have told us." Now what did the fathers tell us? Well, in Hebrews 1:1 it says, "God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.

So, what is He revealing to us? That the realm which these parables are dealing with is prophetic. It is dealing with prophetic truths. It is dealing with prophecy. My friend, the fathers received prophecy, from inspired prophets that God spoke through, down through the ages of time. And because of that, they conveyed those prophecies, that were dark sayings, that were not understood in their period of time. My friend, they conveyed them from generation to generation and took them from person to person and family to family. Psalm 78:2-4, says there, "I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings [They were dark to those people in that day.] of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children." They were passed from generation down to generation.

What were these truths? He spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets (Hebrews 1:1). It was prophetic truth that He was dealing with. So, when we begin to consider these parables, here in Matthew, Chapter 13, we are looking at parables, my friend, that contain prophetic truths; parables that God is using as a vehicle to convey truth to us about

prophecy. So, we must keep that ever in mind as we go down through our study.

So we have learned:

- That the **RECIPIENTS** of truth are the saved.
- The **MODE** of truth is revelation.
- The **LANGUAGE** of truth, in our text, is parables.
- The **REALM** of these truths is prophetic.

## CHAPTER ONE

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PARABLES - PART TWO

*Matthew 13:1 The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside.*

*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 spoke many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold a shower went forth to sow.*

In looking into this passage of Scripture text, we see the divine penman, Matthew in this particular instance, introducing us to those prophetic parables of Christ. And by the help of God, that is what we feel burdened to consider. We want to continue our study, and we want to look further into an introduction to the parables.

Now we found, from our prior study, that the recipients of Truth are the saved. In Matthew 11:25, Jesus prayed and said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." So, we found that the recipients of truth are those who are babes, and babes are those who have experienced a birth. And a birth is that which imparts life. So, He lets us know that the recipients of truth are those who have been recipients of spiritual life, those who have experienced the saving graces of Jesus Christ and have been born again, and have become a babe in Christ. So, the recipients of Truth are those who have experienced this birth. He lets us know that He hid these things from the wise and the prudent (Matthew 11:25).

He is letting us know, my friend, that Truth cannot be approached through normal natural avenues, but Truth cannot be approached quality that must come from a spiritual source to those who have experienced a spiritual birth.

The second thing we found is that the mode of Truth is revelation. He said, "thou hast revealed them" (Matthew 11:25). My friend, this is letting us know that truth is not

something that can be studied out. It is not something that can be dug up. But, my friend, it is something that comes down from divine sources. It is something that is revealed or made known through the avenue of divine revelation.

We also found that the language of truth, in this particular text in Matthew, Chapter 13, is a parable. Matthew 13:35 says, "I will open my mouth in parables." So, we find that the language of Truth, here, is a parable. And we also found, my friend, that a parable is something that is simply a vehicle, that it is not to be taken in a literal sense. It is not the original Greek word **parabole** and means "a placing beside, to lay beside, to compare." It signifies a placing of one thing beside another with a view to comparison.

In other words, He takes that with which we are very familiar, throughout the Gospel accounts—He uses those things that are naturally familiar. As in Matthew, Chapter 13, He takes many things that are understandable on the natural, human level. Then He uses them to draw a comparison, to reveal to us heretofore unknown spiritual truths that our minds could not see. But, because of comparison, or teaching by association, He brings them to light in a manner that **IS** understandable. So, the language of this text is, my friend, the language of parables.

We found that the realm of this particular portion of text is prophetic, because He said in Matthew 13:35, "I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things which have been kept secret." Here He is quoting from the Psalms. He is quoting from Psalm 78:2-3, where the Psalmist penned in a very clear manner: "I will open my mouth in a parable. I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us." Here we found that which the fathers have told, which the fathers had spoken to them, was something, my friend, known as prophecy or prophetic Truth.

Hebrews 1:1 says, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers [How?] by the prophets." The truths the fathers received were prophetic truths. You can see that in Matthew's Gospel, as well, when Jesus spoke in Matthew 23:32. He talked there as well, and says, "Wherefore, old, I send unto you prophets." My friend,



that was the mode through which God spoke to the Old Testament brethren. It was through the avenue of prophecy. So, that which had been hid, that was getting ready to be revealed in these parables, my friend, was prophetic Truth, if you please.

Now, we want to examine this passage of Scripture text, and we want to look at two very vital points of Truth. First of all, we want to determine, Biblically, the importance attached to these parables. What position should they occupy as far as divine importance [is concerned]? And secondly, we want to examine and see the scope that they encompass.

So, my friend, we must look into these parables and realize, as we begin to study, that first of all, it is as the wise man penned in Proverbs 30:5, "Every word of God is pure." He is letting us know there is divine design, and divine importance, behind every word that is incorporated in the Scriptures. There are **NO** unessential words. Every "a," "and," and "the," every word portrays a truth. There are no unessential words. I want you to see, my friend, the Bible is the most condensed book that could possibly be written. John's Gospel lets us very clearly know this. In John 21:25, it says, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."

This is telling us that God, in His infinite wisdom, condensed them and gave us the most distinct points, the most relevant and pertinent points, of eternal Truths. These are Truths that He knows man, of necessity, must know and be aware of to truly make Heaven his home and have a successful journey from earth to the shores of glory land. So, my friend, I repeat, the Wise Man says in Proverbs 10:5, "Every word of God is pure." I repeat, there is divine design and importance behind every word incorporated in the Scriptures. Every word has a Truth housed within it, if we can merely allow the Spirit of God to take and reveal that unto us.

In 2 Timothy, Chapter 3, the Apostle Paul penned to the young minister, Timothy, in 2 Timothy 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God." That word *inspiration* in the original Greek, is the word ***theopneustos*** and literally means,

"God-breathed." This lets us know, my friend, that God's Word has life-giving qualities. Just as back in the Genesis account, in Genesis 2:7, where it says, "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and **BREATHED** into his nostrils the **BREATH OF LIFE**, and man became a living soul." Or, the Hebrew says man became "a living being."

My friend, just as His breath brought life to the body, so His Word brings life to the soul. In John 6:63, Jesus says, "It is the spirit that quickeneth; [That merely means 'To make alive.'] the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." I want you to see, dear heart, just as His breath brought life to the body, His Word also brings life to the soul. There is life and truth in every portion of the Scriptures.

Now, [let us] begin to examine this text in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13. First of all, no other chapter in the Bible has as many parables housed within it as Matthew, Chapter 13, does. That, itself, is significant and portrays a truth to you and me. But let us begin to examine our lesson here. Matthew 13:1 declares, "The same day went Jesus out of the house, and **SAT** by the seaside."

Now, we are trying to determine the importance of, or the value of, this particular teaching that is incorporated in Matthew, Chapter 13. When He says, here, "and sat," this minute phrase reveals the importance that Christ attached to these parables. Someone may ask, "How?" The employment of the word "sat" intimates that this teaching was to be both central and official to The Church. Someone may ask, "How do we know that?" Well, my friend, scholars teach us, and history as well, that when a Jewish Rabbi was teaching officially, he **SAT** to teach. We still, yet today, speak of a professor's chair. The Pope still speaks **ex cathedra**, which means "from his seat." Often a Rabbi gave instruction when he was standing or strolling about, but his really official teaching was done when he had taken his seat. So, then the very mention that Jesus sat down to teach, in this text, is an indication that this teaching, my friend, is central and official, that it is vital Christian doctrine, if you please. This clause clearly values the importance of these parables.

Now, let us look a little further. Housed within Matthew, Chapter 13, are seven parables.

- In Matthew 13:3-9, we find the parable of the **SOWER**.
- In Matthew 13:24-30, we find the parable of the **TARES**.
- In Matthew 13:31-32, is the parable of the **MUSTARD SEED**.
- In Matthew 13:33, the parable of the **LEAVEN** is found.
- In Matthew 13:44, we find the parable of the **TREASURE**.
- In Matthew 13:45-46, is the parable of the **PEARL**.
- In Matthew 13:47-50, the parable of the **NET** is found.

Now, it is distinctly noticeable that **SEVEN** parables are incorporated in this chapter—not six or eight. And every Bible student recognizes that the number "seven" occupies a very special place in the Scriptures. When we go back into the realms of the Old Testament, we find that there are **SEVEN** redemptive names of Jehovah. We find in Genesis 29:20, that Jacob served **SEVEN** years for Rachel. In Pharaoh's dream, in Genesis 41:2, he saw **SEVEN** well-favored kine; in verse 3 there were **SEVEN** other kine; in verse five, there were **SEVEN** ears of corn; in verse six, there were **SEVEN** thin ears. In Genesis 41:29, he saw **SEVEN** years of great plenty, and verse 30 he saw **SEVEN** years of famine.

In Joshua 6:4, it says, that **SEVEN** priests shall go before the ark and compass the city **SEVEN** times. There were **SEVEN** trumpets of ram's horns, and they went up and compassed the city **SEVEN** times on the **SEVENTH** day. And there are many other references of **SEVEN** being employed throughout the Old Testament, that are far too numerous to even begin to bring in this study.

In Matthew's Gospel, when we come to the New Testament, here we find in Chapter 13, there are **SEVEN** parables. In John's Gospel, there are **SEVEN** "I Am's." In the Revelation, there are: **SEVEN** letters, **SEVEN** seals, **SEVEN** trumpets, **SEVEN** vials, **SEVEN** angels, **SEVEN** thunders, **SEVEN** Spirits of God, **SEVEN** heads, **SEVEN** horns, and **SEVEN** eyes.

My friend, we find here that there is a multiplicity [of instances] of the employment, of the usage, of **SEVEN** in the Scriptures. And, my friend, it stands in a very particular

place in the Scriptures.

Now, what is the significance of this number "seven?" Well, certainly there is more depth to it, but suffice it to say, it denotes completeness or entirety. Go back to the Genesis account, the very Book of Beginnings where it is first employed. In Genesis 2:1-2 it says: "thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made." Or the actual Hebrew word there is ***kalah***, which means "He completed," or, "His work was complete."

I want you to see that when Jacob served Laban seven years, that was to be the complete time of service, to receive Rachel, according to the original agreement. When Pharaoh saw the kine and the ears, there were to be seven years. That was the complete years of plenty. And seven was to be the complete years of famine. Seven days make a complete week.

So, my friend, what is the significance in Matthew, Chapter 13, with the seven parables? Well, dear heart, to rightly understand this, we must understand the prophetic meaning of Jesus' words that are penned in Luke's Gospel. In Luke, here Jesus is speaking, and Luke, the beloved physician, recorded it. In Luke 17:26, He says, "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." So here He says, and gives us a divine understanding, "as it was in the days of Noe."

Let us consider: How was it in the days of Noah? Go back to the Genesis account where it says in Genesis 7:1, "And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation." And in Genesis 7:10, it says, "And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth."

Here we find a very good lesson in types and shadows. My friend, here was a place that had been prepared in accordance with divine design and construction, a place made of wood, just as the Cross was. This was a place where man was to flee to escape the wrath to come; the same safety that is afforded to all [those] who respond to the Gospel and come to our ark of safety, Jesus Christ. Here was a place where the world and sin were shut out, just as in salvation. It is a place that

separates the believer from the world, and has walls about it, just as salvation and the True Church have. But notice, that Noah entered in, and there were seven days (Genesis 7:10), then the Lord shut the door (Genesis 7:16). So, there were seven days that the door was open after the ark was prepared, in which man could escape to safety.

Jesus said in Luke 17:26, "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." Now, I want you to notice that when Jesus spoke this, He did not say, "the last day," and He did not use the word "day" in the singular. He employed the term "days" in the plural. He is letting us know He was speaking of a period of time, or He was speaking of an era. Now, I want you to notice, He says, "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the son of man." My friend, I repeat, not "the last **DAY**," but "the **DAYS**," representing a period of time. And just as there were seven days then in which men could come into the ark and find safety and salvation from the wrath that was to come—I want you to see that, just as there were seven days in that era—so are there seven days, or seven time periods, that comprise the entirety of this Christian dispensation.

Isaiah saw a prophecy of that and spoke of it. In Isaiah 30:26, he declared there in his writings, "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people and healeth the stroke of their wound."

That day that he is speaking of is this Gospel Day, or this Christian dispensation. And he lets us know, my friend, that it is comprised of seven days, just as there were seven days in which man had ample opportunity to respond to [Noah's] message and enter into the ark, a place of safety and salvation. So, my friend, Christ, on Calvary's tree, spread His arms wide and opened the door unto all mankind. And He said, "Come unto me" (Matthew 11:28), and offered every man, woman, and child (of the age of accountability), safety and salvation. There have been seven periods of time that have comprised this Gospel Day, or this Christian dispensation—a

time in which man can enter in, before the door is shut on that final day when the wrath to come is ushered in.

I want you to see this Christian dispensation, my friend, is comprised of seven distinct periods. This is why, when we look in the Revelation, in John's very introductory verses to this Apocalyptic Book, we read in Revelation 1:4, "John, to the **SEVEN** churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the **SEVEN** Spirits which are before his throne."

Now, here he speaks of **SEVEN** Churches and **SEVEN** Spirits, but in Ephesians 4:4, it says, "There is [only] one body [or one church], and one Spirit." Now, many would rise up and say, "The Bible is contradictory." No, sir! We just need to do as 2 Timothy 2:15 says: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, **RIGHTLY** dividing the word of truth."

Now, why does the Revelator say seven churches and seven periods or seven Spirits? Because, my friend, it is merely talking about the church and the Spirit through the seven periods that make up this Gospel dispensation. The Gospel dispensation has seven distinct time periods. That is why, in our text in Matthew, Chapter 13, there are incorporated seven parables. Why? Christ uses them as vehicles to take us down through the entire or complete Christian dispensation. By doing that, He shows us what has taken place, why things have occurred, and what has produced them. He takes us from [His] very first advent, right on through, my friend, to the last period of time.

Someone may ask, "Are you certain of that?" Yes sir! In Matthew 13:3, He begins and says, "Behold a sower went forth to sow." And then He very plainly lets us know in Matthew 13:37, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man," letting us know that it is Jesus Christ, when He came in His First Advent. And then it comes down, in the seventh parable, in Matthew 13:48 and says, "Which when it was full" or when it was all the way down to the last period of time. So, I trust we can see the scope of these parables, that the reason there are seven is because there are seven periods that make up this Gospel Day. I trust that we can see it. I trust that we can

see that the importance of these parables is [that] they are central and official teachings to the Church. And that the scope of these parables is that they take in the entirety of the Christian dispensation.

## CHAPTER ONE

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PARABLES - PART THREE

*Matthew 13:1 The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the seaside.*

*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.*

As we begin to examine this portion of the inspired writings of Matthew, we observe that the sacred penman is introducing us to these seven prophetic parables of Christ. [In] the last two lessons, we have been studying an introduction to the parables. By the help of God, we want to look into these introductory verses just a little further, and hopefully conclude our studies of the introduction.

First of all, by way of review, we have established, Biblically, that: The recipients of Truth are the saved. Jesus plainly let us know this in Matthew 13:10-11, where it says: "And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you [Who? The antecedent, in verse 10, is the disciples.] to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." We found in Matthew 11:25, He says, "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth. . . thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast precious truths, one must be a babe, one must have experienced a new birth, and one must have experienced that which brings life to the saved.

Second, we found that the mode of Truth is divine revelation. Again, Jesus in this prayer in Matthew 11:25 says, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, says, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast **REVEALED** them unto babes." So, it teaches us, the mode of receiving truth is by divine revelation.



Third, we learned that the language of Truth is that He spoke in parables. In Matthew 13:34, it declares, "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them." So, we found the language of the truth of this text is the language of parables—a placing beside, or a learning by association. That is taking something with which we can relate to teach us truths with which we may not be familiar.

We found, fourth of all, that the importance of these parables indicated in Matthew 13:1, when it said that He **SAT**. This lets us know that this was deliberate, intentional teaching, and it occupies a place of central and official doctrine.

Then, number five, we learned the scope of these parables is the entirety of this Christian dispensation. We also learned, number six, that the realm of these Truths is prophetic, because we found, in the Hebrew account, that He "spake in times past unto the fathers by the prophets" (Hebrews 1:1).

So, we found the **RECIPIENTS** of Truth are the saved; the **MODE** of Truth is revelation; the **LANGUAGE** of Truth is parables; the **REALM** of these Truths is prophetic; the **IMPORTANCE** of the parables is that they are central and official doctrine; the **SCOPE** of these parables is this Christian dispensation.

In our last study, when we considered the scope of these parables, we introduced a thought that may be novel to some. We want to delve a little deeper into the thought of the scope of these parables, and we want to consider the Gospel Day and what it entails.

In Matthew 13:3, it declares, "And he spake many things unto them in parables." in the plural, with an "s." And if you will survey the context of Matthew, Chapter 13, you will see that there are exactly seven parables incorporated in this text. Now the question arises, why is that? What significance is there to this number, especially in this context? To understand this, we need to understand that when Christ came in His first Advent, a new era commenced.

When Christ came, my friend, mankind was in utter darkness. In Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 4, Jesus was commencing His public ministry. In Matthew 4:16, it declares, "The people which sat in darkness, saw a great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." So, we find that when Christ came on the scene, in His first advent, people were in great darkness, History tells us, as well as prophetic writings, that from Malachi the Prophet to John the Baptist was 434 years that man did not hear from God.

If you go back to the prophecy of Daniel, Chapter 9, Daniel was relating the prophecy concerning the seventy prophetic weeks. He lets us know of this time, when he was speaking of three score and two weeks, in Daniel 9:25. When you give prophetic numeration to it, it gives us the delineation of prophetic time.

It says, "each day for a year" in Numbers 14:34 and in Ezekiel 4:6. Sixty-two prophetic weeks, times seven days in a week, equals 434 days, or 434 prophetic years, which was the length of time from Malachi the prophet to John the Baptist. And in this period of time, my friend, God did not speak to man. This was that intertestamental period that is known as the Maccabean Era, in which God did not speak. And because of the 434 years of silence, certainly, it was gross darkness. My friend, it became a very dark Jewish night.

Isaiah 60:2 prophesied of this time and said, "For, behold the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise." And so, we find, my friend, he prophesied of [Christ's] first Advent when he said, "the Lord shall arise." And when Malachi, my friend, got a glimpse of the same prophecy he said, in Malachi 4:2, "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise."

So, my friend, we find that when Jesus Christ came on the scene, He was the Sun, Or as the Apostle Peter declared, in 2 Peter 1:19, "a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn." And, my friend, just as the literal sun ushers in a new day, so did Christ, the Sun of righteousness, as Malachi described Him. He came and a new day dawned. He ushered in a new dispensation, a new day.

Now the question arises, what type of day, what kind of day did Jesus Christ usher in? Well, in 2 Corinthians 6:2, here the Apostle Paul declared, "(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and the **day** of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" So, my friend, we find here that the day that was ushered in by Jesus Christ—when that day dawned, and that Sun ushered in by Jesus Christ—when that day dawned, and that Sun arose, and a new era commenced—it was a day of salvation.

Now, when we think of the day of salvation, what type of day is this? How is salvation ordained to be communicated to mankind?

In Romans 10:13-17, Paul says: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. [Then he poses some questions.] How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

"And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the **GOSPEL** of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So, then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

So, my friend, Paul begins to teach us, in Romans 10:13, that "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." We are in that day of salvation, but, my friend, what kind of a day is it? It is a day, my friend, when the Gospel of peace, as he spoke of in Romans 10:15, is being preached. So, when we think of this Christian dispensation, or this day of salvation, it is the Gospel Day—a day when the Gospel is to be Bible salvation.

Now, again, why the significance of seven? Why seven parables? Because this Gospel Day, as do all days, starts with the morning-time, and ends with the evening-time. But it is composed of seven distinct time periods. Now, can we substantiate this with the Scriptures? Well, notice Jesus' words in Matthew 13:9. He says, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Now these words of Christ in Matthew, my friend, unite us with almost identical words that were uttered seven

distinct times in the Book of Revelation. In Revelation 2:7, it says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

Now, dear heart, as we begin to look into the Book of Revelation to get some understanding, there are a couple of truths that we must understand in order to rightly divide this portion of God's eternal Word. There are a couple of truths that we must be able to understand, and embrace, for our understanding to be crystal clear.

First of all, we need to understand the nature of Revelation's language. In Revelation 1:1, the very introductory verse to this prophetic and Apocalyptic book, it says, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and **SIGNIFIED** it." The word "signified" means "revealed by signs." And if you look in *Webster's New World Collegiate Dictionary*, you will find that the word "sign" is defined as "symbol." So, first, the nature of Revelation's language is that it is symbolic.

Secondly, for every dark saying in the Scriptures, there is a mate. In Isaiah 34:16, the prophet declares, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them."

So, my friend, as we look into the Revelation, we must understand at least these two premises: (1) That the nature of the language of the Revelation is symbolic. (2) That for every Scripture there is a mate. For every dark saying in God's eternal Word, there is another Scripture somewhere, my friend, that will shed light and bring understanding.

Now, with these premises in mind, let us consider a verse that will help us to gain understanding. In Revelation 5:6, it says, "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."

Now, let us examine this verse. First of all, in Revelation 5:6, it introduces us to a Lamb as it had been

slain. Now, here we have a symbolic representation of Jesus Christ. In the Gospel of John, 1:29, it says, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God." My friend, Peter reiterates this same truth in his writings, in the first general epistle of Peter. In 1 Peter 1:19, it says, "But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." So this is a reference to Christ.

Now, notice about this Lamb, or Christ, as Revelation 5:6 says, "having seven horns." Now why is this? Literal lambs, we know, do not have seven horns. We must be reminded that this is symbolic. But, symbolic of what? What do these horns represent? Well, if we go back to Luke's Gospel and read, there in Luke 1:68-69, it says: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David."

My friend, here he is talking about a horn, or a better rendering might be, "a power." He is telling us that this is the power of salvation. The power of an animal rests in its horns. And it is a symbolic expression of power. Now, why seven [horns]? This is nothing more than that salvation, or the power of salvation, was going to be available down throughout each of the seven periods that comprise this Gospel Day.

Someone may ask, "Are you certain of that?" Well, look a little further. In Revelation 5:6, this Lamb, Christ, also had, it says, "seven eyes." It tells us here that it had seven eyes, and, my friend, the prophet Zechariah saw this as well. In Zechariah 3:9, he got a glimpse of the same vision and said, "For behold the stone [Now who is the stone? It is Christ. First Peter 2:7 says, 'the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.'] that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes." That one stone is Jesus Christ.

Now, what are these seven eyes? Revelation 5:6 tells us very plainly: "and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." Now, he says here, very clearly, "the seven Spirits of God." How can this be?

Ephesians 4:4 says, "There is . . . one Spirit." First Corinthians 12:11 says, "But all these worketh that one and selfsame Spirit." So, what are these seven Spirits? Well, notice that Revelation 5:6 says, "sent forth into **ALL** the earth." Now, what is the earth that he is speaking of?

Jeremiah 22:29 says, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." He was not speaking of this terrestrial ball, he was not speaking of the terra firma, he was not speaking of this literal earth, but, my friend, man is dust of the earth (Genesis 2:7). Second Corinthians 4:7 says, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels." [In] 2 Corinthians 5:1, my friend, the Apostle Paul said, "For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." I want you to see, my friend, that he is speaking here, when he says, "into all the earth" (Revelation 5:6), he is speaking of man or mankind.

Now think with me. For the Spirit to be, as Revelation 5:6 says, "sent forth into **ALL** the earth," that must take in all mankind during the [entire] Gospel day, teaching us that this Gospel day, my friend, consists of seven distinct time periods. So in other words, for Him to have sent the Spirit of God to deal and strive with man's heart unto **ALL** the earth, and then there to be seven eyes and seven horns, that intimates to us, my friend, that there were seven periods that comprise all of the earth, or all of history, from the time that Christ made His first advent until time shall be no more; that it must be composed of seven distinct time periods.

Now, what are these seven Spirits that Revelation 4:5 and Revelation 5:6 speak of? Well, we see these seven Spirits throughout the letters in Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3. There is one portrayed in each of these letters. In Revelation 2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:29, 3:6, 3:13, and 3:22, my friend, each one of them says the same thing: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the **SPIRIT** saith unto the churches."

Now, what are these seven Spirits that Revelation 4:5 and Revelation 5:6 speak of? Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3. There is one portrayed in each one of these letters. In Revelation 2:7, 2:11, 2:17, 2:29, 3:6, 3:13, and 3:22, my friend, each

one of them says the same thing: "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the **SPIRIT** saith unto the churches."

My friend, this is portraying to us that the Spirit of God was working through the Word of God, down throughout these seven periods. He was being faithful to a people in every period that makes up this Christian dispensation. I repeat, it is a picture of the Spirit speaking and working in each of the seven periods that make up this Gospel day or Christian dispensation. In Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3, there are seven letters. These seven letters parallel the seven parables that are in Matthew, Chapter 13.

The noted commentator, Dr. Adam Clark, in his writings, tells us that one ancient title ascribed to the Book of Revelation was *The General History of the Christian Church, From Her Birth to Her Final Triumphant State in Heaven, Chiefly Deduced from the Apocalypse of Saint John the Apostle*. That is what these parables and letters do, my friend. They are vehicles to take us from the morning-time down, throughout the entirety of the Gospel Day.

When we begin to consider, prophetically, this New Testament Era of time, it was referred to in three tenses. In Revelation 1:9, [we see] John, my friend, receiving from Christ, there on the Isle of Patmos, at the very commencement of the Book of Revelation, and in Revelation 1:19, He says, "Write the things which thou hast seen [Past tense], and the things which are [Present tense], and the things which shall be hereafter." [Future tense]. This is teaching us [that] the scope of the Revelation, and the scope of New Testament prophecy, is in three tenses: past, present, and future.

And so, my friend, as we look at these seven parables in Matthew, Chapter 13, the scope of them is the same. The reason there are seven is because, my friend, it takes in the entirety of this New Testament dispensation or Gospel day. It takes us from the very beginning, or commencement, in Matthew 13:3, when it says, "Behold a sower went forth to sow" in the morning-time of this Gospel day, right down to the very closing, in Matthew 13:48, looking very clear when it says, "Which, when it was full" or when it was complete.

So, through the vehicle of these parables, He is taking us down through this Christian dispensation and letting you and me see the events that transpired, that caused things to develop to where they are the way that we see them today, in the day and age in which we live. So, I trust, as we actually commence to study these seven prophetic parables, that we can understand that they are vehicles to give us a keen insight into the happenings and occurrences of the seven distinct periods of this Christian Dispensation. So, I trust that, as we begin to get into these parables proper, that the Spirit of God will take the things of Christ and show them unto us, and make them clear and understandable, so we can see in a clear manner **WHAT** has occurred down throughout this New Testament Era of time, and **WHY** things occurred to where conditions are as they are yet today. So by the help of God, in the next lesson, we will get right into the parables proper and begin studying the parable of the sower.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER

#### PART ONE

*Matthew 13:3 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 wayside, 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.*

As we begin to examine this portion of Scripture text, we see that incorporated in the context of Matthew, Chapter 13, are seven prophetic parables. In Chapter One, we were introduced to these parables. By the help of the Holy Spirit, we want to enter into the series proper and begin our study of these prophetic parables, beginning with the parable of the sower.

Now, as we begin to examine this prophetic chapter, there are some things of which we must also be reminded. First of all, the importance of these parables is denoted in Mark's rendering of this account. When he tells us in Mark 4:2, "And he taught them many things by **PARABLES**, and said unto them **IN HIS DOCTRINE**." So, we find, my friend, that these parables, these lessons, that Jesus brings to us carry the weight and the importance of **BIBLE DOCTRINE**.

We must also be reminded that the nature of the language of our text, as Matthew 13:3 declares, is "in **PARABLES**." Or,

one rendering, my friend, declares, "told them many truths in parables." Another version says, "in figures." Or *The Amplified Bible* renders it, Matthew 13:3, "in parables [That is,] (stories by way of illustration and comparison)." So as we view the language of these parables, we must not take them literally or at face value, but as representative of deeper truth. My friend, this was the manner in which Jesus spoke throughout much of His ministry.

In the Gospel of John 12:32-33 He says: "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die." This teaches us, my friend, that when Jesus speaks, much of what He speaks is "signifying," [or, the word *signify* means 'revealed by signs.'] meaning it is a symbolic or figurative representation. We see, in John 1:18-19, Jesus again speaking, and declaring, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdest thyself, [Speaking of the Apostle Peter] and walkedst whither thou wouldest: But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God."

I want you to see, my friend, that much of what Jesus spoke was in the language, my friend, of signs or symbols. So, we must ever keep in mind that in the parables, that Jesus' words had much more meaning than what was initially apparent at casual observation. He used the parables as vehicles, taking something with which we were familiar, a literal matter, and paralleling it with the spiritual truth, using it to convey spiritual realities. So, we must bear in mind the language of our study.

We must also remember that, housed in this thirteenth chapter of Matthew, are seven distinct parables that are employed as vehicles to take us down through the entirety of the Gospel day, or the Christian dispensation. So, let us begin to study this parable of the sower, here in Matthew, Chapter 13. And as we begin our study, proper, I realize that there are many practical and evangelistic applications which can be drawn from these parables. But our burden is to focus on their prophetic merit, or their prophetic application.

Now, this parable begins with the phrase, here in Matthew 13:3, "Behold [Which means to stop, or pause, and consider that something of great consequence is ready to be declared or uttered.], a sower went forth to sow." Now the *King James Version of the Bible*, here, says, "a sower." But, my friend, you study the original text, in the original Greek in *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott*, and it says, "**THE** sower." We find this reiterated in Matthew 13:18, when Jesus begins to give us an understanding of this parable, and He declares, "Hear ye therefore the parable of **THE** sower."

In Mark's rendering of the account, when he relates it to us in Mark 4:14, He says, "**THE** sower soweth **THE** word." So, my friend, we must, first of all, see that this sower is in the singular tense. It is **THE** sower, in a singular and exclusive sense. Now we must, first of all, identify who this sower is. In Matthew 13:37, Jesus begins to unravel some of these truths, and "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man." So, here he reveals the identity of **THE** sower, that it is **THE** Son of man. Now that, my friend, is a reference to Jesus Christ Himself. We see, in Matthew 16:13, "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" So, here, we clearly see that Jesus identifies Himself as the Son of man. And in Matthew 13:37, He tells us, "the Son of man" is the sower. So, my friend, this makes Jesus Christ Himself **THE** sower.

Now, why is it so important that we labor the point that He is **THE**, in a singular and exclusive sense, **THE** sower? Well, we need to look at what He sowed. In Matthew 13:3-4, it says, "Behold, look at what He sowed. In Matthew 13:3-4, it says, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed." But, my friend, the Greek says, "Lo, went out the sower of the (seed) to sow." (*The Emphatic Greek Diaglott*). Now, what is this seed that the sower, my friend, sowed? Well, Jesus tells us in Luke's account of this parable. In Luke 8:11, He declares "The seed is the word of God."

Now, let us consider this. Why do we need to understand that Christ is **THE**, in a singular and exclusive sense, **THE SOWER**? Because **HE ALONE** is the One who had the moral worth to

take the Book out of the Father's hand and to bring it down to mankind. In the Book of Revelation, we see that the Revelator catches a vision, and God rolls back the veil of time and allows us to glimpse a picture of eternity past, and what occurred in the throne scene.

Revelation 5:1-5 says: "And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne **A BOOK** written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And I wept much, because no **MAN** was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof."

Here we find, my friend, in a symbolic account, we find that the Root of David, my friend, was the one that prevailed to loose **THE BOOK**. And, if you will go to Chapter 22 of the Book of Revelation, it will tell you, my friend, who the Root of David is. Revelation 22:16 [says], "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am [Who? Jesus!] the root and offspring of David." So, we find, here, a symbolic representation. This "Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David" is Jesus Christ. And, when no **MAN** in heaven or earth was worthy to take the Book and bring it down to mankind, thank God, the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, stepped upon the scene. Revelation 5:12 says, "Worthy is the Lamb." He was the only One who had the moral worth to take hold of the Gospel and to bring it down to humanity.

Now, think here: when He speaks of Himself as **THE SOWER**, He was the only One, exclusively, who had the moral worth to take the book from the hand of God and bring it down to fallen man. He was the only One Who had that moral worth. And think of the dark earth into which the seed was initially sown. From Malachi, the prophet, to John the Baptist, was the 434 years that Daniel 9:25 spoke of—a time when man did not hear from God in a public sense. But, my friend, Galatians 4:4 declares, "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth

his Son." And our lesson text says, in Matthew 13:3, that this, "sower went forth."

Now, let us examine some of the prophetic aspects of this parable. First, out of the seven parables in this chapter, this was selected to be the first. Now, why? There is a divine significance behind everything that is incorporated in the sacred Scriptures. Why was his chosen out of all the multitudinous parables, and the seven, particularly, in this chapter, to be the first? Because, my friend, it commences with Christ and His arrival on the scene in His first Advent. Matthew 13:3 says, "[the] sower went forth to sow." Now, think with me, what is a sower? What do they actually do? Certainly, they sow the seed. But, my friend, think, what does that actually entail? They initiate something now. When they arrive on the scene, something commences. They bring a new season, a new start. Something begins. So it was with Christ. When He came, in His first Advent, a new era of time commenced. A new dispensation started.

Look at those familiar words, in 2 Corinthians 5:17, where Paul talks about, "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." He was actually referring to the old Jewish economy, that which was after the flesh, being passed away, and a new era, a new dispensation commencing—a spiritual era. How do we know? Read the preceding verse. In 2 Corinthians 5:16 [it says], "Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh." Here he is telling us that the old dispensation, after the flesh." Here he is telling us that the old dispensation, the old Jewish economy, that was driven by a literal birth, and fleshly works and moves and ceremonialism, my friend, had passed away, and a new era, a new dispensation, had commenced.

My friend, this first parable represents the first period of the Gospel day, or, that period of time from approximately AD 33 to AD 270. This letter portrays the morning-time of the Gospel day. Does our text substantiate this? Look at Matthew 13:6, where it declares, "and when the **SUN** was up. "When does the sun come up? When does it rise? In the **MORNING TIME**. So this parable portrays, my friend, the **MORNING TIME**. Go back to when Jesus commenced His public ministry. In Matthew 4:16, it

says, "The people which sat in darkness [434 years of darkness, to be exact.] saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death **LIGHT IS SPRUNG UP.**" When does light spring up? When does, as Malachi 4:2 says, the Sun arise? My friend, in the morning time. And this parable says, Matthew 13:6, "And when the **SUN** was up."

Now, my friend, when Christ came on the scene, it was in the morning time. In 2 Peter 1:19, it portrays a "day dawned." What occurred—what was the predominant condition when Jesus Christ came on the scene? In John 8:12, "Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." When He came on the scene, my friend, in His first Advent, men were walking in **DARKNESS**. But, thank God, through the Gospel, He brought the light of life to men.

Our text tells us, my friend, in our lesson, that there were four types of ground. In Matthew 13:4, He denotes one as "wayside" ground. In Matthew 13:5, it is "stony places." In Matthew 13:7 [the seed] "fell among thorns." And in Matthew 13:8, it was "good ground." Here, in these four types of ground, He represents all of humanity. Now, what does that teach us? That the message was a universal message. That the message, the seed, the Word of God, is for all of mankind. My friend, as we examine these four types of ground, we see that all of the ground was affected. None escaped! Matthew 13:19 says the "wayside" (ground) **HEARETH THE WORD**. Matthew 13:20, speaking of the "stony" ground, says it **HEARETH THE WORD**. Matthew 13:20, speaking of the "stony" ground **HEARETH THE WORD**. In Matthew 13:23, the "good ground" **HEARETH THE WORD**. So, my friend, in these four types of ground, and the entrance of the Gospel to each, we see the universality of the Word that Jesus sowed when He came on the scene in His first Advent.

Is the Gospel message a universal message? Certainly so! In John 3:16, that very familiar text, it says, "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." My friend, when He came on the scene in His first Advent, He brought a universal message. When Paul

preached on Mars' Hill, in Athens, he again reiterated the universality of the message. In Acts 17:30, he says, "and the times of this ignorance [Speaking of the Old Testament Era.] God winked at; but **NOW** commandeth **ALL** men every where to repent." And the Apostle Peter reiterated the same truth in 2 Peter 3:9 where it says, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that **ANY** should perish, but that **ALL** should come to repentance." And the Revelator, my friend, heralded the same truth in Revelation 22:17: "And the Spirit and the bride say, **COME**. And let him that heareth say, **COME**. And let him that is athirst **COME**. And **WHOSOEVER WILL**, let him take the water of life freely." I say, my friend, it is a universal message. In these four types of ground, and the entrance of the Gospel to each, we see the universality of the Word.

Now, my friend, as we look at this parable, it is unique. There are many new qualities to this parable. One is, my friend, that this is one of only two of the seven parables that are incorporated in the three Synoptic Gospels. This particular parable **WAS** incorporated in the three Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This, again, shows us the universality of the message and how He wanted it to reach out and radiate to all mankind.

Also, the parable of the sower is the longest of the seven parables. It is also the only one of the seven parables that does not say, "the kingdom of heaven is like." He clearly says this in the other six: in Matthew 13:24, 31,33, 44,45, and 47. What is the significance of the omission of this (clause) in the parable of the sower? It is because we were in the inception of the Gospel day. He is not dealing with the Church, or the Kingdom, but rather, my friend, He is dealing with all mankind. That is why He says, in Matthew 13:19, "When **ANY ONE** heareth the word of the kingdom." He was, in this parable, portraying how the Church would be built—by the seed, by the Word, going forth and precious hearts responding to the call of the Gospel.

We find, in the Roman letter, in Romans 10:13-19, it says, "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be

saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher: And how shall they preach except they be sent?" So, my friend, he is telling us, here (in the first parable), of how the message would be heralded forth. He was not dealing with the Kingdom, but dealing with the message that was going to go out universally, that would secure the salvation of those that would comprise and compose the Kingdom and the Church.

In 1 Corinthians 6:9, he tells us, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" And he enumerates a list of heinous sins. Then, in verse 11, he says, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." I want you to see [that] at this juncture, He was making the Kingdom Experience known. He was teaching its mode of entrance, and how you can become a member. In John 3:5, He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be **BORN AGAIN**, he cannot **SEE** the kingdom of God." And in John 3:5, He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." So, my friend, He is teaching us, here in this initial parable, the message and how it went forth initially, and how that it worked to secure the salvation of those that would comprise the kingdom and The Church.

At this juncture, He was not making the Kingdom, or words to the Kingdom, the object to be taught to those that believed. But He was, my friend, showing those who were unbelievers how that they might be believers, and be saved, and comprise this body of Christ. I say, my friend, the reason that it is the longest parable, is because, my friend, when He came on the scene, man had been in a long period of darkness, and the light of a new day was arising with a new message—a message of salvation and of an experience [to gain]. My friend, I want you to see, here, [that] this [parable], my friend, portrays to us the initial condition of mankind, and what Jesus had to contend with when He first came on the scene. All mankind was approached with the opportunity to



enter the Kingdom, but only those, as Luke 8:15 says, that had an "honest and good heart" provided the ground on which the Morning-time church was built. So, I hope we can see that this parable portrays the condition at the start of the Morning-time church.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER - PART TWO

*Matthew 13:18 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 wayside.*

*20 But he that received the seed in 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 endureth 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.*

In our last message, we began our study of the Parable of the Sower. By the help of God, we want to look a little further into this prophetic parable. We found in our prior study that through the vehicle of these parables, Jesus is taking us down through the seven distinct time periods that comprise this Christian dispensation or Gospel Day. We found that the Parable of the Sower is the first of the seven parables and has several unique qualities to it.

1) It is one of only two of the seven parables that are in all three of the Synoptic Gospels. It is in our text, here in Matthew, Chapter 13, and also recorded in Mark, Chapter 4, and in Luke, Chapter 8.

2) We found that it is the longest of the seven parables.

3) It is the only one of the seven parables that does not say "the kingdom of heaven is like." This phrase, "the kingdom of heaven is like," is an integral and very vital part of the

other parables. And we find that phrase incorporated in each of the other six, in Matthew 13:24, 31, 33, 44, 45, and 47.

Now, what is the significance of these unique qualities in this parable? We found in prior studies that Christ is what is denoted, in Matthew 13:18, as **THE** sower, and that the seed He sowed during His first Advent, according to Luke 8:11, was the Word of God. And, when He came on the scene, Matthew 13:6 tells us, "The sun was up." In other words, a new day dawned (2 Peter 1:19). A new era or dispensation of time commenced. And when He came on the scene, there had been darkness for 434 years. So since, my friend, up to this point, this had been the longest period of spiritual darkness in human history, He addressed this, the longest parable, as the first parable, to help shed light on those who sat in darkness. He was bringing and introducing a universal message of salvation. This is why it was incorporated in all three of the Synoptic Gospel accounts.

But, more noticeably, why the absence or omission in this initial parable, of the phrase incorporated in the other six, of "the kingdom of heaven is like?" Because, dear heart, here in this portion of this first parable, was the inception of a new era of time, the commencement of the Gospel Day. He is not dealing with the Kingdom, or conditions confronting the Kingdom, but rather, in this particular parable, my friend, He is dealing with a universal message that was being heralded forth to all of mankind. It was a message urging them to respond to the Word that was being sown in their hearts and to get an experience that would induct them into the Kingdom and give them a real Kingdom experience. This was a universal message. In Matthew 13:19, it says, "When **ANY ONE** heareth the word of the kingdom." So, we find that this was the initial sowing of the Gospel seed; it was a universal message to "whosoever will" (Revelation 22:17) to **ANY ONE**.

In Matthew 16:18, Jesus says, "I will build my church." And here, in this parable, He portrays how the Church would be built. It would be built by the seed, by the Word, going forth, and honest hearts responding to that message, responding to the call of the Gospel, and gaining an experience of salvation. My friend, that inducted them, as a

member, into the Church. And so He is, my friend, showing us in the form of this prophetic parable, how the Church would be built.

Now in this parable He gives a keen insight, not only into humanity, but also into the conditions that the message had to contend with in His first advent. Let us examine it by the help of God. Here in Matthew 13:19-23, He gives us an understanding of the four types of ground that the seed was sown on. Or, in reality, He is portraying the four conditions that He met, initially, in the morning time, when He came sowing the Gospel seed. Now, think with me, what was the first condition that He was confronted with in His earthly ministry? Well, in Matthew 13:3, as well as in verse 19, it talks about that which received the seed by the wayside.

So, my friend, the first type of ground He introduces you and me to, is the wayside [ground]. Now what, actually, is this wayside? Well, let us look more closely. Here, in Matthew 13:19, it says, "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and says, "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not [Or a better rendering, the Greek says, 'considers or regards it not'], then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which is sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the wayside."

Now, I want you to notice that here, my friend it talks about when they did not consider or properly regard the Word. It says, "then cometh the wicked **ONE**," but you will notice that the word **ONE** is in italics, which, my friend, means it was not in the original text. Translators inserted it for the sake of clarity. The actual, original text of Matthew 13:19 says, "comes the wicked" (*The Emphatic Greek Diaglott*). My friend, the reason it does not say **ONE**, is because there are many. You go back to when Jesus first spoke the parable, in Matthew 13:4, "And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and the **FOWLS** [in the plural] came and devoured them up." So we find that the wicked is not, my friend, in the singular but, rather, employed in the plural.

So, it talks here, Matthew 13:19, and says, "then cometh the wicked." So, Biblically, we need to establish, who are the wicked? Jesus called them, in Matthew 13:4, "fowls," in the

plural. Who are these "fowls?" Who are these "wicked" ones? Those ones, my friend, that work so against the seed being sown. In Psalm 50:16-17 it says: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee."

Here, my friend, the Psalmist identifies who, my friend, God considers to be the wicked. It said, "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes?" Here were people who were declaring the statutes of God. In other words, they were preachers, if you please; religious leaders that declared His statutes, or that took the covenant of God in their mouths. They proclaimed the covenant. They proclaimed the Word. But, my friend, they hated true instruction and would not take the reality of the Word; they cast it behind them. My friend, God says this is the pinnacle, this is the height, of wickedness. These are those who truly constitute the wicked. Not whoremongers and harlots, my friend, but those that are religious leaders, who will not take the unadulterated truth of God's eternal Word.

So the wicked are preachers, religious leaders, if you please. Someone may ask, "Are you certain that is the fowls of the air, the ones that He calls the wicked?" Look in Revelation 19:17-18 where it says: "And I saw an angel [depicting a ministry] standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the **FOWLS** that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God [What was this particular supper?]; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men." My friend, these were those that were religious leaders, fowls of the air, my friend, that were not clean. They were unclean birds, with unclean experiences and unclean spirits, my friend, that were propagating and teaching religion.

Revelation 19:21 says, "And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the Horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the **FOWLS** were filled with their flesh."

My friend, He was talking, there, about religious leaders who, rather than follow the Spirit, follow the flesh, and work against the very cause of truth. In the prophecy of Jeremiah (5:26), the prophet got a glimpse and said, "For among my people are found **WICKED** men: they lay wait, as he that setteth snares, they eat a trap, they catch **MEN**. As a cage is full of **BIRDS**, so are their houses full of deceit: therefore they are become great, and waxen rich." Here he refers to those, my friend, that are false prophets, that catch **MEN**. They catch them because their houses are full of deceit. Their religious assemblies are full of deception and deceptive teaching. And, my friend, their false teachings and their fiery speeches catch **MEN**, if you please.

In Revelation, the Revelator caught a glimpse of the same picture that Jeremiah, the prophet, did. He said in Revelation 18:2, "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every **FOUL SPIRIT**, and a cage of every unclean and hateful **BIRD**."

I want you to see, my friend, when Jesus spoke of the wayside, that the wayside is the way of religion. Proverbs 16:25 says, "There is a **WAY** that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death. "Now, was Christ confronted with religion when He began to sow the seed? It was the first opposition that He faced. In John 1:11, it says, "He came unto his own, [Who? The Jewish nation, the Jewish people, the seed of Israel.] and his own **RECEIVED HIM NOT**." In the Gospel of Luke, we see here, the beloved physician pens, in Luke 6:6, "And it came to pass also on another Sabbath, that he entered into the synagogue and taught: and there was a man whose right hand was withered. And the scribes and Pharisees [Religious leaders of that day, my friend] watched him, whether he would heal on the Sabbath day; [Why?] that they might find an accusation against him."

Here were those, when Christ was trying to sow the very seed of truth, my friend, that were looking for ways to come along and pick up that seed that was sown in the hearts and lives of men. They tried to discredit His teaching and, my friend, they worked against the very cause of Christ. In Luke

6:11, following that episode, it says, "And they were filled with madness; and communed one with another what they might do to Jesus."

We also find, in the Gospel of John 5:18, it says, "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God." My friend, I want you to see that He was confronted, first and foremost, with this wayside ground—the way of religion. In Luke 19:47-48, it says: "And he taught daily in the temple. But the chief priests and the scribes and the chief of the people sought to destroy him, And could not find what they might do: for all the people were very attentive to hear him."

I want you to see, my friend, this shows the ones that were on the wayside ground. Let us look at the fowls trying to devour the seed in John's Gospel, my friend, when [Jesus] healed the one who had been blind from his birth. In John 9:13, it says, "They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind." And it goes on, and the Pharisees asked him what exactly happened, what occurred? Then he told them what had occurred, and how that Jesus, my friend, had healed his eyes. And, my friend, we can go on and see how they tried to discredit the seed, how they told him very plainly that He (Christ) was a sinner. And in John 9:25, "He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know that whereas I was blind, now I see." They had done their best, you read the entire context, to take that seed and to remove it with philosophy, with prophecy, with the way of religion, and with reasoning. But, my friend, this man stood pat. This is a prime example of the fowls trying to devour the seed.

My friend, if we go and look in other places, we can see the same thing occurred. In the Galatian epistle, we can see here that, even later in the Morning Time, it occurred. The Apostle Paul said in Galatians 3:1, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?" What were they trying to do? Galatians 3:2 says, "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" My friend, those wayside

ones, those religious individuals, tried to remove the seed with the way of the Law, the way of religion. So may God help us to see what this wayside is. It is the **WAY OF RELIGION**.

Next, He introduces us in Matthew 13:5,21, to the stony places. Now, what does this portray? Matthew 13:5 says, ". . . they had no deepness." Then Matthew 13:21 says, ". . . hath he not root." What is the root? Well, look at Jesus' words in Revelation 22:16 where He said, "I am the root." What was He teaching us? These which were stony were hard. They had no real conversion. My friend, no real change was affected. The stony one portrays the stony heart—the unconverted heart. In Ezekiel 36:25-26 it says: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the **STONY** heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh."

I want you to see, my friend, this stony heart is those where no conversion had yet been effected. These people, Matthew 13:20 says, "heareth the word," but Matthew 13:21 says, "hath not root." And Jesus said, "I am the root" (Revelation 22:16). They did not have the presence of Christ in their life, In Luke's rendering of this particular parable, in Luke 8:12, it says, "lest they should believe and be saved." This is a clear indication that these ones were not saved, and had not been saved or experienced a real conversion. I want you to see, my friend, no real experience was gained.

They enjoyed hearing what they thought would benefit the flesh. There were the "fish and loaf" type of followers. If you go to John's Gospel, my friend, in 6:14-15 it says: "Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." Then drop down to John 6:26-27: "Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you. Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because



ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed."

Then, dropping on down to John 6:66-68 it says: "From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him. Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

What is the picture before us? The stony places were those who had no real conversion, but followed [on] the fleshly level. They had no real heart for spiritual truth and would not accept it when it was presented, but they wanted a leader and a religion that made the flesh comfortable, one that took care of the flesh and made the flesh of man comfortable. That is what the stony ground was: those who followed on the fleshly "fish and loaf" level. My friend, the masses of religion are filled, yet today, with those types of people and those types of followers. Those that have stony hearts, but no real conversion. And, my friend, that is not a conducive ground for the seed.

Now, remember, each of these types of ground represents a condition that the message contended with, when it was originally sown. In His quest for material with which to build the church, my friend, these and the conditions that He was confronted with.

Next, the third type of ground found in Matthew 13:22 is that "which is among the thorns." Here is a picture of those who were genuine, those who were once fruitful. Matthew 13:22 says, "he becometh unfruitful." A clear indication that at one time there was fruit, at one time he was productive. But, my friend, it is a picture of the backslider. Here is the position of Judas, and Demas, and many others that fell into this kind of condition. Matthew 13:22 says, "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." I say, dear heart, these are those who had once had a genuine experience and were fruitful. But they fell into a snare and, my friend,

this is where the Judases and the Demases are located.

In John 12:4-6 it says: "Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, which should betray him, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein." So here we see, my friend, one that the thorns had choked out. The deceitfulness of riches had choked out the experience. In 2 Timothy 4:10, it says, "For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world."

So, my friend, we find, in these types of ground, what Christ was confronted with in His first Advent, in His quest to find material with which to use to build the church. We find the first type of ground is the way of religion. The first opposing force that Jesus faced was religion. The second opposing force was the stony ground, those that were unconverted, those that were fleshly followers, those following after the flesh and wanting something that would change their heart and life. The third type of ground was the thorny, and is a portrait of the backslider, those who began, my friend, but allowed a snare to entrap them to where they become unfruitful. And I would just say this: yet today, we are faced with these same opposing forces. And Jesus warned us, in Luke's Gospel, Chapter 17, to watch and not become ensnared with these things.

I trust we can see what Jesus contended with, in these first three types of ground in His first Advent. Lord willing, we will go a little further in Part Three.

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER - PART THREE

*Matthew 13:18 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 wayside.*

*20 But he that received the seed in 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 endureth 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.*

We have been studying the prophetic parables of Christ, incorporated here in Matthew, Chapter 13. We have found that through the vehicle of these seven parables, Jesus takes us down through the Gospel Day in its entirety. Housed in Matthew, Chapter 13, are seven distinct parables, which correspond with the seven time periods that comprise this Christian Dispensation.

In Part Two we considered the four types of ground that Jesus described in the Parable of the Sower that we read in your hearing. By the help of God, we want to examine this parable a little further. We found that these types of ground represent people, and their response to the Gospel message when Christ heralded it in His first Advent. These types of ground represent conditions the message was confronted with when initially sown. And, again, we must bear in mind that we

are approaching these parables prophetically, not practically. We are studying them in the light of their prophetic merit.

We found the first thing that Christ encountered was what Matthew 13:19 describes as the wayside, which we found was the **WAY OF RELIGION**. Secondly, He encountered what Matthew 13:20 denotes as stony places. They are those **UNCONVERTED FLESHLY FOLLOWERS**, those that were, in essence, "fish and loaf" followers. Next, Matthew 13:22 speaks of seed among the thorns—those who initially were believers but became, as Matthew 13:22 declares, "unfruitful." This was, my friend, exemplified by such as Judas and Demas. This portrays backsliders.

Now, we find that Christ, in His fairness to all men, sowed the seed, the Word, on all types of ground. The Gospel call is a universal call. The seed being sown equally on each of these types of ground displays the faithfulness of God. The Prophet Jeremiah penned, in his Book of Lamentations, 3:22-23: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness." In the prophecy of Isaiah 45:21 he penned, ". . . there is no God else beside me; a **JUST** God and a Savior." Acts 10:34 tells us, "The Lord is **NO** respecter of persons." The Lord, or as Matthew 13:3-8 tells us, sows the seed on **ALL** types of ground. And, my friend, this gives an equal opportunity to **ALL** mankind to be saved. The Apostle Paul reiterated this truth in Titus 2:11, when he declared, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to **ALL** men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." So I repeat, my friend, that Christ's sowing this seed equally on each type of ground, displays the faithfulness of God and portrays that He is no respecter of persons. And, my friend, that He gives equal opportunity to all men to be exposed to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

However, in His quest to fulfill His mission (that He stated in Matthew 16:18, when He declared, "I will build my church."), only one **TYPE** of ground is acceptable. Only one **TYPE** of ground is suitable to build the church upon. What type of ground is that? Well, in our lesson, in Matthew 13:23, He

speaks of "the **GOOD** ground."

Now we must begin to examine this good ground, and several questions loom to mind. Such questions as: "What made this ground good?" and "What distinguishes it from the other types of ground?" Luke's account tells us. (Luke has an account of this, as well, and is a little more descriptive in some matters.) In Luke 8:15, his Gospel declares, "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it [Or *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott* says, 'retain it.'], and bring forth fruit with patience."

Now, we found that all mankind is approached with an opportunity to hear the Word, and to heed the message, and to enter into the Kingdom through a Kingdom experience. But only those with an honest and good heart, Luke 8:15 declares, are those that are truly suitable and acceptable ground for the seed to be sown on. *The Amplified Bible*, in Luke 8:15, says, "these are [the people] who, hearing the Word, hold it fast in a just (noble, virtuous) and worthy heart."

So, my friend, we can begin to see what provides the ground on which the true church is built. It cannot be built on religion. It cannot be built on the unconverted. It cannot be built, my friend, on those who have less than a determination to follow on to the end, or, as Jesus said, to endure unto the end (Matthew 10:22). So, my friend, the true church, in Jesus' first Advent, as He was looking for acceptable ground upon which to build the church, He could not build it upon **RELIGION**. He could not build it, my friend, upon the **UNCONVERTED**. Nor could He build it on the **BACKSLIDER**. But only those who were **NOBLE** and **VIRTUOUS** and had a **WORTHY HEART**, could He build on, just as He told of Nathanael, in John 1:47, "Jesus . . . saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" My friend, it must be an honest and a good heart in those who provided the ground on which the true New Testament church was initially built.

Now, we must ask the question, "What distinguishes the true people of God, the true church, from religion? Well, consider our lesson. What was sown, that made a difference in the hearts of those who were honest? In Luke 8:5, it declares, "A sower went out to sow his seed." Now, what was this seed?

Luke 8:11 tells us: "The seed is the word of God."

Now, let us stop and examine this. What is the power of a seed? What distinguishes this seed from other types of things that can be sown in hearts and lives? My friend, it says this: "The seed is the word of God" (Luke 8:11). He likens the Word to a seed. Now, we know that the Word has power. And there is power in a seed. But, the question is, what is the **POWER** of the seed? Well, if you stop and consider, you will find that the **POWER** of a seed is the **POWER** of life. In Genesis 47:19, it portrays that to us very clearly, and says, ". . . give us **SEED**, that we may **LIVE**." The power of the seed is the power of life.

This is why that Christ had to commence this New Testament Era. Why? Man was under the sentence of death. Galatians 3:22 says, "But the Scripture [It is actually referring to the Old Testament at this juncture.] hath concluded all under sin." And Ezekiel 18:4 says, ". . . the soul that sinneth, it shall die." Man was, as Ephesians 2:1 says, ". . . dead in trespasses and sins."

Yes, certainly, in the Old Testament Dispensation there was ceremonial holiness. But, my friend, there **WAS NO LIFE**. That is why Jesus Christ had to step up on the stage of action. This is what necessitate Jesus Christ being, as Matthew 13:18 denotes, "**THE** sower." Why? Because He is **LIFE**. He is **LIFE PERSONIFIED**. In the way, the truth, and the life." My friend, life, Spiritual life, eternal life is vested in Jesus Christ. In the Gospel of John 1:4, it says, "In **HIM** [speaking of Christ] was **LIFE**; and the **LIFE** was the light of men." In 1 John 5:11, it says, "God hath given to us **ETERNAL LIFE**, and this **LIFE** is in Him."

Now, what did He come for? What was His express purpose for coming into this time world? Well, He reveals that to us. In John 10:10, when He says, ". . . I am come that they might have **LIFE**, and that they might have it more abundantly."

Now, the question arises, how did He **TRANSFER** this life from Himself to others? What avenue did He employ to accomplish this? Well, in the Gospel of John 6:63, He declares, ". . . the **WORDS** that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they [What? **THE WORDS**] are life." This is why He

sowed the Word.

And this is why that the Morning Time Church subsequently, my friend, followed the same example. In Mark 16:20, after His crucifixion and ascension, it says, "And they went forth, [speaking of His followers] and **PREACHED EVERY WHERE.**" In Acts 8:4, Luke, the beloved physician declares, "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went **"EVERY WHERE PREACHING THE WORD."** Why? Because, my friend, that is where the power of life resides, in the Word. In it is the power to cause a birth, to commence life, **NEW LIFE.** In 1 Peter 1:23, the Apostle Peter declares, "Being **BORN AGAIN,** not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible, by the **WORD OF GOD,** which **LIVETH.**"

I know, my friend, the Holy Spirit plays a very vital part and is involved in this experience. But, my friend, nowhere can the Spirit birth the believer until they have embraced the Word by faith and believed the report, as Isaiah 53:1 declared, and have accepted the message. My friend, then that is when the Holy Spirit and the Word, the two Witnesses, can rise to their feet in the heart and life of an individual and birth them, in the new birth, and make them a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Now, where was the Church instituted, in all of this, in The Morning Time? Well, in Luke 8:15, He again speaks and says, "they, which in an honest and good heart, having **HEARD** the word, keep it." Or, the Greek says, ". . . retain it." When these heard the word, they as Jesus said, in Luke 8:18, "take **HEED** therefore **HOW** ye hear." They heard it properly and they believed it. And they embraced the Word, and it produced life. And by producing life, it produced a fellowship. And this brought man into a communion and a fellowship with God. In 1 John 1:1-3, it says, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of **LIFE;** (For the **LIFE** was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal **LIFE,** which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;) That which we have seen and heard declared we unto you, that ye also may have **FELLOWSHIP** with us: and truly our **FELLOWSHIP** is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." Here the Apostle John

brings forth the thought of fellowship. What actually is this fellowship that man is brought into? The actual Greek word here is *koinonia* and means, "to share in common." Now my friend, will understand fellowship when we understand what it is that we share in common.

Look at these preceding verses. In 1 John 1:1, he spoke ". . . of the Word of **LIFE**." In 1 John 1:2, he said, "(For the **LIFE** . . . [and he talks about] . . . eternal **LIFE**." And then he talks, in 1 John 1:3, of ". . . **FELLOWSHIP**" or **SHARING IN COMMON**. What is it that we share in common? What we share in common is **LIFE**. My friend, that is the fellowship that we have. We share in common this life.

We know everything that was lost through the first Adam was restored through the second Adam, Jesus Christ. You go back to the Book of Beginnings and you will find there that man walked with God. Genesis 3:8 says, ". . . in the cool of the day." They enjoyed fellowship. They shared something in **COMMON**. But, why did they share it in **COMMON**? Because, my friend, God is **LIFE**. And because at that juncture, Adam had **LIFE**.

When sin entered in, God said, the day you sin you will surely **DIE** (Genesis 2:16-17). When sin entered in, my friend, the life was gone. And when the life was gone, the fellowship was broken. And man was no longer in communion.

So, when we ask, what is this fellowship, what did they, and do we share in common? My friend, it is **LIFE**.

The Church was instituted in The Morning Time, when individuals who were honest, and had an honest and a good heart, when they accepted and embraced the message. And, my friend, when this occurred it produced life.

And then as they, as 1 John 1:7 says, ". . . walk in the light" which indicates a progression, indicating a continuance. It was the same as Jesus said in John 8:31, ". . . If ye **CONTINUE** in my **WORD**, then are ye my disciples **INDEED**." And so, my friend, as they walked in the light, or kept or retained it, they retained life.

And then as they individually saw and followed light, they came together with others and made up a collective body **THE CHURCH**. In Acts 2:1, on the day of Pentecost, the day that The



Church was instituted, it said there that ". . . they were all of **ONE** accord in **ONE** place." And so here we find, my friend, a picture of unity.

Luke's account portrays this, in Luke's Gospel, when he speaks here of the Parable of the Sower. In Luke 8:16, it says, "No man, [Speaking of an individual person,] when he hath lighted a candle, covereth it with a vessel, or putteth it under a bed; but setteth it on a candlestick, [Or the Greek says, '. . . a lampstand'] that they which enter in may see the light."

Now, we have a picture here. What do we see portrayed before us? In the preceding verse, in Luke 8:15, He talked about the ground upon which The Church was built, ". . . an honest and good heart." Those that hear the Word, and those that, after they heard the Word, they keep the Word. And, my friend, those that after they have kept the word, and retained it by walking in the light, they come together.

Here in Luke 8:16, it says, "No man, [speaking of an individual experience] when he hath lighted a candle, [talking about coming out of darkness and gaining an experience] covereth it with a vessel or putteth it under a bed; [in other words, he does not isolate it] but setteth it on a candlestick." He brings it, in other words, together with the other lights.

Someone asks, when it speaks here of "No man when he hath lighted a candle" (Luke 8:16), do you think that portrays an individual experience of Salvation? Well, the Psalmist penned in Psalm 18:28, and told us there, "For thou wilt **LIGHT** my candle: the **LORD MY GOD WILL ENLIGHTEN MY DARKNESS.**" It is talking here about an experience that brings man out of darkness and brings man to light. So, it first of all portrays the individual experience that lights the coming out of darkness and gaining an experience that lights the light of a man's soul.

Then it tells us that you do not cover it with a vessel, or put it under a bed. In other words you do not **ISOLATE** it. "But setteth it on a candlestick" (Luke 8:16). A candlestick, or a candelabra, or a lamp-stand was where they brought several lights together and, my friend, put them in one place,

in an elevated position, where they gave light to the whole house. It portrays going from an **INDIVIDUAL** experience to a **COLLECTIVE** experience. This candlestick portrays The Church.

When John saw a vision of Christ in Revelation 1:20, he said, "The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels [Or the Greek word used there is *aggelos* which means, "messengers or ministers."] of the seven periods that comprise this Christian Dispensation.

So, what we are seeing portrayed here is how that Christ came forth in His initial advent. And, my friend, heralded a universal message "whosoever **WILL** let him come" (Revelation 22:17).

He sowed the seed to all ground or all humanity. He sowed it to the wayside. He presented it to religious folks. But they would not accept it. They said crucify Him.

He presented to those that were unconverted. And, my friend, as long as they received something for the flesh, "fish and loaves," they were content and willing to make Him king. But when He turned and preached the true sayings of Christ to them, my friend, they forsook Him and fled. And He turned to the twelve and ask, "will ye leave also?" (John 6:67).

Then, my friend, He sowed it on the thorny ground. Those that started out fruitful, the Judases and the Demases, but after a while they were offended in Him and backslid.

But, thank God, He found a people. A people with an honest and a good heart that would hear the Word, and that would take heed how they hear. They embraced it, they accepted it, they retained it, they kept it, and they walked in the light. And those people gained an individual experience and then following that light, my friend, they took that individual experience, that candle that had been lighted and brought it together with the other lights. They brought it together with the other ones that had been lighted, and formed it together with the other ones that had been lighted, and formed a collective body or, my friend, a body of believers, **THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH**. So, here we see a portrayal of the ground upon which Christ built The New Testament Church, **THE CHURCH**

**OF GOD.**

What is the distinction between The True Church and religion? The True Church has light. They take, keep, and retain the whole Word or whole Counsel of God, and enjoy the presence of Christ. And, by doing that, they maintain life.

I trust we can see how Christ secured this ground through Salvation. And how, my friend, through this taking of the Word and of the seed, in the morning of time, He instituted a Church. He found a people who would take the seed and take the Word and would hear it, and hear it properly, embrace it, keep it, and walk in it. And then come together with others of a like experience and formulate a body of believers that became **THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH OF GOD.**

## CHAPTER TWO

### THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER - PART FOUR

*Matthew 13:18 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 wayside.*

*20 But he that received the seed in 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 endureth 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.*

We have been studying concerning these seven prophetic parables that are housed in Matthew, Chapter 13.

With this message, we want to conclude our study of this first parable, The Parable of the Sower.

By way of review, we found that The Gospel Day or Christian Dispensation is comprised of seven distinct time periods. Each of these parables housed in Matthew, Chapter 13.

This first parable commences with the first Advent of Jesus Christ, or AD 33, and then goes to the end of that first period of The Gospel Day, or AD 270.

Now, as we look at these dates, the question arises, what occurred to validate these dates? Well, in AD 33 was the very day of Pentecost, when, my friend, the Holy Ghost Dispensation began. This was when the Spirit was given and came on the scene, and when the Seed, the Word of God, as Luke 8:11 tells

us, produced life, and The New Testament Church was actually instituted. In AD 270, according to *Wickersham's Nineteen Year Church History*, "Another great event which marked the close of this period of time, AD 270, is the division and decline of the Roman Empire."

Now, what caused the Roman Empire to decline, my friend and caused this to be the marking of the end of the first period of this Christian Dispensation? Well, Revelation 12:3, introduces us to what is symbolically called "a great red dragon." Which every Bible student knows, was a symbolic expression of the Pagan Roman Empire. It was that same red dragon that was found as an insignia on the shields of the Roman soldiers and so was a representation of the Roman Empire.

Now in Revelation 12:10, in the latter portion of that verse it says, ". . . for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, [And every Bible student knows that Rome became an accuser of The Morning-Time Church. Nero set the city on fire, as it were, and set and fiddled while Rome burned, and blamed it on the Christians. Then he had them hunted down as virtual animals. My friend, they were an accuser of the brethren.] which accused them before our God day and night. And they [The Saints] overcame him [The dragon] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." So here we see the demise of the Pagan Roman Empire was the result of truth.

If you go back into prophecy in Daniel 2:34, you will find there that the Stone (Jesus Christ) smote the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw, in the feet. He came, as Luke 2:1 declares, right in the very days of Caesar Augustus. And, my friend, from that time forth The Kingdom of God has been preached and every man presseth into it (Luke 16:16).

And, my friend, they overcame that empire by blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death (Revelation 12:10). And they became the demise of Rome in her Pagan state. So it, my friend, marks the end of that first period of The Gospel Day.

Now, we found that Christ built The Church on one type of ground. Luke 8:15 says, "an honest and good heart."

And, our text tells us that in this Morning Time they brought forth fruit. Matthew 13:23 says, ". . . an **HUNDREDFOLD**." Which, my friend, reflects a complete and perfect measure. It was an indication of the blessings of God. The writings in Genesis verifies that. In Genesis 26:12, it declares, "Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an **HUNDREDFOLD**: and the Lord **BLESSED** him." And in the early portion of the Morning Time the Lord blessed The Church with great fruit, with a great harvest.

In Acts 2:41, speaking of the day of Pentecost, it says, ". . .the same day there were added unto them about **THREE THOUSAND** souls." And, that was as Acts 2:15 says, at ". . . the third hour of the day" or, 9:00 AM according to our reckoning. And Acts 3:1 says, ". . . many of them which heard the word believed; and the number of the men was about five thousand." This was a time when truth was going forth in a great way. In Acts 2:47 it says, "And the Lord added to the church **DAILY** such as should be saved."

Seemingly the Gospel was just going to continue to increase. My friend, Acts 6:1 says, "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was **MULTIPLIED**. And in those days, when the number of the disciples was **MULTIPLIED**." Here we went from adding to multiplying. Acts 6:7 says, "And the word of God increased; and the number of the disciples **MULTIPLIED**." It was such a great increase, such a mighty marvelous moving of God, my friend, so much so that Acts 19:10 says, "And this continued by the space of two years; so that **ALL** they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks."

But, unfortunately something happened. Look at our text. In Matthew 13:23, it says, ". . . some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." Now, as Jesus spoke here, I want you to notice, there is a regression taking place. It is going backwards. It started out, ". . . an hundredfold" full fruit, productive, and effective. But, my friend, something happened, something occurred that affected the fruitfulness of the seed. Something that caused the true fruit to become more sparse, more rare.

What is this portraying to us? Well, notice as we look at the parable of the sower here in Matthew, Chapter 13, notice it is the last verse of the parable of the sower. And not only that, but the last part of the last verse. What does this signify to us? It is at the very end. What does that tell us?

My friend, that at the end of the first period things begin to change. It tells us that truth was not as plentiful as it once was. Someone may ask, "Well, what happened?" The Apostle Paul gives us an insight. In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, he said, ". . . that day [In reference to the Second Advent of Jesus Christ] shall not come except there come a falling away first."

Now, what does this mean? The Greek word for "falling away" is the word *apostasia*. *The Amplified Bible* renders this portion of the phrase, ". . . except the **APOSTASY** comes first." This word *apostasia* in the Greek is the word from which the English word *apostasy* is derived. If you will study *Strong's New Testament Greek Dictionary*, it tells us, giving us a definition of *apostasia* as a "defection from truth, [or] forsake."

So, my friend, sad to say, the morning glory, great as it was, was very short lived. As early as AD 66, a mere thirty-three years after Pentecost, when such a glorious move was wrought, Jude penned in his epistle, in Jude 1:3, ". . . earnestly contend for the faith which was **ONCE** delivered [past tense] unto the saints." This is letting us know that something had occurred, something had moved on the scene to where **THE FAITH** was not being delivered in its wholeness, in its purity, in its completeness as it once was. As it had been "**ONCE**" delivered, past tense, unto the saints (Jude 1:3).

What happened? What produced this apostasy? Well, Jude 1:4 tells us, "For there are certain men crept in unawares." And, my friend, we must always be aware of the fact that apostasy can **NEVER** occur without **MEN**. My friend, the tool that the enemy uses, in every age of time, to work against truth is men. He works through human instrumentality. And it was through men that this move began to occur. Jude 1:4 says, "For there are certain men crept in unawares."

He also denotes here that they **CREPT**. They did not come, first of all, and stand up publicly and refute truth or deny truth. But, they came in a most subtle and crafty manner. They came working unawares, Jude said. My friend, what happened when they began working unawares? What did they do? Jude 1:4 says, "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness" or loose living.

How did they do that? Second Timothy 4:4 says, "And they shall turn away their ears from truth, and shall be turned unto fables." Whenever any people does not any longer hear the unadulterated truths of God's Eternal Word, and whenever they turn away from wanting the whole council of God, they are a prey, they are, my friend, left open for the move of the enemy to come in upon them and turn them unto fables.

A fable is something that is not based in truth. It is not sound. It is make believe. It is not reality. And, unfortunately there are myriads of people, today, just as there was here in this first and second century, that does not want the whole council, the unadulterated truth of God's Eternal Word.

And so, they turn to something that is man made, something that is imaginary, something that tickles their ears and suits their fancy, and makes them feel good. When all along, my friend, they are under a deception and on the road to a Devil's Hell as fast as the wheels of time will take them.

Now, what caused them to turn from truth? What causes one to turn from truth, or to turn from **THE FAITH**? In 1 Timothy 4:1, here he says, "some shall depart from **THE FAITH**." And right here we see portrayed, your defection, or your departing, or your apostasy. What prompts it? He tells us here in 1 Timothy 4:1, what caused them to "depart from **THE FAITH**? [What?] giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."

We must be reminded that behind every defection from truth, and behind every false doctrine there is a spirit working. My friend, these spirits cause men to turn and twist and change the truth of God into a **LIE**, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator."



Now, what actually happened in this Morning-Time apostasy? In 2 Thessalonians 2:3, the Apostle Paul spoke of "a falling away." In Acts 20:29-30, he prophesies of it again when he says, "For I know this that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them."

And that is always an indicator of one who is not in divine order, because they have no concern for the flock. They spare not the flock. They care not what their moves do to the flock. They care not what effect it has. My friend, that is a mark of one who is a wolf. And Jesus taught us in John, Chapter 10, about hirelings and about how the wolves would come in among the sheep. And there is always a natural presumption in the Scripture that where the sheep are, there the wolves will try to work. That, my friend, is a natural presumption.

But here were men, that were supposedly men that were among them and they were not sparing the flock. Isaiah 62:1 says, "For Zion's sake." This tells us that those who are truly of the flock, truly saints of God, will care for the body of Christ. And, my friend, will be considerate of the effect of their lives upon the flock. But, here the Apostle Paul says in Acts 20:39, they shall "enter in among you, not sparing the flock." And Acts 20:28 tells us the flock is The Church of God.

Then Acts 20:30 tells us, "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking **PERVERSE** things, [Now, why would they do such a thing?] to draw away disciples after them." Now, what were these perverse things they were speaking back here in this Morning Time Apostasy? What were the things they were teaching and speaking? Jude 1:4 said they were, "turning the grace of our God in lasciviousness." A little clearer rendering of that is in *The Amplified Bible*. In Jude 1:4, which says, "who pervert the grace (the spiritual blessing and favor) of our God into lawlessness and wantonness and immorality." Another rendering declares in Jude 1:4, "they abuse His grace as opportunity for immorality."

What is he actually teaching us here He goes on to say in Jude 1:4, that not only were they "turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, [It says,] and [they were] denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, immediately men's minds would run to think, "Oh, these must be atheistic. These must be agnostics. They 1 were denying our only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." No! Read it in context. They were not denying His existence. But, they were denying His Lordship. They were denying His control over their lives.

Someone may ask, "Can you deny Him in that manner?" Well, when the Apostle Paul penned to Titus, in Titus 1:16, he says, "They **PROFESS** that they know God; but in works **THEY** deny him." Or *The Amplified Bible* says in Titus 1:16, ". . . but deny and disown and renounce Him by what they do."

What really occurred back here in The Morning Time? My friend, false teachers known as Gnostics and Antinomians came on the scene. And they arose and came in, gained influence and gained position they turn things that were not correct. Second Peter 2:1-2 says: "But there were false prophets also among you, who privily [They start privately talking to individuals and gaining influence.] shall bring in damnable heresies, even **DENYING** the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

These men known as Gnostics, these men known as Antinomians contended that men could not live right or Holy in this earthly body. They claimed that matter was wholly evil and that only spirit was good. And that since man was made of matter, his body was matter, that he could not but sin. They taught that he could not live in a Holy State. That the body was evil and so he was compelled to do evil. And so they turned the grace of God into a license for lawlessness and immorality.

They, my friend, held to the persuasion that the body could not help but sin. But the grace of God over-looked that sin and understood man's human failings. They claimed that man could not live right, could not live in this world in a

rightful manner. But, yet they claimed fellowship with God. First John 1:6 says, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth.

Is this what they were doing in the first century? First John 2:4 says, "He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." I say, they twisted and turned the Scripture to try to substantiate their claims and their teachings.

And since it was a teaching and a doctrine that was easy on the flesh, it had a **LARGE** appeal. And they kept professing that it was Christianity.

And because of this, my friend, it caused a people to embrace fallacy. It caused people to move away from the sound teachings of God's Eternal Word, since their teachings were not Biblical and were not sound. But it was, my friend, appealing to the flesh. It was easy for an unregenerate man to comprehend and adhere to.

And so, my friend, an influx of unbelievers started coming into what had been the body of Christ. And they started adhering to these doctrines that were doctrines of Devils. Doctrines that were promoted by spirits that were contrary to God's Eternal Spirit.

And so my friend, this is why Jesus portrayed to us here in this closing verse in Matthew 13:23, in the last portion of this last verse of the parable of the sower, He portrayed a regression. He said therein Matthew 13:23, "and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, [That is what it started out with on the day of Pentecost.

And, my friend, it was a great and glorious time when truth went forth and the Lord added to the Church. And it went from adding, to many were added to, and then to multiplied to. And a great and marvelous work was wrought.

But, my friend, in the midst of that there arose false teachers that began to draw away disciples. And they began to influence people.

And so there was a regression. And it became, "some sixty, [and finally] some thirty" to where truth became a great scarcity at the end of this closing period of The Morning Time.

I say, this is the reason that Jesus employs this very portion of this verse, in this place, as the closing portion of the first parable, or the closing portion of this first part of the Gospel Day. He was revealing to us conditions at the close or the end of The Morning Time. He was portraying an apostasy.

And this, my friend, closes out the first period of The Gospel Day, this scene of apostasy, this first parable. And it sets the stage for the next parable, the parable of the tares that shows us very vividly and in explicit detail, my friend, the furtherance of that apostasy. And I trust we can see what this first parable portrays. It portrays this first period of The Gospel Day, or that time period from AD 33 to AD 270. I trust we can see what Jesus was portraying to us.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE PARABLE OF THE TARES - PART ONE

Matthew 13:24 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 root up also the wheat with them.

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.

We have been studying concerning these seven prophetic parables incorporated in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13.

Now we want to begin to examine the second parable, the parable of the tares. As we begin to consider this parable, first of all we must note that it is in direct succession to the first parable. And as such, it represents the second period of The Gospel Day, or that period of time from AD 270 to AD 530. Now, the question immediately arises, what substantiates these dates? What occurred to commence and to conclude this time period?

Well, my friend, we find in the book of Revelation, which we found was a symbolic book, because Revelation 1:1 says, It was "sent and signified" which means revealed by *signs*. Or *Webster's Dictionary* tells us the definition of *sign* is "a symbol."

We find in this symbolic account, known as the Revelation, that the first opposing force to The Morning Time Church was the Pagan Roman Empire. We see that represented in symbolic expressions of "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars" (Revelation 12:1). This is a figurative expression denoting The Church, when she came on the scene in Her Pristine Glory in the morning of The Gospel Day.

We find that immediately, Revelation 12:3 says, "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon," which is a symbolic representation of that Pagan Roman Empire. That great red dragon was the insignia that was on the shields of the Roman soldiers. So the first opposing force against The Morning-Time Church, after she had been instituted, was the Pagan Roman Empire.

But, my friend, Revelation 12:11 teaches us, "And they [the saints] overcame him [The antecedent of 'him' is found in Revelation 12:3, 'a great red dragon' or the Pagan Roman Empire.] by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." So The Morning-Time Church defeated old Rome in its Pagan form.

This was spoken of in prophetic language back in Daniel, when in Daniel 2:34, it declares, "Thou sawest till that a stone [And the Stone, Ephesians 2:20 tells us, is 'Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.'] was cut out without hands, [Portraying a virgin birth, without the aid or intervention of a man,] which smote the image upon his feet." And Daniel 2:45 says, "it brake in pieces."

And, so, *Wickersham's Nineteen Year Church History* tells us, "That another great event which marked the close of this period of time, AD 270, is the division and decline of the Roman Empire." So here we see, dear heart, that if this occurrence marked the end of the first period of time in this Christian Dispensation, it also marks the commencement of the second period as well.

We shall study what marks the conclusion of this period as we go through our study.

As we begin to examine this parable of the tares, we see some clear distinctions between it and the initial parable,

the parable of the sower.

In Matthew 13:24, Jesus says here, when He began this parable, "The Kingdom of heaven is likened." This is the first parable to include this phrase. But, this parable and every succeeding parable hereafter, here in Matthew, Chapter 13, incorporates and includes this phrase. It is here in Matthew 13:24, 13:31, 13:33, 13:44, 13:45 and 13:47. Now, why was this not included in the first parable? And what is the significance of its incorporation now?

In the first parable, Christ is, my friend, taking forth a universal message to, as Matthew 13:19 denoted, **ANYONE**. And I might just clarify as we deal with this thought, that the message was for the masses. It was for **ALL** men. It was for, as Matthew 13:19 says, any one."

But we found in in prior studies that the understanding, my friend, was reserved for those who were disciples.

So here we find that in the first parable Christ is taking forth a universal message to anyone. He was looking for, as Matthew 13:23 spoke of, "good ground" upon which to build The New Testament Church.

However, at this point in history, the second period of The Gospel Day, The Church has been built, and has been instituted.

But, why the phrase as Matthew 13:24 speaks, "The kingdom of heaven is likened"? Well, we must remember the burden of these parables, Remember, they are vehicles to carry us down throughout the Christian Dispensation or Gospel Day. Through these parables and the imagery they employ, He is portraying the prevailing condition facing The Kingdom or The Church, in the age which the parable represents.

Let us look a little closer. What is He actually saying when He employs the phrase here in Matthew 13:24, "The kingdom of heaven."? What Biblically is "The Kingdom of Heaven?" Many would have us to believe that these are separate entities, that there is a separate entity of The Kingdom of Heaven?" Many would have us to believe that these are separate entities, that there is a separate entity of The Kingdom of Heaven?" Many would have us to believe that these are separate entities, that there is a separate entity of The Kingdom of

Heaven, The Kingdom of God, and The Church of God. Many would make you to feel that they refer to separate and distinct entities. My friend, some religious advocates say that we are in the church age now. And that in some future point, in time, that Christ will usher in the kingdom age.

But, let us see what the Bible teaches. Number one, we must first address, "What is the **NATURE** of The Kingdom?" In Romans 14:17, the Apostle Paul declared, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; [In other words, not literal or temporal.] but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The Kingdom is not of a literal nature. It is a Spiritual entity. All of the attributes that are enumerated and mentioned here, "righteousness, peace and joy" are Spiritual qualities that are "in the Holy Ghost" (Romans 14:17). So, He is speaking here of Spiritual realities.

The Kingdom of God is **NOT** an earthly kingdom. Jesus told Pilate in John 18:36, "My kingdom is **NOT OF** this world . . . something that can be seen with the naked eye. But, my friend, it is a Spiritual reality.

In Luke's Gospel, the Pharisees posed a question to Jesus, that, my friend, is yet posed today. They asked in Luke 17:20-21: "when the kingdom of God should come, [Now, notice Christ's distinct answer.] *he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: [Or, The Amplified Bible renders it, 'with signs to be observed or with visible display,' And in verse 21 He declares,] Neither shall they say, Lo here! Or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.*" Or *The Emphatic Greek Diaglott*, containing the original Greek text says, "is among you." This lets us know, again, that it is not a literal, temporal reality, but rather, it is a Spiritual reality. It is an, unseen by the naked natural eye, **SPIRITUAL REALITY**.

The second question we must ask is, "Is the Kingdom a present reality?" Again, the Scriptures are very explicit. Look at Jesus' words in Luke 16:16, when He says, "The law and the prophets were [in the past tense] until John: since that time [John the Baptist's time] the kingdom of God **IS** preached, and every man presseth **INTO** it. Here, my friend, when these words were spoken, it let us know that men were accessing and



entering into The Kingdom. This lets us know that it must have been a reality that was afforded to man even at that juncture. John said in Revelation 1:9, "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and **IN THE KINGDOM.**"

My friend, this certainly baffles the minds of modern teachers of those who are of the Dispensationalist persuasion. Those who would teach the tribulation as a literal affair to occur out here in the realms of the Future, and that The Kingdom Age is not yet come upon the scene.

Here, John in the very first century in AD 96, or in that proximity when he penned the Book of Revelation, he said that he was "in tribulation and in the kingdom" (Revelation 1:9). This lets us know beyond any shadow of a doubt that The Kingdom of God is, indeed, a present reality. In Romans 14:17, the Apostle Paul says, "For the kingdom of God **IS.**" Again, employing the present tense: not *will be*, not *going to be*, but rather, **IS**, which is a present-tense reality.

Now my friend, let us consider what Matthew 13:24 denotes here as, "the kingdom of heaven." Is there a distinction between The Kingdom of God or The Church of God? Let us see how they are used in the Scriptures. In Matthew 4:17, at the commencement of Jesus' public ministry, Matthew records, "Repent: for the kingdom of **HEAVEN** is at hand." But in Mark's account it is rendered in Mark 1:15, "the kingdom of **GOD** is at hand: repent ye." I say, my friend, they are interchangeable and synonymous terms. Look in Matthew's Gospel, where He gives the parable of the mustard seed. Here in Matthew 13:31, He says, "The kingdom of **HEAVEN** is like." But, my friend, in Mark's Gospel, in Mark 4:30, he records, "Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of **GOD?**" So we see, very clearly, they are used in an interchangeable sense and refer to the one and selfsame entity.

Someone may ask, "Are you certain of this?" Well, if you look in Matthew 4:23, Matthew 9:35, and Matthew 24:14, each of these three Scriptures has a common phrase. And that phrase is, they all speak of "**THE** Kingdom." My friend, this lets us know they were both used in the singular sense, that there is only **ONE** Gospel and only **ONE** Kingdom. Now, stop to consider, if there were more than one Kingdom, then it would require

more than one Gospel. But the Scripture explicitly says, "**THE** gospel of **THE** kingdom" (Matthew 4:32). Both of these are in the singular sense. There is only **ONE** Gospel and only **ONE** Kingdom.

Now, what about The Church? Is it the same as The Kingdom? Well, since Pentecost, these terms are synonymous. The only distinction that can be made is that the Kingdom portrays the individual experience and the reigning in the heart of the King. And The Church, my friend, denotes its collective aspect of various believers coming together in a unified body.

Do the Scriptures unite these two? Certainly so! Look at Jesus' words in Mark's Gospel. In Mark 9:1, it says, "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power."

Now, I do not have time to digress, but there are several Truths incorporated in this verse. One is, either The Kingdom of God came with power as Jesus promised, within the lifetime of these men who were standing there, whom He was addressing. Or, secondly, we must conclude that somewhere in this earth, there are men who are approaching two thousand years of age, which is a ridiculous thought to entertain. Or, thirdly, we must say, that Christ did not speak the Truth, which we also know is not sound in the light of Scripture and history.

So, the reality is that The Kingdom of God came with power within the lifetime of those whom He was addressing. Now, He said here in Mark 9:1, "That there be some of them that stand here, which will not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." And in Matthew 16:18, Jesus said, "I will build my church."

Now, I want us to see, that since the day of Pentecost, The Kingdom and The Church are speaking of the one and self-same thing.

In Acts, Chapter 1, we find here that Jesus' disciples were posing a question prior to His ascension. In Acts 1:6-8 it says: "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the time or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his

own power. But ye shall **RECEIVE POWER**, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you."

And so my friend, their questions were concerning The Kingdom. In Acts 1:6, "they asked . . . wilt at this time restore again the **KINGDOM** to Israel? And He let them know that they would receive power. And in Acts, Chapter 2, they received that power when it says in Acts 2:2-4: "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost."

And so, my friend, when the Spirit of God moved in on the scene, understanding came. Peter preached here in Acts 2:17, when he picked up Joel's prophecy, (Joel 2:28-29) and said: "And it shall come to pass in the last days." And he had understanding of prophetic truths, and The Kingdom came with power and fulfillment of Jesus' words in Mark 9:1, here on the day of Pentecost.

Now, can we unite that with The Church? In Acts 2:47, it says, "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the **CHURCH** daily such as should be saved." So they had asked about The Kingdom being restored. Jesus had prophesied that The Kingdom would come with power. That is when the power of the Holy Ghost came in on the scene. And men received understanding of prophetic truths that had been darkened to their minds prior to this.

So we find that it tells us there in Acts 2:38, "Then Peter said unto them, Repent." And we find, my friend, it goes on and tells us in Acts 2:41, "Then they gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." That Kingdom came with power. And, my friend, it tells us in Acts 2:47, "And the Lord added to the **CHURCH**." Here we clearly see that The Kingdom and The Church are interchangeable terms since Pentecost.

Look in Hebrews 12:22-24 where it says: "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and **CHURCH** of the firstborn, which are

written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus." So, here we see very clearly enunciated that in Hebrews 12:22-24 it says: ye are come unto mount Sion . . . to the general assembly and church . . . and to God . . . And to Jesus."

Then in Hebrews 12:28, he never changes the topic of his address and says, "Wherefore we receiving a **KINGDOM**." Now what had he been speaking of all the way down through here? He had been speaking of various figurative expressions to denote **THE CHURCH**. And it says in Hebrews 12:23, "To the Wherefore we receiving a **KINGDOM**."

So I repeat, dear heart, that from the day of Pentecost on, we clearly see that The Kingdom of God and The Church of God is speaking of the one and self-same entity.

Therefore, when our text says, back here in Matthew 13:24, "The kingdom of heaven is likened. . ." we found The Kingdom of Heaven and The Kingdom of God are synonymous and interchangeable phrases. And we found that The Kingdom of God and The Church of God are also interchangeable phrases.

So when our text says in Matthew 13:24, ". . . The kingdom of heaven is likened. . ." we could just as well say without doing any injustice to the Scriptures, "The kingdom of God [Or, The Church of God] is likened. . . ."

So, my friend, as we go through and study these parables that Jesus is speaking, we need to understand that He is giving us a revelation, He is giving us a picture of the prevailing conditions that The Church would face during these different periods of time.

Now there are a couple of more truths that we need to understand concerning this parable. In Matthew 13:36, after Jesus explained the first parable, the parable of the sower in Matthew 13:18-23, then in Matthew 13:36, it says, "Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went **INTO THE HOUSE**. . . ." The first parable had a message for all—it was as Matthew 13:19 says, to "**ANY ONE**." It was for the masses.

But the second through the seventh parables were for a very exclusive group of people—**HIS DISCIPLES**—those that were **IN THE HOUSE**. To understand these truths, you have to be a **DISCIPLE**. These six parables, the second through the seventh,

I repeat, are for an exclusive group of people. To understand these parables, you must be in close personal audience with Christ, in communion with Christ, in close communion with Him, **IN THE HOUSE.**

These truths are not for the unregenerate masses, but rather, they are for those who have a "hunger and thirst for righteousness" (Matthew 5:6). They are for those who are really seeking the authentic truths.

What else do we need to see as we look at this passage of scripture? Last of all, our text says in Matthew 13:24, that ". . . The kingdom is likened." What does it mean here when it employs the term "likened"? The Greek word here is from the root word **homou** which means "at the same place or time." So my friend, the usage of the term "likened" means that these were the prevailing conditions taking place at the same time. This was what The Church was facing in that particular age.

So, my friend in Chapter 3, Part 2, we will begin to see the conditions that The Church was facing during this period of time from AD 270 to AD 530.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE PARABLE OF THE TARES - PART TWO

*Matthew 13:24 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 slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way.*

*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 unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?*

*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.*

As we look into this passage of Scripture text, we again see before us the parable of the tares. We began to consider this particular parable, in our series of studies of these prophetic parables in Matthew, Chapter 13. Now we want to examine this parable a little further.

By way of review, we found that this second of seven parables housed in this chapter corresponds with the second period of The Gospel Day, or that period of time from AD 270 to AD 530.

Also, we saw that this was the first parable to include the phrase that Matthew 13:24, holds before us as, "The kingdom of heaven is likened." And we learned the phrase, The Kingdom of Heaven, The Kingdom of God, or The Church of God

are synonymous and interchangeable phrases since the day of Pentecost, and have been used in an interchangeable manner throughout the New Testament.

This text, as well as each subsequent parable in this chapter says as Matthew 13:24 does, "The kingdom of heaven is likened." Or, as Matthew 13:31 says, "The kingdom of heaven is like." We find this incorporated in Matthew 13:24, 31, 33, 44, 45, and 47.

The Greek word [the original language of the New Testament was written in Greek] the original Greek word for the English word "likened" written in Matthew 13:24, is the Greek Word **homoios** which comes from the root word of **homou** which literally means "at the same place or time." So the employment of the word translated in our English as the word "likened" means that these things mentioned in the various parables such as in Matthew 13:25 "tares," Matthew 13:33, "leaven," etc., my friend, is depicting the prevailing conditions that were taking place at the same time and that The Church was having to contend with in the particular period or era that was under consideration.

Now, let us begin to examine this text and see just what Christ intimated in this particular parable that The Church was facing in this second period of time.

Let us remember, as we begin to view this particular parable, that the first period of the Gospel Day was that period of time from AD 33, when The Church was instituted on the day of Pentecost, to AD 270 which closed the first period of time with the decline and division of the pagan Roman Empire.

We found that that first period of the Gospel Day closed out with an apostasy beginning. The word *apostasy* comes from the Greek word **APOSTASIA** and it means "a defection **FROM** the truth."

So as the first period of time was closing out, an apostasy had begun. A defection from the truth that Jesus brought forth in His first Advent, and the disciples heralded. My friend, that which the Book of Acts calls "the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42). My friend, the saints were having leaders rise up that were leading them away and defecting from

the original truth.

So we find the portrayal of this in the latter portion of this first parable. In the closing verse of the first parable, the parable of the sower, in Matthew 13:23, we see this defection portrayed when Jesus said, "and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty." We found that, my friend, at the beginning of the Gospel Day the fruit was a hundredfold. But a regression over a period of time had taken place to where it became sixty fold and then thirty fold. I find, my friend, that a regression was working as the second period commences, we find that this was the condition that was working.

Let us examine this parable very closely to see just exactly what Jesus was revealing to us. In Matthew 13:24, it says, "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened."

Now again, we must recall that when we say, The Kingdom of Heaven, we could as well say, The Kingdom of God, or The Church of God. So, my friend, He is speaking of conditions that were facing The Church. When He said in Matthew 13:24, "is likened" this is the prevailing condition that was taking place at the same time. And, my friend, it was the condition that The Church of God was facing at that time or that particular period.

In Matthew 13:24, now, He begins to tell us, and says here, "a man which sowed good seed in his field." Now, let us examine this, and by the help of God, let us get the understanding as we go.

Who is this "Man" that Matthew 13:24 speaks of? It says, "a man which sowed good seed in his field." My friend, in Matthew 13:37, He says, "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man."

Now, to whom does this refer? Jesus reveals that to us in Matthew 16:37 where He posed the question, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" He is revealing to us that Jesus Christ Himself is this Son of man. He is the **MAN** that is referred to in this particular text. The text goes on to say in Matthew 13:24, that He said, "a **MAN** . . . sowed good seed in his field." It said **HE SOWED GOOD SEED.**



Now we must ask, "What is this seed?" In this particular lesson, this particular parable, my friend, the thought of the **SEED** now has a dual application.

When Jesus was expounding on the Parable of the Sower, He said in Luke 8:11 that "The seed is the word of God," but, in explaining the Parable of the Tares, He said in Matthew 13:38, "The good seed are the children of the kingdom." How could it be both? Some would say, "Isn't that a contradiction?" Certainly not!

We must ask the question, "What made them children of The Kingdom? What enabled them to have a new birth that made them part of The Kingdom or part of The Church? What was it that enabled them to experience the new birth and make them a child? My friend, we find here that which enabled them to have a new birth, to birth a believer, was the Word. By believing and embracing the truth of the Word.

So, when we see here that Jesus teaches us in the parable of the sower that the seed is the **WORD OF GOD**, and then in the parable of the tares He says that the good seed are the **CHILDREN OF THE KINGDOM**, we have no contradiction here at all. But rather, it is a revelation of what the Word of God, when properly heard, properly embraced, and adhered to, what that revelation will produce in the heart and life of an individual. That revelation will make them a new creature, it will cause them to become a new man in Christ Jesus. They will experience a new birth by embracing the Word of Truth and incorporating it into their heart and life.

First Peter 1:23 says, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, **BY** the word of God." And when we accept the word and the truth that it brings to us, it brings a birth. My friend, it becomes as James 1:21 says, "the engrafted word." Or *The Amplified Bible* says in James 1:21, "the which implanted and rooted [in your hearts]." John tells us in 1 John 3:9, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; [Why? How is this possible?] for his seed [or the Word] remaineth in him." So, by you and me giving the Word of God its proper position in our life, it initially births the believer.

Because 1 Peter 1:23 says, "Being born again . . . by the

incorruptible, by the word of God." And it not only initially saves us, but by getting its rightful place in our hearts as "the engrafted word" (James 1:21), will also enable you and me to be free from sin, because "his Seed [or His Word] remaineth in" us (1 John 3:9). The Psalmist reiterated this truth. In Psalm 119:11 he said, "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." So in this parable, they are those who have embraced the Word.

When He refers in Matthew 13:38, "the good seed are the children of the kingdom" we see portrayed in this lesson that these are those who have embraced the Word, experienced the power of regeneration and have hid it in their hearts and daily draw from its strength.

Now, notice the text goes on to say in Matthew 13:24 that "a man sowed good seed **IN HIS FIELD** . . ." Now, what is this field? In Matthew 13:38, Jesus tells us, "The field is the **WORLD**." And so my friend, the field is the world.

Here it gives us an understanding to questions that many times the masses pose, such as: ""What made the sower so presumptuous that He could come into this world and sow the seed everywhere? Even yet today, what makes preachers so presumptive as to try to preach the Gospel to everyone?"

Because in reality Matthew 13:24 says it is "**HIS** field" or His world. In Psalm 24:1 it says, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and **THEY** that dwell therein," In Psalm 100:3, it declares, "Know **YE** that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; **WE ARE HIS PEOPLE**."

This is why He can presume to intrude on men's lives, because in reality, it is not an intrusion, nor is He an intruder. But He is the Creator and has creative rights. In the Book of Revelation 4:11, The Revelator declares, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

But notice in our text in verse 25, the narrative takes a drastic turn. Its tone and its emphasis change completely. Matthew 13:35 declares, "But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way." This

passage conveys many vital truths to us. First of all, it says here in Matthew 13:25, "But while **MEN** slept."

We must be reminded that this Gospel was started with Christ. He was the Man that Matthew 13:24 speaks of. It started with **GOOD SEED**. There was no failure in Christ. There was no failure in the seed. My friend, it started with Good Seed. There was no failure with Christ. And this Gospel day was started with the seed of the Word which He brought, and it was Good Seed.

But on down through time we find a breakdown occurred. The breakdown came in Matthew 13:25, where it says, "But while **MEN** slept." The breakdown was not with Jesus Christ, but rather, the breakdown came with men. The plan of God was to entrust the Gospel to faithful, capable men.

In 2 Timothy the Apostle Paul pens to this young minister, penning in 2 Timothy 2:1-2: "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit to **FAITHFUL** men, who shall be able to teach others also." The Apostle Paul went on to say in 1 Thessalonians 2:4, "But as we were allowed of God to be **PUT IN TRUST** with the gospel, even so we speak." Certainly this was the plan of God to entrust man with the Gospel, to perpetuate it down through the ages of time.

However, something drastic happened. There was as Matthew 13:25 says, an "enemy." My friend, the move of the Devil caused as Matthew 13:25 declares, "men slept."

Now, what does this mean? What is it actually portraying? Look at the Apostle Paul's words in Ephesians 5:14, where it says, "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." He is teaching us here, my friend, that those that were sleeping, those "that sleepest" as he said, are those who, as he went on to say were in need of "light." They were losing light.

Think of one when he goes into a state of sleep, or begins to fall asleep, losing contact with surrounding reality—he does not see things clearly as he did when he was wide awake. He does not speak as clearly. His mind is not as clear nor as keen. He is not as alert to what is going on around him in the

real world, when sleep begins to enclose about him. So one who is falling asleep is one who is losing contact with surrounding reality—he is going into darkness.

Look at the words of the Apostle Paul in Ephesians 5:14, "Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." Here he was penning to a congregation of the Saints of God, that had once been fully awake and fully enlightened and fully aware of what was transpiring about them.

But an enemy came, and, my friend, began to move in such a subtil, deceptive manner that started so gradually. When one falls asleep, he does not just lie down and immediately lose his conscious state. But it is a process. And so it was a process here: They were losing contact with surrounding reality, their senses were being dulled, and they were losing an awareness of what was transpiring. They were being rocked into a complacency, into an indifference, just as when one starts to lose consciousness and go to sleep. They go into darkness, and their eyes grow heavy. They start closing their eyes to the light, and then darkness comes in.

I want you to see the picture of what was happening when He refers here in Matthew 13:25 to those in this state when he says, "men slept." When one sleeps, he goes into a state of darkness. In 1 Thessalonians 5:6-7, he says: "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober, For they that sleep, sleep in the night."

Here he lets us know when he says "Therefore let us not sleep, as do others." He lets us know that the apostasy was already working. Those who had been awake, those had been in light, those who had an understanding of precious truth had lost that. They were going asleep. They were losing their awareness, losing their consciousness, their consciousness of true doctrine, their consciousness of sin. They were going into darkness. And so, he says, "they that sleep, sleep in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:7). This is letting us know, my friend, that a "night" is when light is out, when the light does not shine.

And we are seeing here a portrayal in this particular parable. This phrase here in Matthew 13:25, when it says "men

slept" portrays the morning-time apostasy. And the onset of a dark night when the prevailing conditions were darkness and night. The bright Sun which arose in the morning-time was starting to be eclipsed. And the stage was being set for a Dark Age that would come on in the third period of time.

I trust we can see, dear heart, what was beginning to work. We are seeing conditions, my friend, where men that had been entrusted with the truth, that were supposedly faithful men, had the enemy move in upon them to where their senses became dulled, their vision became dim, and their light became darkness. And because of that, dear heart, they lost their grip, they lost their grasp on precious truth and light. So, because of that, a dark night started to set in—an eclipse of that bright morning Sun started to take place.

This was a condition that became a massive move. It became a move that spread and became a dominant condition of that age, to where, my friend, that the tares were sown right amongst the wheat. The distinction was lost between the right and the wrong. It became a condition, my friend, where people began to **NOT** see the distinction as clearly. And the enemy worked in this era to where people would claim that they were right, that they were children of God, that they were of the Christian community.

But yet, they did not adhere to the original teachings and the original doctrines. That is why, when 1 John was penned, as John came off the Isle of Patmos, around AD 100, and he saw prevalent conditions taking place. His move, in this Epistle, was to get them back to the original. He said in 1 John 1:1, "That which was from the beginning." And that is a predominant theme through the entirety of this Epistle. Because, he saw that they had been moved, my friend, from the Truth, moved from the original teachings that had been laid down by Jesus Christ and the Apostles.

And at this juncture in history, he was the last living of the original Apostles and felt the burden upon him, my friend, to lay forth a warning, to sound it in a clear tone to where people could see what they needed to do.

I trust you have gained an understanding of it, and we will look a little farther in Part Three.



## CHAPTER THREE

### THE PARABLE OF THE TARES - PART THREE

*Matthew 11:24 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 up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.*

*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.*

We have been studying these prophetic parables of Christ incorporated here in Matthew, Chapter 13. And we are currently studying the parable of the tares, or the second parable which represents that second period of the Gospel Day, or that time frame of AD 270 to AD 530.

We found in prior studies, that during this period of time one of the prevailing conditions which The Church faced, was as Jesus denoted in Matthew 13:25, when He said, "men slept." Or, we found that to represent a massive apostasy that was under way. And, as always when there is an apostasy, there are results or consequences from that apostasy. So it is in our text. Here in Matthew 13:25, it says, "But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way."

Here we are introduced to a term and to an occurrence, with which we, in western society, are not readily familiar. Here Jesus introduces us to the term in Matthew 13:25 as "tares." Now questions arise: What are these? What do they do? Why was this such a serious matter? and What does it represent? Let us look closely at what these "tares" are. Scholars tell us that tares represented one of the greatest fears of the Middle-Eastern farmer. To this day, in India, it is one of the direst threats a farmer may face. Even in the codified Roman law, it was forbidden as a crime and its punishment was laid down.

Now, what actually were these "tares" that Matthew 13:25 speaks of? *Tares* were actually a weed that was called Bearded Darnel. In its early stages, these tares so closely resembled the wheat that it was impossible to distinguish the one from the other. And I might say, so it is with apostasy—that when an apostasy first begins to work, it starts minutely. It starts very slowly and it is very difficult to perceive the seed of apostasy when it is extremely small, and is impossible, many times, to distinguish the one from the other, or the wheat from the tares. But when both had headed out, it was easy to distinguish them. However, by that time their roots were so intertwined that the tares could not be weeded out without tearing the wheat out with them. But, yet we find that there had to come a time when they had to be separated. Why is that? Because the grain of the Darnel is poisonous—it causes dizziness and sickness, and it has a narcotic effect. And even a small amount of it has a bitter and an unpleasant taste.

Now, why did Jesus use this illustration to portray this age, this second period of the Gospel Day, or the time from AD 270 to AD 530? Because, my friend, it reveals a real truth us—The Church, left alone in its Pristine Glory, unmarred by confusion, standing plain and clear in the field (which Jesus taught us in Matthew 13:38 is "The field is the world.") every honest heart would be able to behold it and see it in a clear manner. So an enemy, or Matthew 13:39 tells us, "the devil" had to do a work to obscure the truth and The True Church from public view.



We must remember as we study this particular parable, and the subsequent parables, that Matthew 13:24 begins by saying, "The kingdom of heaven is **LIKENED**. . . ." And we found we could just as well say, "The Kingdom of Heaven, The Kingdom of God, or The Church of God" they are synonymous terms. And when Jesus says, "is likened," that means "that which is taking place at the same time." And so it reveals to us that the prevailing conditions of the era, or the period of time under consideration. So the enemy, the Devil, had to do a work to obscure the truth and The True Church from public view. So we are seeing portrayed here, by the tares, that He is telling us the prevailing condition that The Church faced in this period of time. Up to this point in history, to be a Disciple of Christ, a saint of God, a member of The Church, was very plain for all to see. A lifestyle and standard was adhered to in such a way that those entertaining thoughts of being saved and becoming a part of the Christian community, **CLEARLY** knew its precepts and teachings. And so because of that, many were yielding to the call of the Gospel, and the truth was clear and in plain view. So an enemy had to move in and work a work.

My friend, during this time the enemy worked in such a manner that he introduced "tares" or as Matthew 13:38 says, "the children of the wicked one." But unfortunately, they did not announce they were "children of the wicked one." They appeared to be, in their initial state, just like the wheat. But as they grew and matured and progressed, it became clear, my friend, they were not as the wheat. They were not what was originally sown.

So, during this time the conditions became unclear. Others arose with contrary teachings, different doctrines and standards. Yet they were claiming that they were still The Church. In the first general Epistle of John, this is what he was warning against. When he penned in 1 John 1:6, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." Evidently, there were those who were walking in darkness and professing that they were walking with Christ, that they were walking with God, and that they were in right standing. But they were not doing the truth. They were not living and walking in accordance with His Word.

In 1 John 2:4 he says, "He that saith, [Evidently there were some that were saying,] I know him and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." I repeat, dear heart, during this time, conditions were such that men arose teaching contrary teachings and doctrines and standards yet claiming that they were The Church. And one could associate with and be accepted into the supposed Christian community without any change of heart and life. They could be accepted on the basis and on the merits of a mere assent to a religious persuasion.

As we begin to think concerning this which Jesus spoke of in Matthew 13:25 as "tares" these were used because they portray a real lesson to us. They start out small, just as the morning-time apostasy did. But it does not stop there, when a seed is sown, unless something is done, it will develop. And so it was here, my friend, they started out small, but it does not stop there. And many times, initially, it is difficult to detect. But, my friend, it does not stop there either. Matthew 13:26 says, "But when the blade was sprung up, [And then it goes on to say,] and brought forth fruit. It does not stay under cover. It does not stay concealed but it breaks out. It says, "Sprung up." My friend, there is an outgrowth, there is a spread. There was the "blade" and then ultimately, it "brought forth fruit" (Matthew 13:26).

I want you to see it takes on an appearance, a religious cloak, that just as the tares to an untrained eye, looks just like wheat—they look just like Christianity. My friend, it intertwines itself with the wheat, just as religion does—it speaks Christian terms and uses Bible teachings, supposedly. Biblically, they use phrases and acts of piety so that when one attempts to show it for what it is—to those devoid of a knowledge of the truth, or to an honest heart—it would seem that one is tearing up part of Christianity.

My friend, as we begin to go through this series of studies to see what has transpired in the Gospel Day, we are going to view organizations that many revere as Christian organizations and as a part of Christianity. So as we begin to examine it, we are going to see that they are not, as Matthew 11:38 says, "the children of the kingdom . . . [at all, but

they are] the children of the wicked one. . . ." We are going to see that they are not a part of Christianity, even they may have a religious garb, they may employ Christian terms, they may use Bible phrases, and they may perform acts of piety. However, when we shine the light of Truth upon and hold up the original church Jesus built, we will see that it is not of Divine origin. We will see that it was not, my friend, "That which was from the beginning" as 1 John 1:1 declares. But we will find that it is that which was the outgrowth of an apostasy wherein men got hold of teachings and propounded teachings that were contrary to sound Biblical doctrine.

In reality, the tares are poisonous—their teachings are not healthy and wholesome. The Apostle Paul instructed Titus, when he penned to him there in Titus 2:1, he very explicitly told Titus to "speak thou the things which become **SOUND** doctrine." The word *sound* means, "healthy and wholesome" that will produce a wholesome people. But, my friend, tares are poisonous and their teachings are not healthy and wholesome. The end of their message, my friend, is death. And the reason for this is because 1 Timothy 4:1 says, their doctrines are of Devils. They are the result of a seducing spirit, and because of that, the end of their message is Spiritual death. It has a narcotic effect—people continually want more, but its end is just like the tares—bitter and unpleasant.

In the Revelation that John received, in symbolic expression, we see a parallel picture of this age. In Revelation 8:8 it says, "And the second angel sounded and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood."

Now, we must be reminded that the Book of Revelation is a book that speaks in symbolic language. In Revelation 1:1, the very introductory verse to this Apocalyptic Book, it says, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and **SIGNIFIED** it. . . ." The word *signified* means, "revealed by signs." Or, *Webster's New World Dictionary* tells us that a **SIGN** is a "symbol." So, the Revelation is a Book that speaks in symbolic expressions.

Now, let us look at this portrayal in Revelation 8:8,

which says, "And the second angel. . . ." Now, what is he teaching us here? It says, "and the second," letting us know that he is speaking of the same time period as our parable, that is, the second parable, the second period of the Gospel Day, from AD 270 to AD 530.

He goes on to say in Revelation 8:8, "And the second angel." Now, what is this angel? The original Greek word here is **aggelos**, which means "a messenger." It denotes a minister or a ministry. John is not speaking herein the Revelation, of Celestial Beings, but rather, messengers that brought forth Divine Truth. In Revelation 22:8-9, which says, "And I John saw these things, and heard the feet of the **ANGEL** which shewed me these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the **ANGEL** which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy **FELLOWSERVANT**, and of thy **BRETHREN** the prophets, and of them which **KEEP THE SAYINGS** of this book." So, my friend, what we are seeing here is the angel portrays a ministry, and the predominant **MINISTRY** or **MESSAGE** of that particular period of time.

Now, look at the prevailing conditions. Here in Revelation 8:8, "And the second angel sounded, and as it were a **GREAT MOUNTAIN**[it goes on to say,] burning with fire was cast into the sea." Now, let us look at these symbols and gain some understanding.

It says, "a great mountain." What does this mountain represent? In Revelation 21:9-10, where it says, "And there came unto me one of the seven angels [again a picture of the ministry, the Evening Time Ministry] which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. [Every Bible student knows that represents The Church.] And [a conjunction] he carried me away in the spirit [That is the only way you will ever get a vision of The Church.] to a **GREAT AND HIGH MOUNTAIN.**" Now, what does this great and high mountain portray? Well, what was He going to reveal to him? Revelation 21:9 says, "the bride, the Lamb's wife" or The Church. So, this great mountain refers to the mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and

to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly [What are all these expressions of?] and **CHURCH** of the first born." Therefore, this mountain, Mount Zion, this great and high mountain the Revelator speaks of, the Bride, the Lamb's wife are all depicting The Church. So, as we come back here to Revelation 8:8 where it says here, "a great . . . mountain." We are. And, my friend, since it was the second angel, it is The Church in this period of time, from AD 270 to AD 530.

Now, it says here in Revelation 8:8, that this mountain was "burning with fire." That represents a portrayal of the Holy Ghost. In Acts, Chapter 2, when He made His advent on the Day of Pentecost, it says in Acts 2:3-4: "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of **FIRE**, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." So, this **GREAT MOUNTAIN**, my friend, is a picture of The Church of the Morning Time. And it was burning with fire, which is a portrayal of the Holy Ghost.

Now, notice what happened to this "mountain." In Revelation 8:8 it says, it "was cast into the sea." What does this tell us? Well, what happens when something on fire goes into the sea? The **FIRE** goes out," in other words, He left their midst. Why? Because it went, as Revelation 8:8 denotes, "into the sea."

Now, we must ask ourselves, what is this sea? Well, when you consider what a sea actually is, a sea is nothing more than a great mass of water. It is just a density of water. So, we see here, by employing this figure "sea," we are seeing a great, massive move. Now, a sea is just a mass of water. What does water represent in Revelation? In Revelation 17:15, the Revelator says, "And he saith unto me, The **WATERS** which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations and tongues." So, my friend, water represents people. And so, here we see a sea, which is a mass of water which represents a mass of people. This is letting us know that this was a massive move that was taking place during this period of time. So, my friend, we see that this sea is people. Someone may ask, "Are you certain of that?" Yes! Not only is it people, but it is a certain type of people. In Isaiah 57:20, the prophet declares, "But the **WICKED** are like the

troubled **SEA**, when it cannot rest." So this sea, my friend, is people. What type of people? It is wicked people.

What made them wicked? What is the height and zenith of wickedness in God's eyes? In the Psalms he tells us very plainly there exactly what the height of wickedness is. In Psalm 50:16, he tells us there very plainly, "But unto the **WICKED** God saith, [Now what constitutes wickedness?] What **HAST** thou to do to declare my **STATUTES**, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" The height of wickedness are those that profess Christianity, and those that practice religion. But yet, my friend, they are devoid of the Holy Spirit, and devoid of Divine control, and allow human minds and human thinking, and human machinery, to come in the place of the Word of God, and the Spirit of God.

And so, what is the picture before us? When we see in Revelation 8:8 when it says, [I saw] ". . . as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea. . . ." I repeat, this great mountain was that representation of what had been The Morning-Time Church, on fire with the Holy Ghost. But, my friend, it was cast into the sea. In other words, what is the picture? What had been, my friend, much of what had been The Morning-Time Church, fell out of the hands of God and into the hands of men.

Someone may ask, "How does this relate with the lesson, the parable of the tares, the wheat and the tares?" My friend, just as the wheat and the tares are incompatible and do not belong together; the **MOUNTAIN** represents **THE CHURCH**, and the **SEA** represents **WICKED MEN**. Therefore, the wheat represents the saints, which comprise The Church, and the tares represent the children of the wicked One, or wicked men—those who were not of God. So the **MOUNTAIN AND THE SEA** show the same truth as the **WHEAT AND THE TARES**. The symbolic representation in this second trumpet age portrays a massive move of apostasy that took place during this second period of time in the Gospel Day.

Someone may ask, "Why is it necessary that we understand this? We need to understand, dear heart, how some "very supposed Christian organizations" came up. Notice that much of what had been the New Testament Church, or the Morning-Time

Church, Revelation 8:8 says, ". . . went into the sea. . . ." Then look at Revelation, Chapter 13, to see where the first beast in Revelation came from. Revelation 13:1 says, it came "up out of the sea." So, I say, it is very vital for us to understand what took place in these periods of time. For that is why things are as they are today, why conditions are such as they are in our world, and why we are faced with religious confusion today. This is because apostasy caused what had been much of The Church to fall out of the hands of God and into the hands of wicked men. And then up out of the minds of those same men came a religious organization. I trust we can see it. By the help of God, we will go a little further in our study in Part Four.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE PARABLE OF THE TARES - PART FOUR

*Matthew 13:24 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.*

Again, before us, we have the parable of the "tares." We have been studying concerning these seven prophetic parables which are housed in Matthew, Chapter 13. By the help of God, we want to conclude our study of this particular parable of the tares.

By way of review, we found in prior studies, that the second parable corresponds with the second period of the Gospel Day—that period of time from AD 270 to AD 530. We found that during this time period, Matthew 13:25 tells us, "men slept." This is portraying a massive, full-scale apostasy that was under way in that particular era of time.

It was so great of an apostasy that when the Revelator glimpsed a view of it in the Book of Revelation, he said in Revelation 8:8 he saw, "a great mountain burning with fire was



cast into the sea." And we found the reason the "sea" was used in this particular expression, as a figurative rendition, was because when "sea" is used, it implies something massive. My friend, three-fourths of the earth's surface is covered by the seas. Therefore, it portrays to us a move that was massive and predominant.

We found that the mixture of "a great mountain burning with fire" and the "sea" (Revelation 8:8), conveys to us the same truth as our lesson text in Matthew 13:24-30 does by showing the wheat and the tares being brought together. We found that the result of the wheat and tares being brought together was the outgrowth of this apostasy. We found it was a result of their being, as the Apostle Peter said in 2 Peter 2:1 when he declared, "there shall be false teachers among you." And as the Apostle Paul said in Acts 20:29-30 he said: "after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also, of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them."

Because this became such a predominant condition, my friend, it was to an extent, that acceptance into the supposed Christian community was no longer determined by Spiritual merits, but rather, it was determined by an agreement to a doctrinal stance or theological persuasion. Because of this letdown, much of what had been The Church was no longer a clear, separate body of believers. Those who gave verbal assent to those heretical teachings, that were being espoused as Christian in this era, were now being **REGARDED** as The Church. From this point on, until the evening time, the Body of Christ became obscured from public view, as a separate, distinct, unified body of believers.

Does our text portray this to us? Certainly so! Look at Matthew 13:28 where a question was posed, "Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? This was speaking of the tares. In other words, is it not time now that we separate them? Look at Jesus' reply in Matthew 13:29, "But he said, Nay; [Or in the modern vernacular: **NO!** Implying it was not the proper time, in this second period of the Gospel day, AD 270 to AD 530, to bring the message on separation. Why?] lest while ye gather up

the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them." What is the lesson? Well, we found that tares intertwine their roots about the wheat. And my friend, until the time of harvest the distinction is blurred between the two.

And, so, Jesus said in Matthew 13:30, ". . .until the harvest. . . ." In other words, until the fullness of time. The time was not right to separate them in this era. Look at the words of Jesus in our lesson in Matthew 13:38 where He said, "Let both grow together. . . ." Now, what does this tell us? It reveals a prophetic truth that there was going to be a period of time when The Church would be obscured from public view—a time when supposed Christendom would be a mixture of Saints and sinners and a time when **RELIGION** would be the measurement rather than **SALVATION**.

But, thank God, in this same parable in which He reveals this bad condition, He gives a prophetic utterance revealing to us that it shall not always be so. Herein Matthew 13:30, He says, "Let both grow together until the harvest: [But He does not conclude there. He goes on to say,] 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."

Now, here He reveals several truths to us. First, He says here in Matthew 13:30, "Let [or permit] both [implying the wheat and the tares] grow together [In other words, occupy the same position and be together, as it were. They were not to be separate, not to be distinct. But then He lets us know,] **UNTIL** [And, thank God, this was only for a time. Until, what?] the harvest."

Now, Biblically, we need to address this question of when this harvest is to be of which Jesus spoke. Sad to say many, because of a lack of understanding of the Scriptures, want to place this Scripture, or place this harvest, way out at the consummation. However, let us examine it by the Scriptures to look to see when this actually is speaking of.

Look at Jesus when He began to give us an explanation of this parable in Matthew 13:37-43: "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the

kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. 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; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Now, immediately, when we casually peruse this Scripture, it would appear that He was speaking of the time of the consummation, or that which is commonly referred to as "the end of the world." But, my friend, we need to understand this Biblically. As Isaiah 28:13 says, "But the word of the Lord was unto them . . . precept upon precept; line upon line. . . ." Here in Matthew 13:39, it says, "the harvest is the end of the world." Now right away, men's minds run off with this phrase. But let us qualify it by the Bible. When is the end of the world? Well, the Hebrew writer penned in Hebrews 9:26, speaking of that vicarious work wrought, by Jesus Christ, in His first Advent, and said, ". . . but now once **IN THE END OF THE WORLD** hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." Now when did this occur? It occurred in AD 33, right in the first Advent of Jesus Christ. Look at the Apostle Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 10:11, when he was talking about the Scriptures, that had been penned and preserved, and the occurrences that took place back in the times of the Old Testament, he said, ". . . these things . . . are written for our admonition, upon whom the **ENDS OF THE WORLD ARE** [present tense] **COME**. And, he penned this in the proximity of AD 54 to AD 57. So Biblically, when Matthew 13:39 speaks of ". . . the end of this world. . . ," my friend, it commenced with this Gospel Day and includes the entire age of Christendom.

My friend, we can even see that when Jesus spoke and gave us the understanding of this particle parable, He let us very plainly know in Matthew 13:40, "As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be **IN** the end of the world." Not **AT** the end of the world, but **IN**, implying a

period of time. And the entirety of this Christian Dispensation is actually that "end of time," since it commenced with Jesus Christ's coming and ushering in a new age, and putting away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Let us look a little further into this text. In Matthew 13:39, when Jesus talked here about what would occur, He said, ". . . the reapers are the angels." Now again, men's minds immediately will run off with literalism. But the actual Greek word here, which is the language of the New Testament, is the word **aggelos** which means, "a messenger, or ministry." These are not Celestial Beings. How do we know that? Well, look at what they do.

In Matthew 13:30, He said, "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. . . ." What does this portray? Well, if you will go to the Gospel of Matthew 16:19, when Jesus was speaking to Peter and the ministry here, He said, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt **BIND** on earth shall **BOUND** in heaven: And whatsoever thou shalt **LOOSE** on earth shall be **LOOSED** in heaven." So, here we find that this was an ability and an authority that was given and entrusted to the ministry.

Look what else these angels do. In Matthew 13:42, it says, ". . . And shall cast them into a **FURNACE** of fire. . . ." This was not the **LAKE** of fire, nor that eternal realm, but it was a **FURNACE** of fire." Now, what is this "furnace of fire" that is being spoken of here by Jesus? It was a familiar term that was used in prophecy. In Isaiah 31:9 it says, "And he shall pass over to his strong hold for fear, and his princes shall be afraid of the ensign, saith the LORD, whose **FIRE** is in Zion, and his **FURNACE** in Jerusalem." Here we find, my friend, a furnace and a fire spoken of that would be in Zion or Jerusalem. Hebrews 12:22-23 tells us: these terms are "figurative expressions" of The Church. Now, what is this fire, or this furnace of fire that we find in Zion, or in Jerusalem, or in The Church? In Jeremiah 33:29 he said, "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord." So here we find that the **FIRE** is the **WORD**.

Those who handle the Word are the ministry. These "angels" of which He is speaking here were not Angelic Beings. Angelic Beings do not handle the Word. My friend, these were not Celestial Beings, but rather, these pictured and portrayed a ministry. You can see this in Revelation 22:8-9 which says: "And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the **ANGEL** [Or *aggelos* which means, 'messenger or ministry.'] which shewed me these things. [How do we know they are not Celestial Beings?] Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy **FELLOWSERVANT** and of thy **BRETHREN THE PROPHETS**, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: **WORSHIP GOD.**" So here we see, my friend, these were not Celestial Beings, but rather, these were divinely chosen and called messengers.

These represent a ministry, if you please, handling the Word of God and laying the Word of God out in such a manner, that to those who were not measured to its precepts, it became a furnace of fire. When the three Hebrew Boys were cast in that fiery furnace, it never gave them a minutes' harm—it never, my friend, scorched them. They never even had the smell of smoke. But, the ones who were not measured to the Word, the ones who tried to cast them in there were consumed by it. My friend, this is a portrait, in type, of the Word of God.

Now, when was this harvest that He speaks of here in Matthew 13:39? Jesus tells us, "the harvest is the end of the world." We found that the "end of the world" commenced with the First Advent, Jesus Christ coming on the scene in His first advent of time. And we found "the harvest" is in this Gospel Day, and it was to be reaped by a ministry.

But, when was it? In 1 Corinthians 4:5, the Apostle Paul says, "Therefore judge nothing before the time, [This is why He would not allow them, in this second period of time, AD 270 to AD 530, to pluck and separate the wheat from the tares. It was not time] until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness. . . ."

Now in view of our study, when did this prophetically occur? When did as Paul said, "the Lord come?" Well, look at Jesus' Words in the Gospel of Mark 13:26, where He said very clearly, "And **THEN** shall they see the Son of man coming. . . ." What is the antecedent of **THEN**? Mark 13:24 says, "after that tribulation, [which took place in AD 70. Then it says,] the sun shall be darkened. . . ." [A portrayal of the Dark Age that followed.] Mark 13:25 says, "And the stars of heaven shall fall. . . ." [This is a picture of the sixteenth and seventeenth century Reformation, and of their failure to keep pace with light.] And then the ensuing age of Sectarianism. And then, subsequently following these occurrences in these time periods, it says in Matthew 13:16, "And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds. . . ." Now, look what He does when He comes. And we immediately want to run away again in our minds and think He was referring to the Advent. However, He was referring to Spiritual occurrences: He was referring to the Dark Age, and He was referring to the Cloudy Day. And Jesus said that subsequent to that (in this very period of time) as the Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4:5, He "will bring to light."

Now, in Revelation 14:14, it says, "And I looked, and behold a white

cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man." Matthew 16:13 tells us this was Jesus. Revelation 14:15 says, "And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for them to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe." In other words, now it is time to separate, it is time to reap, and now it is time to separate the wheat from the tares.

When did this take place? The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4:5, when ". . . the Lord come. . . [And what would He do? He] will bring to light. . . ." Therefore, when did this occur? When did this reaping take place? After the Dark Ages and after the era of Sectarianism—it happened when light came, when He brought light. When was that? Zechariah 14:7 says, ". . . at evening time it shall be light."

So here, my friend, right as we begin in our study to enter a dark age, Jesus gives a message of encouragement to the Saints. And He lets them know this will not be perpetually so, that there will be a time when the wheat and tares will be separated. When was this? When was it ripe? When, my friend, were the tares going to be ripe to the point where they could be separated? Well, when the tare is fully ripe, the Darnel is a slate gray-colored kernel, and the wheat is white. It was when God allowed a pure, holy people to be separated from mere religious professors.

It was when the clear light came, which was a time when the wheat and the tares became visible. The tares were slate gray, and the wheat was pure white. And so, my friend, when it came in fullness of time, at evening time—when there was a clear message that went forth. When light had come, my friend, there would be a separation, and the people of God would, again, be separate and distinct.

So, as we head into a Dark Age, in this second period of time, my friend, Jesus pauses and shows a time when The Church would be restored. This was when He would, as Matthew 13:30 says, "Gather the wheat [Or the Saints] into **MY BARN**" [which is The Church.] And Matthew 13:43 says, "Then [When? In the Evening Time] shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom. . . ." The Church will shine and reflect the light of Jesus Christ in the evening. However, for this period of time under consideration, the second period of time, from AD 270 to AD 530, they would as Matthew 13:30 declares, "grow together."

We find that the mountain that had been on fire was cast into the sea, Revelation 8:8 declared. Then what occurred? The fire was out—the light was out. As Matthew 13:25 says, "men slept." And when one closes his eyes to sleep, he goes into darkness. They went into darkness. My friend, there was an eclipse that took place right in the midst of the clear day. In Amos' prophecy he portrays this hundreds of years before the occurrence, and tells us in a very clear manner, in Amos 8:9, "And it shall come to pass in that day, [an expression of the Gospel Day] saith the Lord God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day." So we find, my friend, the outgrowth of this apostasy was a Spiritual eclipse. A Dark Age came on.

What type of a Dark Age was it? Amos 8:11 says, "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." There

was coming a time, a Dark Age, when the Book would be shut, my friend, as far as a public message was concerned. The Bible would be chained to the pulpit and would be in a language that the masses could not enjoy, could not read, could not understand. My friend, because "men slept" an apostasy occurred. A Dark Age came in to where light was out, as a public message, to where it became dark.

My friend, what is the picture for us to see? We find that although it started with a small beginning, as the next parable declares, in Matthew 13:31, when it talks about "a grain of mustard seed." [Which is the smallest of all garden seeds. [Or it actually tells us in Matthew 13:32, "Which is indeed the least of all seeds." It tells us here in prophetic language that although it started from a very small beginning, it sprang into a system that became the largest supposed Christian system.

In Revelation 8:8, we see that "great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea." And in Revelation 13:1, we see here, it says, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a **BEAST** rise up out of the sea." And in Revelation 13:1, we see here it says, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a **BEAST** rise up out of the sea." Out of that same sea of apostasy, [in which we found "sea" represents men.] Out of that same sea, or the same men into whose hands The Church had fallen. It had fallen out of Divine hands into the hands of men. And out of the minds of those same men rose up a system, my friend, that was contrary to God's Eternal Word.

This massive apostasy gave rise to a religious system that is denoted by the seven heads and ten horns (Revelation 13:1). And we found in prior study, in Revelation 12:3, when that "great red dragon [appeared] having seven heads and ten horns" we found that dragon symbolized Rome in its Pagan form. And so, those seven heads and ten horns in Revelation 12:3, symbolized Rome, they still symbolized in Chapter 13 of the Revelation. But something has happened, and it is no longer a dragon. It now says that it has become a system that has a beastly nature to its religious orientation to it.

So we find this massive apostasy gave rise to the religious system known as Roman Catholicism—identified by those seven heads and ten horns (Revelation 13:11). This identifies it as something Roman. And in our next study we will look a little further at the rise of this system. The second period ends in AD 530 when Boniface II was regarded as the first universal Pope.

So here we see portrayed a transitional period, as apostasy was taking hold, light was going out, and a Dark Age was coming in. It started out as a Divine Organism under God. But now it became a human organization under men.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED - PART ONE*

*Matthew 13:31 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.*

We have been studying the series of prophetic parables, incorporated in Matthew, Chapter 13. And we found that these are seven parables that correlate with each of the seven parables. Jesus takes us from the institution of the Gospel Day or Christian Dispensation, in AD 33, through to the end of time.

We are now down to the third parable, the parable of the mustard seed. This parable corresponds to the third period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time from AD 530 to AD 1530.

Now, as we begin to examine this parable, we see that our text commences with the employment of the word *another*. He says here in Matthew 13:31, "**ANOTHER** parable put he forth unto them." Notice that this term or this word "another" is employed in the second, third and fourth parables. In Matthew 13:24, it says, "Another parable put he forth unto them. . . ." Matthew 13:31. "Another parable put he forth unto them. . . ." Matthew 13:33. "Another parable spake he unto them. . . ." So, here we find, my friend, that it is incorporated in these three parables, the second, the third and the fourth.

Now, we must ever be mindful that as the Proverb writer penned, in Proverbs 30:5, he said, "Every word of God is pure." This is teaching us that there is Divine design and import behind every word incorporated in the Sacred Scriptures—that there are no unessential words. Every word of God is pure, every word conveys a truth. There is a revelation and a depth of truth incorporated, in every word, in the



Sacred Scriptures. My friend, the Scriptures, as we have them set before us, are the most abbreviated that they can possibly be—they are the most condensed they can be. We can read in the Gospel of John 21:25 where it says, "And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen." This teaches us, my friend, that the Bible is very **SUCCINCT**. Every word that is incorporated in it is vital. It is the most abbreviated and condensed book, my friend, that God saw fitting, to leave on these time shores, to show you and me the route to Heaven. And so, every word is by Divine design and choosing, and portrays a Divine truth.

So, what we need to understand, as we look at this word "another," is that there is a truth to be conveyed by its incorporation in this text. My friend, there is a truth that is being taught to us that we need to be mindful of.

What is that truth? This is not the only parable, or only message, being related to us, but rather, one of a series of parables. He is letting us know that they are connected or related and must be viewed together, as they are progressive in their nature. I say, my friend, this word indicates that we cannot separate or private one of these parables from the other and get the full picture of the truth that Jesus is conveying to us. They are connected, and united as a series. They are related, and must be viewed together, because they are progressive in their nature.

Now, let us begin to examine this parable. And as we begin, recall that as we closed the prior parable, the parable of the tares, that we were seeing the outgrowth of apostasy and what developed, what rose up as the result of the Morning-Time Apostasy.

This lesson begins, with the words in Matthew 13:31, "The kingdom of heaven is **LIKE**." Now, we found the phrase, The Kingdom of Heaven, is an interchangeable, synonymous phrase with The Kingdom of God or The Church of God. And that the word in Matthew 13:31, "like" is the Greek word **homios** and is from the root word, **homou** which means, "at the same place or time.

So this term "like" does not mean, as we would think of it, that The Kingdom or The Church was like this. But rather, that here is a picture of the prevailing conditions that The Church or The Kingdom was faced with, taking place at the same time, or the time represented by the parable under consideration.

Now, as we actually look at the burden of the parable, Christ declares in Matthew 13:31, "The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field."

Here in this parable, we are introduced to something different and distinct. This is the third parable, my friend, where the thought of seed being sown is portrayed.

In the first parable, the parable of the sower, we are told in Luke 8:11, that "The seed is the word of God."

When the seed is spoken of in the parable of the tares, it is referred to in Matthew 13:24, as "good seed."

But never is it referred to in these previous lessons as it is in our text here in Matthew 13:31 as, "a grain of **MUSTARD SEED.**"

Now, what does this teach us? This tells us that this is not the same seed that was spoken of in the previous lessons. This seed does not portray the Word, nor does it portray that which the Word produced that Matthew 13:38 declares, "the good seed are the children of the kingdom."

My friend, in this seed or more properly as Matthew 13:31 denotes it, "a grain of mustard seed," there is something distinct and something different because it is specifically named as "mustard seed." It lists a specific type, and it is different from the seed that is employed in the prior lessons.

Now, what truth does this convey to us? Well, there are several truths portrayed here. But to understand these, we must understand both the nature of the mustard seed, and the term, as it was when Jesus spoke these words.

In Matthew 13:32, when He speaks and says, "Which indeed is the **LEAST** of all seeds." The "mustard seed" was the smallest of all garden seeds. In Luke 13:19, He declares, "It is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast

into his garden." So, we find here that it is a garden seed and it is the least of all garden seeds.

This phrase that is incorporated in Matthew 13:31, "a grain of mustard seed," is one which, to us, seems to be original with Christ. But, in reality, He was speaking in terms that they were accustomed to, in His day, amongst the Jewish ranks. According to the Rabbis, "a grain of mustard seed" was a common expression for anything very minute. When Jews talked of a drop of blood, they would say, "as a mustard seed." Or, when there was some tiny breach of ceremonial law, they would speak of a defilement "as small as a mustard seed."

Also, if you examine a mustard seed, itself, you will find that the mustard seed is **BLACK** on the exterior. It is a black seed.

Now, let us get to the lesson before us. Remember that the Gospel Day began, Matthew 13:6 declares, "when the **SUN** was up." Or, as Malachi 4:2, prophesied, "the **SUN** of righteousness arise[s] with healing in his wings"—a prophetic expression of the first Advent of Jesus Christ. And when Christ came on the scene in His first Advent, He ushered in a new day. There was, my friend, a new time that occurred. There was as the Apostle Peter said in 2 Peter 1:19, a "day dawn[ed]."

But unfortunately the morning glory was short lived. Matthew 13:25 speaks of, "men [that] slept." This lets us know there was a massive morning-time apostasy—when darkness began to set in. A spiritual eclipse was starting to take place. Amos prophesied of it in 787 BC when he recorded in Amos 8:9, "And it shall come to pass in **THAT DAY**, [An expression of the Gospel Day.] saith the LORD God, that I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth [A picture of the Dark Ages] in the clear day," or the Gospel Day. Now, as this darkness began to set in, what had been a divine organism, The Church, began to become a human organization, dominated and controlled by men.

In Revelation 8:8, we find here in symbolic expressions, that "a great mountain burning with fire [A portrayal of the morning-time Church, with unction and anointing of the Holy Ghost.] was cast into the sea." Now, what is this sea? Isaiah 57:20 says, "But the wicked are like the troubled sea."

Now, the question we must ask ourselves is: "Scripturally, who are the wicked? Who are those that are at the zenith of wickedness? In Psalm 50:16-17 it says: "But unto the **WICKED** God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee." So, the height of wickedness we see here is religious advocates who will not take the truth. It is those, my friend, who Psalm 50:16 says, that "declare my statutes." They preach, my friend, but they do not preach in holiness. They do not preach the whole counsel of God. They are religious advocates, but, they are advocates that though they declare His statutes, take His covenant in their mouth, Psalm 50:17 say, they hate "instruction and castest my words behind thee." They will not take the unadulterated truth of God's Eternal Word. So, the height of wickedness is religious advocates who will not take the truth of God's Eternal Word. So, that is who this "sea" is, because the "sea" is wicked men. And, my friend, religious men are religious advocates that will not take the truth. So, this "sea" that we found this mountain being "cast into." (Revelation 8:8) is a portrayal of men.

When Revelation 8:8 says that "was cast into the sea," it portrays an apostasy. This portrays, my friend, that which had been a divine organism, under Divine control, and on fire with the Holy Ghost, falling out of the hands of God and into the hands of wicked men—religious men. So in Revelation 8:8 we see this "great mountain burning with fire cast into the sea." That "casting into the sea," and going down, portrays an apostasy.

In Revelation 13:1, it tells us of what came up out of this apostasy. In Revelation 13:1, John says, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a **BEAST** rise up out of the sea." And, so, my friend, this beast rising up out of the sea, or up out of the minds of the same men that had caused the apostasy and was the outgrowth of the apostasy. Up out of the minds of these same men, a religious system arose.

Now, let us connect this to our lesson. John saw, what he declared in Revelation 13:1 to be "a beast **RISE** up out of the sea." But, stop and consider the thought of rising. This is a

process. At first you see very little, then it continues to rise, until it becomes clearer and larger and plainer over a period of time.

Actually, my friend, this beast started to be formulated around AD 270, when apostasy was in full sway. But, my friend, it just gradually amalgamated its power, and gradually rose to a position of prominence, to where during this period of the Gospel Day, this third period from AD 530 to AD 1530, it began very small, very minute. But it did not stay that way. It arose, it became, my friend, larger, it became clearer, it became plain and more dominant on the landscape of humanity.

So, my friend, this "grain of a mustard seed" that our lesson speaks of is something that began very small, very minute, and it grew. And it became larger and clearer and more plain. And just as this "beast" was "rising up out of the sea," this picture of this "grain of mustard seed" growing and rising, my friend, portrays the same thing. It portrays the outgrowth of that morning-time apostasy. It was a system that became larger and larger and more dominant over the years of time.

Just as the mustard seed is black, so was this system. It, my friend, produced darkness.

Now, why did Jesus use the two thoughts of Matthew 13:31 here, "a mustard seed" and in Revelation 13:1, "a beast rise[ing] up." Why did Jesus use these thoughts, my friend, to portray this particular system?

I say there are, my friend, some synonymous lessons in both of these texts. Both of them started small. Both, at first, were undetected. Both, at first, went unseen. Both, at first were under something. The beast was under the water, the seed was under the ground. But, nonetheless, it was working and it was growing. And there came a time when it came to the surface. There came a time when it became visible, plain, and observable.

Then as time grew on, at AD 530, it reached a point where it became very prominent on the landscape. It became, as our lesson tells us, "a great tree" (Luke 13:19). It became something very noticeable and dominated the landscape of this time world for a period of time.

Now, Jesus here in Matthew 13:31, this thought of "a mustard seed." We need to consider what this also portrays to us. It portrays another truth. Aside from in the three synoptic Gospels where this parable is recorded, He only used this phrase two other times: He used it in Matthew 17:20, when He told us very plainly there about, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed. And He employs the same thing in Luke's Gospel in Luke 17:6. And in both of these instances, He equates it with faith.

Now, what does that teach us? It teaches us that this system of religion, this "beast," professes a faith. It professes to be a religious faith. It is no mistake that Jesus, my friend, identifies this system of religion with the thought of a "mustard seed." Because the only other places He employed that term is in relationship to faith. Because these people who comprise this system, say that they are a religious faith. They claim to be the one true faith. Ephesians 4:5 says, there is "one faith." They claim to be that one faith.

But, in reality, that seed is black. It is a black, dark faith, without true light. It is, my friend, a system of religion. It is a system of mere intellectual assent rather than heart-felt conversion. It is not the true faith.

During this period of time, during this era, AD 530 to AD 1530, as Luke 13:19 denotes it, this seed became "a great tree." In Matthew 13:31-32 it says: "The kingdom is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a **TREE**." Or in Luke's rendering, in Luke 13:19, he said, "a great tree." This was a time when a system of men arose that was great, it was enormous, and it was large in its magnitude. As a tree is, it was in plain view—it dominated the landscape.

How do we know this? Because this is one of two of these parables that appears in the three synoptic Gospels. Out of these seven parable here in Matthew, Chapter 13, only two appear in all three synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

And one is the parable of the sower because Christ had a universal message, my friend, that Matthew 13:19 says, was to anyone.

My friend, this particular message was a picture of a universal message, my friend, that Matthew 13:19 says, was to anyone.

My friend, this particular message was a picture of a universal condition that was working over the world. It became a Dark Age. The sun went down at noon. And, my friend, a Dark Age commenced. And this religious power controlled the religious landscape, as it were, over the entire earth during this period of time.

And so, because of their religious domination of the landscape, my friend, this is why He speaks of its being "a great tree" (Luke 13:19). Because, although it had a small, minute beginning, it continued to grow and continued to reach out to where it encompassed all the then-known world.

So, as we look upon this tree, this "great tree" that our text speaks of, what did Jesus liken to trees? In the Gospel of Matthew 7:15-16 He talked there and said: "Beware of false prophets . . . Ye shall know them by their fruits." Then what did He start likening it to? In Matthew 7:17, "Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." So, my friend, here He speaks of false prophets, or a system of religion being a corrupt system, being able to tell it was corrupt by what it produced.

Now, what does a mustard tree produce? This tree produces little black seeds which the fowls love to eat. This is letting us know that this tree produces darkness. Its doctrines are dark, black, and they lead to corrupt lives. This tree produces darkness. Therefore, it is a corrupt tree—the people are corrupt, the system that produces it is corrupt.

The Revelator, my friend, calls this system, in Revelation 13:1, "a **BEAST**." And it lets us know here that this system was not Divine. It is not of Divine origin. It is something that is corrupt.

So, this tree that our text speaks of, or this beast the Revelator speaks of, are both speaking of a system of religion that rises up out of the morning-time apostasy. It had a very small beginning, but it rose to a position of prominence and greatness in the religious realm. It was a religious system,

my friend, that dominated the landscape over this period of time from AD 530 to AD 1530.

By the help of the Lord, in Part Two we will study concerning this system, and identify it clearly by the Bible.



## CHAPTER FOUR

### PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED - PART TWO

*Matthew 13:31 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.*

We have been studying the seven prophetic parables housed in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13.

And in our last study we began the third of these seven parables—the parable of the mustard seed. By the help of God, we want to look a little further into this parable.

In our lesson, Jesus said in Matthew 13:31, "The kingdom of heaven is **LIKE** a grain of mustard seed." We found in prior studies, that this phrase contains a host of truths.

When Jesus employs the term "The Kingdom of Heaven" we found that this term is interchangeable. Because in Matthew's Gospel it is recorded as "The Kingdom of Heaven." But, if you will look in the companion Scripture, in the Gospel of Mark 4:30, speaking of the companion Scripture, in the Gospel of Mark 4:30, speaking of the same occasion, we find that Mark pens it and says, "Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God?" And, my friend, we found, also, that since Pentecost that The Kingdom and The Church are synonymous terms.

In Hebrews 12:22-23, here the penman said, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, [What are all these expressions speaking of? What are they depicting the various facets of?] To the general assembly and **CHURCH** . . . ." So, each of these phrases are interchangeable terms denoting various facets or attributes of the church.

Then, on down later in that same chapter, he never changes his topic of address. And he says, in Hebrews 12:28,

"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom . . . ." Letting us know that the kingdom and the church are interchangeable terms speaking of the one and selfsame entity.

So, we can just as well say, when our text, Matthew 13:31, "The **KINGDOM OF HEAVEN** is like, we could say, The Kingdom of God, or the Church of God is like and be doing no disservice to the Scripture.

Also, when He said, Matthew 13:31, "The kingdom of heaven is **LIKE**," the word "like" comes from the Greek word which means, "At the same place or time." Telling us that the figures employed, the expressions and objects used in the parable, are vehicles to portray the conditions that the kingdom of the church was faced with. And that which was taking place at the same time as the time period that our lesson has under consideration.

Now, we found in this particular parable, Jesus speaks in Matthew 13:31 of "a **GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED**." This seed is the smallest of all garden seeds. And the "mustard seed" is also black on the exterior. So, we found that this portrays something black on the exterior. So, we found that this portrays something that has a small beginning. And, also, that it is black or dark.

Now, we must remember that this is the outgrowth of apostasy. We must remember that this seed did not stay small, however. Matthew 13:32 says, ". . . when it is **GROWN** [a gradual process], it is the **GREATEST** among herbs, and becometh a **TREE**." Or, as Luke 13:19 declares, "a **GREAT TREE**."

Now, what does this "tree" represent? Well, look at Jesus' words in Matthew's Gospel. And here he lets us know very plainly in Matthew 7:15-18, "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or gigs of thistles? Even so every **GOOD TREE** bringeth forth **GOOD FRUIT**; but a **CORRUPT TREE** bringeth forth **EVIL FRUIT**. A good tree **CANNOT** bring forth evil fruit, **NEITHER CAN** a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit."

Here, my friend, He likens men to trees. And in this particular text, He is revealing that false prophets shall be known by their fruits, and that if they are corrupt trees that

cannot produce good fruit. So, here, my friend, He is speaking, in Matthew 7:15 of "false prophets." And in Matthew 7:16, he said, "Ye shall know them [who? False prophets.] by their fruits." And in Matthew 7:17, He identifies false prophets as "a corrupt tree [that] bringeth forth evil fruit." Now, what does a mustard tree produce? What type of fruit does it bear? It produces little black seeds which the fowls of the air love to eat. It produces black seeds. In other words, it produces darkness. Its fruit is darkness. Its fruit is black symbolizing darkness. Therefore, because it produces darkness, its fruit is corrupt. So, there tree must be corrupt.

Now, the question we must address is, what is this tree that Jesus spoke of? In Matthew 7:15, He clearly denoted it as "false prophets," letting us know that this "tree" was a system of religion.

Now, let us look at our text. This tree which our text speaks of was not always a tree. But in Matthew 13:32, it says, ". . . but when it is **GROWN**." I repeat, growth is a gradual process. It arises over a period of time. So, this tree, my friend, represents a false system of religion that arose, over a period of time, as a result of the apostasy.

This tree rising is the same picture that John received in the Revelation. When he said in Revelation 13:1, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast **RISE** up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns . . . ."

Now, immediately, when we read Scripture texts such as these, men's minds run off with literalism. But let us be reminded that the Book of Revelation speaks in symbolic expressions. In Revelation 1:1, here the Revelator talks about, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which shortly come to pass; and he sent and **SIGNIFIED** it . . . ." This is letting us know that the nature of the Revelation language is that it is signified, which means "revealed by signs." or *WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY* tells us one definition of "sign" is that it "is a symbol."

Now, we know that this "sea" that this "beast" rose up out of is **MEN** (Revelation 13:1). Because Isaiah 57:20 taught us, "But the **WICKED** is like the troubled sea." And, we found that

Psalm, Chapter 50, told us who those men were that were at the height of wickedness: those who "hatest instruction, and castest my [God's] words behind thee" (Psalm 50:17). Those who still continue to proclaim and take His statues in their mouths. But will not take the Word from God in its true and unadulterated form. So we know that the "sea" that this "beast" rose up out of is men, religious men.

Now, my friend, when the term "beast" is employed, what does it have reference to? Well, let us examine some Scriptures and see. In 1 Corinthians 15:32, the Apostle Paul declared, ". . . after the manner of **MEN** I have fought with **BEASTS** at Ephesus." What was he speaking of? We know that Paul was not engaged in carnal warfare against literal beasts. But he was in defense of the doctrine. He was in defense of the truth. And that was what he was speaking of.

Peter and Jude made it even clearer in their writings. In 2 Peter 2:1-3, he said: "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. And **MANY** shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you."

Now, who were these men? My friend, they were false prophets, false teachers according to 2 Peter 2:1. Look at 2 Peter 2:12. It says, "But these, {Who? These false prophets and false teachers.} as **NATURAL BRUTE BEASTS**, made to be taken and destroyed, **SPEAK EVIL** of things that they understood not . . . ." These were not literal beasts. Literal, natural beasts, in the natural realm, do not speak. These were those who spoke. They not only spoke, they were teachers, they were preachers, my friend. Second Peter 2:12 in *The Amplified Bible*, which makes it a little clearer, says, "But these [people] like unreasoning beasts, mere creatures of instinct . . . ." These "beasts" are figurative expressions denoting the nature and the spirit of the people who are under discussion. It is speaking of people, religious people.

In the general epistle of Jude, verse 8, it says,

"Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the **FLESH**, [These people were people who were in the flesh. They were human beings. They were people, if you please. They] despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities." Now, look at Jude 10, which reads, "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know **NATURALLY**, as **BRUTE BEASTS**, in those things they corrupt themselves." *The Amplified Bible*, again, makes it a little clearer. It says, "But these **MEN** revile (scoff and sneer at) anything they do not happen to be acquainted with and do not understand; and whatever they do understand physically [that which they know by mere instinct], like irrational beasts . . . ." These "beasts" are **MEN**. They are religious men, men that Jude 19 declares, "These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit."

In the Revelation, when he speaks of "beasts," he is speaking of men, religious men, men who have gathered together. Men of like spirits. And they have developed systems, religious systems, that are contrary to God's Eternal Word.

Now, here in Revelation, he speaks of just such a system. It says in Revelation 13:1, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy." Here in this text, he speaks of just such a system, a system that was a product, and outgrowth of, the morning-time apostasy, a system that produced the Dark Ages.

Now, what was this system? What is this "beast" of Revelation 13:1? What is the "tree" that our text in 13:32 speaks of?

Well, as we study, dear heart, bear in mind that we are not dealing with individuals. But rather, a religious system that is deceiving the souls of mankind.

Now, what is this "beast"? Well, the Scripture gives several identifying factors. Let us look at them. Here in Revelation 13:1, it says, "I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven **HEADS** and ten **HORNS** . . . ." Now, what does this portray to us? Well, we were introduced to these seven heads and ten horns in

Revelation 12:3, when it said, "And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns . . . ."

Now, my friend, this "great red dragon" was symbolic, or a symbolic expression of the pagan Roman Empire. This great red dragon, or a red dragon was the insignia on the Roman soldiers' shields. But we also know from the "seven heads and ten horns" that it identifies it as the Roman Empire as well.

Heads, in the Scripture, symbolize governments. In Isaiah 9:6 we read, ". . . the government shall be [a prophetic expression of Jesus Christ] upon **HIS** shoulder . . . ." Now, what is on the shoulder? It is the head. In Colossians 1:18 we read, "And he is the head [speaking of Christ] of the body, the church." So, the thought of head, or heads, represent government.

And Rome in her history had seven distinct, or different, heads of government. These seven systems of government were:

1. REGAL POWER
2. CONSULAR
3. DECEMVIRATE
4. MILITARY TRIBUNE
5. TRIUMVIRATE
6. IMPERIAL
7. PATRICIAN

Now, what about the ten horns that Revelation 13:1 speaks of? Horns in the Scripture denotes power. A beast's power was in its horns. That is where its power resided. And in this case, when it is a figurative expression, it denotes not just power, but particularly political power.

This is not novel to the Revelation. Back in Daniel 8:20, it says, "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings [or one rendering says 'kingdoms'] of Media and Persia."

These horns, the ten horns that Revelation 12:3 and Revelation 13:1 speak of represent the ten minor kingdoms, or the ten minor political powers, which composed the Roman Empire. They are:

1. ANGLO-SAXON
2. BURGUNDIANS
3. FRANKS

4. HUNS
5. HERULI
6. LOMBARDS
7. OSTROGOTHS
8. SUEVES
9. VANDALS
10. VISIGOTHS

So, we can clearly see that this "beast" in Revelation 13:1 was definitely connected to the Roman Empire. In Revelation 12:3, it represents the pagan Roman Empire. But, in Revelation 13:1, we see a distinction. Because in Revelation 12:3, it says the "seven crowns [were] upon his heads." The seven heads, when Rome was in her pagan form, were the types and heads of government she had in her pagan form.

But in Revelation, Chapter 13, we find that the crowns, now, are upon the horns, my friend. And verse 1 says, ". . . upon his horns ten crowns . . . ." Letting us know that the **POLITICAL POWER** had shifted from the heads of government, that Rome had in its pagan form, to the ten minor kingdoms, that comprise the Roman Empire, when she was in her divisive form.

But in the midst of this divisiveness, something rose up that unified them, that had a name of blasphemy, letting us know that this Roman "beast" was distinct from the Roman "beast" in Revelation, Chapter 12, because Revelation 13:1 says, ". . . and upon his heads the name of blasphemy."

Then, he proceeds to identify it. In Revelation 13:18, it says, ". . . let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a **MAN**; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six."

Now, where do we find, as Revelation 13:1 denoted it, "the name of blasphemy"? And where do we find this number? And what system is best represented by a sole man?

Well, the answer is, if you will look on the miter, or the triple crown, worn by the office of the popes of Rome, there is a Latin inscription: VICARIUS FILII DEI. That is a Latin term, which in English means "Vicar of the Son of God."

*WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY* tells us that "a vicar is a person who acts in the place of another." In other words, he is saying, he has taken the place of Jesus Christ. However, I

am here to tell you, Jesus has not given His place to anyone. That is a name of blasphemy!

We also must recognize that there was not a separate numerical system until the tenth century. But up until that time, the numerical system and the alphabetical were the same system. And, so, letters were also used as numerical expressions.

When we take the Latin inscription *VICARIUS FILII DEI* and give it the numerical expressions we all learned in school, such as: C = 100, D = 500, I = 1, L = 50, and U or V = 5, etc. It comes to six hundred and sixty six, which is the exact number as it said when it identifies the man who best represents this beast.

I repeat, a vicar is a person who acts in the place of another. In other words, it is saying that he (the pope) is taking the place of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ has not abdicated the throne and given His place to anyone. That is usurping!

That is the name of blasphemy. Revelation 13:5 says, "And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies . . . ." What are some of the blasphemies that are spoken by this man and by this system? I say, this is blasphemy when you put a man in Christ's place. **NO ONE** is in Christ's place.

V.....	5	F.....	0
I.....	1	I.....	1
C.....	100	L.....	50
A.....	0	I.....	1
R.....	0	I.....	1
I.....	1	D.....	500
U.....	5	E.....	0
S.....	0	I.....	1
Total.....	112	Total.....	554
Grand Total (112 + 554).....		666	

So, the man who represents the "beast" is the office of the popes of romen. And the beast is Roman Catholicism.

This system is the system that produced the tree that produced black seeds, or fed people darkness in this period of time from A.D. 530 to A.D. 1530. In A.D. 530 Boniface II was regarded as the first universal bishop. And from there until A.D. 1530 this "beast," this "tree," dominated the landscape and dominated the earth.

What is some of the blasphemies that this mouth speaks? Well, for years, when the mass was said in Latin, part of the



Latin mass that was recited by everyone was *DOMINUS DEUS NOSTRA PAPA*, which in the English is translated as **OUR LORD GOD THE POPE**. That is a name of blasphemy. The pope is **NOT OUR LORD GOD**.

Here are a few other titles ascribed to him: "Our Lord God the Pope King of the World"; "Holy Father"; "King of kings, and Lord of lords"; "Most Holy Lord Pope." Leo XIII said this: "We hold upon the earth the place of God Almighty." I say, that is blasphemy! The Vatican Counsel proclaimed on January 9, 1870, "The Pope is Christ in office. Christ in jurisdiction and power. We bow down before thy voice O Pius as before the voice of Christ. The God of truth is clinging to thee. We cling to Christ."

Johann Tetzel, the one who was selling indulgences and going through Germany in the sixteen hundreds, went with this cry: "The Lord God Omnipotent hath ceased to reign. He has resigned all power to the pope."

In the thirteenth century, this title was given: "The Bishop of Rome is the Supreme Lord of the Universe."

I say, dear heart, that is blasphemy. I speak not against the person, but against the office that he holds, against the doctrine that he declares. These are terms of blasphemy. This is darkness. This is not Biblical truth.

And during this period of time (A.D. 530-1530) the cry was, "Be Catholic or die." It truly was a dark age. The Bible was chained to the pulpit, as it were. The saints were underground in the caves and catacombs.

And this "great tree," this "beast" as it were, ruled the landscape. It was a predominate prevailing condition during this era of time.

So, I trust we can see what this system actually is that rose up out of the sea (Revelation 13:1). What this "beast" actually was that the Revelator spoke of here in Revelation 13:1. It is the same as the "great tree" that Jesus spoke of in our lesson text (Matthew 13:32-33).

It is the system of Roman Catholicism. This system is the "tree" that produced the black seeds, or fed people darkness in this period of time (A.D. 530-1530).

I want you to see, my friend, this is what covered the

landscape. This was the predominant condition that was taking place during this period of time.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED - PART THREE

*Matthew 13:31 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed.*

*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.*

We have been studying a series of lessons concerning the seven prophetic parables of Christ, which are found in Matthew, Chapter 13. We found that through the vehicle of these parables that Jesus takes us from the institution of the Gospel Day in AD 33 through to the end of time. Each one of these parables corresponds to a period in this Gospel Dispensation.

For two chapters we have been considering this parable of the mustard seed. By the help of God, we want to consider this parable a little more, and study further into the depth that, my friend, this parable contains.

We found in prior study, that this third parable corresponds to the third period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time from AD 530 to AD 1530—a period of time also known as the Dark Ages.

We found that the reason that Jesus employed, when He spoke of it here in Matthew 13:31, as ". . . a grain of mustard seed," was because as Matthew 13:32 declares, "Which indeed is the least of all seeds." This seed, the mustard seed, is the smallest of all garden seeds. But yet, it arose to become, as Matthew 13:32 denotes, "a tree." Or as Luke 13:19 declares it to be, "a great tree." So, it portrays to us something that had a very small, minute beginning but yet rose to a position of prominence over the landscape.

In Matthew 13:31, when He spoke of this "mustard seed," we also found the mustard seed is a black seed, that is black on the exterior. That lets us know that the prevailing

condition which could be seed was black or darkness. This tree produces a dark condition or the Dark Ages.

We also found that this tree, rising up, was portrayed in Revelation 13:1 as "a beast rise[ing] up out of the sea." And the Scriptures let us know that this "tree" that Matthew 13:32, and the "beast" of Revelation 13:1, speaks of, both represent a religious system.

This is a system, my friend, that was best identified by a man. And Revelation 13:18 declares, "Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man [A sole man identifies this system. And it is the man who bears the number Six hundred threescore and six." Or six hundred and sixty-six, which we identified as the numerical expression given to the Latin words **VICARIUS FILII DEI**, inscribed on the miter of the Popes of Rome. Thus, if the man is the office of the Pope, then the beast must of necessity be that Papal system of religion or that organization known as Roman Catholicism.

Now, we also found that this tree dominated the landscape. It was as Luke 13:19 portrays, "a great tree." It was great in size and also in dimension. And during this period of time so was papalism. The cry, over the landscape was, "be Catholic or die." They dominated the religious landscape for a thousand years, or that period from AD 530 to AD 1530.

Now, this tree produces little black seeds which the fowls of the air love to eat. And as we look at our text here in Matthew 13:32, it says that it "becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Now the questions we must ask ourselves are: "Why do these birds of the air, or these fowls, if you please, come and lodge in its branches?" What was it that attracted these fowls? What was it that caused them to lodge there, to take up their abode and to stay in this system, or in this tree, as it were? My friend, the reason is that this tree produced black seeds that the birds love to eat.

Now, we must ask ourselves, "What are these fowls?" Well, in Matthew 13:4 it says, "And when he [Christ] sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, [The way of religion] and the **FOWLS** came and devoured them up." Who are these "fowls" that devour

truth, yet love to eat black seeds or darkness? In the Book of Revelation, Chapter 19, the Revelator caught a glimpse of them. And he said here in Revelation 19:17-18: And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; [What was this supper that these fowls partook of?] That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men." So, here we see, my friend, that these ones that were fowls of the air, they eat the flesh. In other words, they eat things that were human, things that were of man, things that were not of Divine origin, not of Divine intent. But, my friend, you look at Revelation 19:21, and it says, "and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." So, we see a picture here that these fowls, my friend, were those who ate things that were not Divine. They ate things that were fleshly, things that were human, things that were of man. So, these fowls that devour the truth, yet love to eat these black seeds or darkness, is a picture of those who are false prophets.

We go back to the Gospel of Matthew 13:19, and it says, "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth [or regardeth] it not, then cometh the **WICKED** one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart." If you will notice the word *one* is in italics—it was not in the original. So He is speaking here of the wicked in a plurality, just as He did in Matthew 13:4 when it said, "and the fowls [in the plural] came and devoured them up."

Now, He tells us who these "fowls" are. In Matthew 13:19, they are the wicked. Now, who are these wicked people who were taking and devouring the seed, or devouring truth? But yet, they loved dark seeds, loved darkness, loved the flesh of men, loved the sayings and teachings of men? Who are these wicked? Psalm 50:16-17 says: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee." So here we find, my friend, the zenith of wickedness is religious professors and advocates. These are teachers and preachers of religion that would not

take God's Eternal Word, but cast His Word behind them. They devoured the seed, out of the hearts of others, and they loved black seed, darkness, and teachings of men. These are false religious preachers or false prophets.

Now, what are these black seeds? Well, we must bear in mind that black seeds are just the opposite of white seeds. White denotes purity and holiness and black portrays darkness. My friend, this lets us know that their teachings are just the opposite of Divine truths. So, we must ask ourselves, "What are these black seeds that this system produced, that they feed on? Well, when Christ sowed His seed, Luke 8:11 says, "The seed is the word of God." And 2 Timothy 3:16 declares, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for **DOCTRINE**." The seed Jesus sowed is the Word. And the Word, or Scripture, is the doctrine. Now what are these black seeds? It is their word or their doctrine.

This tree that dominated the landscape, this system of religion, my friend, produced doctrine. And this is what the "fowls" [the false prophets, their ministry, and their priesthood] fed on. My friend, it is what they taught, what they fed on, and what they carried to the people to feed them.

It was a thousand year period of time, just as Amos the Prophet said when he said in Amos 8:11 that there was "a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, not a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord." Sad to say, too many people will eat anything. So it was during this period of time when this Dark Age was working. During this time people were accepting things due to the conditions, they were accepting things that, my friend, they might otherwise not normally accept. But they accepted false doctrine and heretical teachings as truth.

Now, what are some of these black seeds, or doctrines, that this system teaches? Well, my friend, the Apostle Paul got a glimpse of it and penned it very distinctly in 1 Timothy 4:1-8, when he began there and said, "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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to

abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come."

Now, let us examine these verses in light of our study. Here in 1 Timothy 4:1, he said, ". . . some shall depart from the faith. . . ." Here the Apostle Paul, penning under Divine inspiration, foresaw the morning-time apostasy—the departure or the defecting from truth. What caused it? He said in 1 Timothy 4:1, they were, ". . . giving heed to seducing spirits. . . ." An apostasy is always an outgrowth of a change of spirit.

Now, what else do these spirits produce? In 1 Timothy 4:1, he says, ". . . doctrines of devils. . . ." Now let us examine these verses to see what the Bible considers to be, what 1 Timothy denotes as ". . . doctrines of devils. . . ." Because these are the black seeds, or the black, dark doctrine that was produced during this era of time.

In 1 Timothy 4:2, he talks about, "speaking lies."

Now, as we go through to study these, we must be reminded that we are dealing with a system. We are not speaking of people, but we are dealing with a religious system that is contrary to God's eternal word. And it is deceiving and damning the souls of multiplied millions.

But, what are some of these lies? What are some religious lies that are propagated by this religious system known as Roman Catholicism? They have a doctrine known as "the doctrine of **TRANSUBSTANTIATION**." Where, my friend, in the midst of their mass they convert a wafer, supposedly, to the Body and the Divinity of Jesus Christ. I say, dear heart, that is not true. That is a lie. Transubstantiation is not true. It is a

black seed. It is just the opposite of Biblical truth. My friend, it is not the body of Christ, in a literal manner, when that priest consecrates that wafer. Because when Jesus instituted the ordinance in Matthew 26:26, it says, "And as they were eating, Jesus took **BREAD**, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body." My friend, when He said this, He was yet in His corporal body. He had not yet gone to Calvary and made a sacrifice for sin. So, when He lifted that bread and said, "Take, eat, this is my body" (Matthew 26:26), it was a symbolic expression. It was, my friend, representing, **IN A FIGURE**, the work of Christ's body. It was not literally transformed then, nor is it now. That is not truth, that is a lie.

What else? What other lies are spoken by this system? Marian worship, such as "the perpetual virginity of Mary. But, my friend, the Bible teaches us in Matthew, he tells us very clearly in Matthew 13:55, "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us?" My friend, here the Scriptures teach us that Christ had at least six brothers and sisters that were subsequent to birth. So, there was not perpetual virginity, my friend, of the Virgin Mary. She was a virgin when she was conceived of the Holy Ghost. But subsequent to the birth of Jesus Christ, my friend, she had at least six other children. So, my friend, "the doctrine of the perpetual virginity" is not a Biblical doctrine.

Also, the doctrine of "the bodily ascension of Mary" is foreign and, my friend, contrary to God's Eternal Word. In 2 Corinthians 5:8, the Apostle Paul says, "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." This is teaching us, my friend, that when we are present with the Lord, we are absent from the body. The body, when we die, lies down and goes into the earth and turns to dust again as the Scripture says. And it is to be raised again on that last day. My friend, Mary did not bodily ascend, because, ". . . God is no respecter of persons. . ." (Acts 10:34).



My friend, there are other doctrines that are contrary.

What else? "The doctrine of Papal infallibility." Even though this was not a canon law until up in the 1800's, they supposedly base it on truth. However, my friend, "the doctrine of infallibility" is not a Biblical doctrine, because they say that the Apostle Peter was their first Pope. And the Scriptures teach that he was a very fallible man—in one place even to be blamed and rebuked. In Galatians 2:11, it says, "but when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." So here we find, my friend, that the doctrine of Papal infallibility is not a Biblical doctrine.

These along with many others are as 1 Timothy 4:2 very clearly declares, they are lies. And as 1 Timothy 4:1 speaks, they are, ". . . doctrines of devils. . . ," not Biblical truths.

What else? First Timothy 4:3 says, "Forbidding to marry." Here we have the very well-known doctrine of celibacy. But, my friend, it is not a Biblical doctrine. It is a doctrine of devils; it is devilish. Celibacy is just the opposite of what God's Eternal Word teaches. Back in the Book of Beginnings in Genesis 2:18, God came on the scene and said, "It is not good that the man should be alone." My friend, that is God's will, that is God's Word. This doctrine is a devilish doctrine. In 1 Corinthians 7:2, the Apostle Paul said, "Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife." And even the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 9:5 says, "Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?" [Or Peter who supposedly was the first Pope.] Here he lets us know that Peter was married, and the brethren were married. The Apostles were married. My friend, celibacy was not a doctrine of The Church. Nor is it a doctrine of the Bible. This devilish doctrine that prevents lawful expression of God-given desires has led to terrible sin, and to terrible abuses and activities over the years of time. It is not a Bible doctrine.

What else? In 1 Timothy 4:3, he talks about, "commanding to abstain from meats." And for years, Roman Catholicism taught not to eat meat on Friday and also, my friend, many do

not eat meat during lent. But yet, even while they could not eat meat, they could eat fish. My friend, when Jesus came back and asked His disciples after His resurrection, in John 21:5, it says, "Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No. And he said unto them, Cast the net on the right side of the ship and ye shall find. They cast therefore, and now they were not able to draw it for the multitude of fishes." Even Jesus admitted that fish was a meat. But, my friend, for years Roman Catholicism commanded to abstain from meet. It was a "doctrine of asceticism." However, my friend, the Scriptures are very clear, this is a doctrine of devils.

First Timothy 4:3 goes on to say, ". . . which God has created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth." Dear heart, if you will believe the truth of God's Eternal Word, you can be set free from false teaching, be free from false doctrine, and be free from the bondage that men and men's religion would impose upon you. In John 8:32, Jesus says, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Are there other teachings? Certainly! There are many, many multitudinous teachings, more than we can deal with in this short span of time.

But Paul comes on down here in 1 Timothy and he talks very clearly in 1 Timothy 4:7, "But refuse profane and old wives' fables." What type of fables? Such fables as when they supposedly found what they revered to be Peter's Chair. And one day when it was being cleaned, they discovered that it had written on there the deeds of Hercules, a Pagan Deity. My friend, there are also teachings such as that the church of Saint John the Lateran has the Scala Sancta or the Sacred Stairs that, supposedly, are the same stairs that came from Pilate's Judgment Hall, that Jesus ascended. And that somehow landed from Jerusalem into Rome. I say, my friend, that is profane and old wives' fables. It has no basis in truth; it has no basis in fact. It is just an old wives' fable.

In 1 Timothy 4:8, he talks about, "For bodily exercise profiteth little." But, my friend, Roman Catholicism is full of genuflecting, full of flagellation, full of many other things that are just exercise of the flesh and bodily exercise. My friend, it does not have a Spiritual profit or

merit to it whatsoever.

And, dear heart, we are not speaking against people, but these are prominent teachings of Roman Catholicism. They are the "black seeds" that fed the fowls, who fed the people during the Dark Ages. But, the teaching and the system, my friend, never was Bible based, and it is not yet today.

Teachings such as these are what produced and perpetuated that period of time known as the Dark Ages.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED - PART FOUR

*Matthew 13:31 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.*

We have been studying a series of prophetic parables which are housed in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13. And these parables are vehicles, that Jesus employed, to convey to us the major events that have occurred, down throughout this New Testament Dispensation of time.

We have been examining the parable of the mustard seed. And by the help of God, we would like to consider this parable, and look a little further into the truth that it reveals to us.

By way of review, we found that this is the third parable. As such, it corresponds to that third period of the Gospel Day, or that time frame from AD 530 to AD 1530.

We also learned that this which Matthew 13:31, denotes as "beginnings of a religious system that started with the seed of apostasy. But it grew to be, as Luke 13:19 declares, "a great tree." Or, my friend, it was a corrupt system of religion that dominated the earth for this thousand-year period of time.

The mustard seed is black on the exterior, letting us know that the visible condition during this era of time was darkness, or a Dark Age.

History, as well as Scripture, teaches us that the system that thrived during this era, and dominated the world, was the system of Roman Catholicism. The cry during this particular period of time was "be Catholic or die."

Now, we also found that this "great tree" produces little black seeds which the fowls of the air love to eat. These

black seeds are their doctrines or teachings.

Now, we also found that this "great tree" produces little black seeds which the fowls of the air love to eat. These black seeds are their doctrines or teachings.

Now, let us begin to study. Our text says here in Matthew 13:32, the latter portion, "the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." Now, the question we must pose is why? Why do fowls which portray a false ministry, or more particularly the false ministry that was working during this era of time—why do they, as the Scripture says in Matthew 13:32, "**LODGE** in the branches?" Well, it is because the branches are that which produced these black seeds. Now, notice our text says, that they "lodged" there. What is the picture being held before us? These seeds are, my friend, what holds them. This is a portrayal of their teachings, and their doctrines, letting us know that it is their teachings and doctrines that are what causes them to stay with this system. Or to stay with, as what Matthew 7:18 declares to be, "a corrupt tree." As a matter of fact, they are told that if they leave this system, that they are leaving "the church." Yet, they are being fed, what Matthew 7:17 denotes as, "evil fruit."

Jesus says in Matthew 7:20, "Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them." So, let us examine some of the fruit that these branches that Matthew 13:32 speaks of, produce.

The Bible teaches us, in Matthew 23:8, "all ye are brethren"—a clear indication of Spiritual equality amongst all brethren.

But Roman Catholicism established and holds to a hierarchical system of religion. This hierarchical system is composed of: priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and finally a pope. The Bible decries a hierarchical system and a system of preeminence. In the general Epistle of 3 John 1:9-10 it says: "I wrote unto the church: but Diotrephes, who loveth to have the preeminence among them, receiveth us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he doeth." Here we see portrayed, a spirit of preeminence. Diotrephes had a spirit that, my friend, wanted to be preeminent and rule over other brethren. Here we see this

penned right in this third general Epistle of John, at the end of the first century. This portrays to us, my friend, that this spirit was already working at that point and time. And, certainly, that spirit was fed as the apostasy continued. And, so, a system became built on this thought of preeminence, on this thought of a hierarchy. And so, we find that this spirit of preeminence was working here over other brethren and over ministerial offices. And we find that the Apostle John, here in his writings, soundly denounced the thought, my friend, of a spirit of preeminence over other brethren, or other ministerial callings.

In Jude, we find that Jude also speaks of what was the cause, or, my friend, what gave an uprising to a hierarchical system of religion. In Jude 1:16, he says, "These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage."

My friend, the Apostle Paul got a vision, and got an understanding, of this apostasy that was going to work in the morning time, that culminated in the producing of this system of religious worship. And in 2 Thessalonians he lets us know that it would be built on a spirit of preeminence. In 2 Thessalonians 2:2-4 he says: "That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [speaking of the second Advent] shall not come, except there come a falling away [Or the Greek word is **apostasia** which means, "an apostasy." Except there come an apostasy] first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; [Now, how does he describe and how does he give us, my friend, understanding of that which would cause us to understand and recognize this man? What are the earmarks? Verse 4 says, "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." And here we find, my friend, a portrayal, in prophesy, by the Apostle Paul, of what was

going to transpire under Romanism. My friend, he portrayed here the office of the Pope "sitting in the temple of God" or sitting in the Vatican, or in Saint Peter's Basilica, as it were, and saying that he is God. And ascribing to himself such titles as: "Our Lord God the Pope." So, we find that this system is built on, my friend, a hierarchical system of religion—from parish priests, to bishops, to archbishops, to cardinals and finally to the Pope himself.

But Jesus says in Matthew 23:8, ". . . all ye are brethren." This tells us that, my friend, there is an equality amongst all ministerial brethren and not some, supposed, religious hierarchical system.

What else was the outgrowth of this apostate leader, Diotrephes? In 3 John 1:10 it says, "neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church." Here we see portrayed the doctrine of excommunication. What did John say about that practice? In 3 John 1:11, it says, "Beloved, follow not that which is **EVIL**." Here he lets us know that the practice of excommunication, by a man, my friend, was an evil, not a Biblical practice. In The True Church, **NO MAN** can put you out. If a man can put you in, or if you my friend, can have a man that can put you out, it is **MAN'S** church and not God's Church.

The Bible says, in Acts 2:47, "And the Lord added to the church daily [Now, what is the mode of entrance?] such as should be saved." In 1 Corinthians 12:13, here, my friend, the Apostle Paul pens, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." Both of these Scriptures, my friend, Luke penning the Acts account and Paul in the Corinthian account, portray to us that **A SPIRITUAL WORK** puts one in. Not any act of sacrament, not any act of baptism, not any mere external, not the acceptance by man or a group of men. But that a spiritual work wrought in the soul is what makes man an acceptable candidate and places him in, as a member, of the Body of Christ.

We also find that **SIN** is that which puts man out. In Exodus 32:33, it says, "And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against **ME**, him will I blot out of my book."

These are "black seeds," dear heart, or as 1 Timothy 4:1 declares, they are "doctrines of devils." Now, I want you to notice that these teachings are black. They are, indeed, black seeds, black doctrines. They are dark. Notice, they are just the opposite of Bible truths. They are just the opposite of the true seed, the Word of God that is white and pure, and brings light to mankind. These teachings are one hundred percent in opposition to Biblical truths. They are "doctrines of devils."

What are some more of these seeds? Jesus said in Matthew 23:9, "And call no man your father upon the earth: for **ONE** is your Father, which is in heaven." Yet, Roman Catholicism is riddled with men being called "father." All the way from the local parish priest to the pompous claims of what: *The Catechism of Christian Doctrine*, on page 23 calls, "Our Holy Father the Pope." Jesus said, 'Don't do that.' Yet, Roman Catholicism insists on it. That is **DEVILISH**, that is a devilish doctrine.

In Matthew 6:7, Jesus plainly instructed, "But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." Yet, Roman Catholicism, going through the rosary, repeats the "Hail Mary" about fifteen minutes. And in the course of that fifteen minutes of time, "Hail Mary" is repeated fifty-three times. The Lord's prayer is repeated six (6) times. There are five (5) mysteries, five meditations on the mysteries, five "glory be's" and one recitation of the supposed "Apostle's Doctrine." I say, dear heart, that is vain repetition. Jesus said, 'Don't do that.' Yet, Roman Catholicism teaches and instructs and encourages their people to do that, and engage in a practice that is totally opposite of what Jesus' Words were. I say, that is a black seed.

What else? Well, certainly there is more than we have time to enumerate. But let us consider a couple of more: Let us consider "the doctrine of purgatory." In the book entitled, *The Catechism of Christian Doctrine*, prepared and enjoined by order of, The Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, page 74 says, "Purgatory is a state in which those suffer for a time who died guilty of venial sins, or without having satisfied



for the punishment due to their sins." Now my friend, as we begin to examine that phrase, this teaches that man can die in a sinful state and have sins purged after death. But my friend, Jesus taught us, in Matthew 8:21, that if "ye die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come." But this teaches that man can die sinful and have his sins purged after life. This creates a false hope. And, my friend, because it creates a false hope and a false illusion, that one will have an opportunity after death—because of that, it is as 2 Peter 2:1 declares, it is "damnable heresies." The Bible, my friend, gives us a very vivid account when Jesus lifted the cap off of eternity, in Luke's Gospel. My friend, He tells us there in Luke 16:19, "There **WAS** a certain rich man." Many would say in this writing, that it was a parabolic expression. He said, "There was a certain rich man." Indicating that He was uncapping the eternal realm and letting us catch a glimpse of realities. In Luke 16:19, He says, "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table; moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And **IN HELL** he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom."

Here we find, very clearly indicated by Jesus, that when our eyes close in the finality of death, that first of all, there is no "soul sleeping." At the moment one closes their eyes in the finality of death, that the next moment, they will be just as awake, just as fully conscious, just as fully aware of their surroundings and their existence, as they were before death seized them. But my friend, what has changed is that one has stepped from the realm of time into the realm known as eternity. So, we find there is no "soul sleeping."

We also find very vividly expressed here, in a very clear manner, that as soon as death seized both of these individuals, that they were not only in an eternal realm, but they were in various places in that eternal realm. We find

that "the rich man died" and it says in Luke 16:23, "And in hell [Or in Hades] he lift up his eyes." He did not go to limbo. He did not go to purgatory, He did not go to some intermediate place, that his spiritual state might be altered. But friend, he immediately, once his eyes closed in the finality of death, he awoke in an eternal realm known as Hell.

Also, we find that "the beggar" or a better translation says "a poor man" Luke 16:22 says "died." And he was "carried into Abraham's bosom," a place known as paradise. Just as He told the thief on the cross in Luke 23:43, "Verily I say unto thee, **TO DAY** shalt thou be with me in paradise." That is the realm that the departed souls of the saved go to when their eyes close in death.

But, friend, there was no intermediary state where man could have his sins purged and then go from one realm to the other. In Luke 16:25-26 it says: "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they that would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." Here He lets us know that once, my friend, man enters into that state known as death and passes into the eternal realm, that my friend, the realm into which he goes is final. He cannot move from one realm to another realm—from Paradise to Hell, from Hell to Paradise. In Ecclesiastes 11:3 it says, "in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be."

If we read the entirety of that verse, he lets us know that there are different states in which a man can die. In Ecclesiastes 11:3, it says, "and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth there shall it be." Notice, he only used two different places that the tree may fall, south or north. He did not say there were many directions or many places, but he only brought up two different states. And, my friend, so it is when man leaves this time world, there are only two different states. You are either saved or you are lost. You either go into a Christless eternity or you go home to be the Lord, which the

Apostle Paul said, "is far better" (Philippians 1:21-23). But, there is no place where man can go as a temporary place, have his sins purged, and then move into the other realm. My friend, Jesus plainly taught us in Luke that they cannot go from one realm to the other. If a tree falls to the south or if it falls to the north, whatever state that soul is in when the finality of death comes, it **IS SEALED** for the ceaseless ages of eternity when death occurs. Ecclesiastes 11:3, I repeat, says, "in the place that the tree falleth, there it shall be." There is no altering of a man's spiritual state after death. There is no second chance. There is no purgatory. Those are devilish doctrines. And because people rest their soul in those doctrines and trust in those doctrines, they are as 2 Peter 2:1 denoted, "damnable heresies."

During this period of time, from AD 530 to AD 1530, when this "great tree" dominated the landscape, Daniel 8:12 says, "and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced, and prospered."

During this time, they did as Jesus said in Matthew 15:6, "Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."

Many, if not most of the teachings and practices of Papalism, came from Pagan tradition. Customs such as rosaries, nuns, mother and child worship, patron saints, saint's day, and a host of other doctrines and beliefs and practices were imported, not through Christ or Christianity, but from ancient Paganism. They claim in the 1998 Missal, *Breaking Bread*, "We are the church of God." And with that they deceive the souls of men.

But Roman Catholicism came from a "backslidden Church of God." I want you to see that their doctrines and teachings are totally the opposite of the teachings of the Bible.

We certainly cannot deal with all, but I trust that we can see why this tree represents Roman Catholicism. And why Christ, in His wisdom, used a tree that produced black seeds. Their teachings were full of darkness.

During this period of time, my friend, it was darkness that they perpetuated. And they have never yet repented of those teachings or claims. There heretical teachings and

practices, my friend, damn the souls of men.

But, Christ said, in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." I say, dear heart, if you have been embroiled with this false system, my friend, He lets us know that He desires that you know and embrace the truth, so that you might be free from this system and not entertain false hope and be eternally lost.

Dear heart, we are not speaking against individuals, but rather, against that system of worship that is deceiving millions of souls of mankind. Christ wants you to know the truth. And if you will know it, and embrace it, and believe it, you can be free from this system.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED - PART FIVE

*Matthew 13:31 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.*

We have been studying the seven prophetic parables of Christ, which are incorporated here in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13. These seven parables correspond to the seven distinct time periods which compose this Christian Dispensation. We have been studying the third parable, the parable of the mustard seed, which correlates to the third period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time from AD 530 to AD 1530. That time is also known as the Dark Ages. By the help of God we want to continue, and to conclude, our study of this particular parable.

By way of review, we might mention that Jesus speaks in Matthew 13:31 of a "mustard seed." And as Proverbs 30:5 declares, "Every word of God is pure." **EVERY WORD** has divine intent, divine importance, and was purposely employed to convey a truth. So it is in this text. The reason for this employment of this "mustard seed" is because the mustard seed is black on the exterior, portraying a time of darkness, a Dark Age. It was a time when Amos the prophet spoke of in Amos 8:9, where **HE PENNED**, ". . . I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will **DARKEN** the earth in the clear day." So it was during this period of time, in which Matthew 13:31 denotes as a "mustard seed." Matthew 13:32 tells us, "Which is the least of all seeds," teaching us that it started with a minute, a very small, beginning. But as Luke 13:19 declares, it became "a great tree." It dominated the landscape during this time.

Also, this great tree produces little black seeds which the fowls of the air love to eat. We found that this "great tree" represents the religious system that dominated the earth during this time: the system of Roman Catholicism. These black seeds are the doctrines, dear heart, I must say, as we found by studying God's Eternal Word, are not Biblical or Christian doctrines, but rather, they have their origin in Paganism. Revelation 13:2 says, "the dragon [symbolic of Paganism] gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." And, my friend, a great part of that "authority" is their doctrines and church teachings. Their doctrines and practices are a result of apostate men embracing pagan practices and teachings and supposedly making them Christian.

Now, notice that the mustard seed is black; this tree produces black seeds. Why is that? Well, we must remember that our text says it really is an "herb." Matthew 13:32 denotes that "it is the greatest among herbs." And Genesis 1:12 says, "And the earth brought forth grass, and **HERB**-yielding seed after his kind." What does this tell us, dear heart? It tells us that darkness can only produce darkness. You cannot obtain light or understanding in a place of darkness. To receive light you must, as Revelation 18:4 says, "Come out." You must come out of where darkness is being propagated.

Now, as this tree that our text speaks of (or as Revelation 13:1 denotes as "a beast") dominated the landscape, where were the saints? Where was **THE CHURCH** during this era of time? Revelation 13:7 says, "And it was given unto him [referring to the beast] to make war with the saints." During this period of time, fierce persecution was loosed by this Papal beast. John Fox, in his famed book, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, on page 43 says this: "We come now to a period when persecution, under the guise of Christianity, committed more enormities than ever disgraced the annals of Paganism. Disregarding the maxims and the Spirit of the Gospel, the Papal church, arming herself with the power of the sword, vexed The Church of God and wasted it for several centuries. A period most appropriately termed in history, the Dark Ages. The kings of the earth gave their power to the beast and submitted to be trodden on by the miserable vermin that often

filled the Papal Chair."

History is replete with volumes of atrocities committed by this beast during this period of time. In *A History of the Church*, by Henry C. Wickersham, on page 232, he pens, "It has been computed that fifty millions of Christians have, at different times, been the victims of the persecutions of the Papists and put to death for their religious opinions." It was a time that Jesus prophesied of in the Gospel of John (16:2), when He said, ". . . yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will **THINK** that he doeth God service." Certainly, these words were true in this era of time.

During this time of martyrdom, Revelation 17:6 says, "And I saw the woman [a reference to Papalism] drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus . . ." I say, my dear friend, and I say it with love but must indeed say it, Roman Catholicism is not a Christian system and never has been a Christian system. During this time, God preserved a seed, a remnant, and protected them in the catacombs and caves.

In Matthew 13:31-32, it tells us this "mustard seed . . . [was] the greatest among herbs." Notice that the word "herbs" is in the plural, letting us know this was not the only "herb" in this era of time. There were other herbs. And when you study an herb, you will find that it begins, and predominately grows, underground. And this is just where the church was during this period of time. They were underground in the caves and in the catacombs. They were literally in an underground position. I want you to see that they had gone into seclusion. There were almost 600 miles of mole-like tunnels in underground caverns outside of Rome. Ten generations, or the one thousand years that Revelation 20:3-4 speaks of, were buried in the catacombs.

This is where the term *niche* originated. They dug out niches in these catacombs and caves and buried the Saints, as they passed, is where the term *niche* developed.

This was one of the most heated times of persecution in the history of Christendom. But, my friend, even though these people were being martyred during this era, and had to go underground to the caves and catacombs, one of the most

frequent inscriptions [found] on the walls of the catacombs was, "**THE WORD OF GOD IS NOT BOUND.**" So, while darkness was the prevailing condition, God had made provision for The Church, provision for the [true] Saints of God. In Revelation 12:6, it says, "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

Here, where it says, "And the woman," the reference is back to Revelation 12:1, ". . . a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet," a symbolic representation of The Morning-time Church. And here in verse 6, it says, "And the woman [The Church in this third period] fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of **GOD**, that **THEY** should feed her.

Now, my friend, we must ask the question, who is the **THEY** that he has reference to here? Well, if you will look, you will see that this word **GOD**, here in Revelation 12:6, comes from the word **Theos**. And it is the same Greek word that was used in the *Septuagint* [Translation], in Genesis 1:26, where it is penned, "And God said, Let **US** make man in **OUR** image, after **OUR** likeness. . . [Plural]." So the [Greek] word that the *Septuagint* used, was **Theos**, but in the original Hebrew, it was **Elohim**, a plural word. "And God said, Let **US** [In the plural] make man in our image, [Plural] after **OUR** likeness. . . [Plural]. So this word refers to God in the plural: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And that is the **THEY**, my friend, who made provision for The Church throughout this period of time.

So, my friend, The Church was in the **WILDERNESS**. Revelation 12:6 declares. In the Greek, the word here is **Eremos**, which means "lonesome or solitary." It was a secluded, solitary place, a place where the Saints were hid away and provided for during this period of time. I know that many times the thought of a wilderness has a negative connotation. But the word means, "lonesome or solitary." So, the thought of a wilderness, Scripturally, does not always have a negative connotation. Many times it is positive. In Genesis 21:20, it says, "And **GOD** was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the



wilderness." In Exodus 3:18, it says, ". . . let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God." Exodus 4:27 says, "And the Lord said unto Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." Exodus 3:1 says, ". . . he led the flock to the backside of the **DESERT** [The Hebrew word for *desert*, here, is **MIDBAR**, which means 'wilderness.'], to the mountain of God." [The wilderness] is where Moses received understanding and saw the burning bush that appeared there (Exodus 3:2-4). All of these, my friend, were places where God worked and [where] God sent [people], during a period of time. David was God's anointed, and he dwelt in the wilderness and was in favor with God. In both the Exodus account and [in] David's day, God's people had to separate themselves and resort to isolation and solitude because of the sinful acts of others.

And so it was, in the Morning-time apostasy. The Woman, the Church, because of the prevailing condition of apostasy, and the outgrowth of it (Romanism), ". . . fled into . . ." a secluded place. Perhaps a better rendering, *The Expanded Translation of the New Testament*, by Wuest, renders Revelation 12:6 in this manner, "And the woman fled **INTO** the uninhabited region where she hath there a place, which is in a state of readiness, having been so prepared by God in order that there **THEY** might be providing her with food, one thousand two hundred and sixty days."

I say, my friend, the thought of a wilderness does not always have a negative connotation. It was in the wilderness that Moses found the burning bush that we read of in Exodus, Chapter 3. It was the Wilderness of Sinai, in Exodus, Chapter 9, where they received God's Eternal Word. It was in the wilderness that Elijah, who had fled from Jezebel, was fed and sustained by God, in 1 Kings 19:4-8. And when the Church came out of the wilderness, what position was She in? Song of Solomon 8:5 says, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, **LEANING UPON HER BELOVED?**" Not in a fallen state, not in a backslidden state, but rather, my friend, she came up leaning upon Her Beloved, Jesus Christ. [She was] leaning, in utter dependence, upon Christ and the Holy Spirit of God, my friend, able to come out of that wilderness condition intact,

as it were.

So I want you to see, dear heart, it was a secluded, solitary place, where the saints were hid away and provided for during this period of time. The Lord was indeed faithful to His people during this period of time, [as] Jeremiah declared in Lamentations 3:23, "**GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS.**" So, my friend, we found that during this period of time, The Church was in a secluded position. Though there were over fifty million martyrs, still God, in His faithfulness, preserved a seed, a remnant. He had another "herb," as it were, that was underground during this period of time.

Now, in Revelation, in the third of the seven letters to the Churches, which also correspond with the parables and the seven periods of the Gospel day, in the third letter, to Pergamos, Christ said in Revelation 2:13, ". . .I know . . . where Satan's seat is. . . ." referring to what 2 Thessalonians 2:3 calls the ". . . man of sin, the son of perdition; [And 2 Thessalonians 2:4 says,] . . . he . . . sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." This is a reference, a prophetic expression, referring to the office of the Popes of Rome. In Revelation 2:13, He says, "I know . . . where Satan's seat is. . . ," speaking of that one who ". . . sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4). He [the Pope] was actually sitting in what was denoted by Christ as "Satan's seat." And He said in Revelation, 2:16, "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." Sad to say, dear heart, [but] Papalism did not repent. As a matter of fact, they do not even teach Biblical repentance. So the Lord loosed the Sword (Revelation 2:16).

Now the question is, what is this Sword that He loosed? In Ephesians 6:17, it says, ". . . the **SWORD** of the Spirit which is **THE WORD OF GOD.** . . ." In Hebrews 4:12, it says, "For **THE WORD OF GOD** is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged **SWORD** . . . ." So, my friend, we find that system would not repent, would not take truth as God asked them to, and so, He turned the Sword of Truth loose. A man named Martin Luther, a humble man, was ascending the Scala Sancta, or the Sacred Stairs, in the Saint John the Lateran Church, in Rome,

and a thunderbolt of truth struck his heart.

As all in Roman Catholicism are instructed to be, he was filled with works. Those supposedly sacred stairs are nothing but "an old wives' fable." Catholics contend that those were the stairs that were at the very Judgment Hall of Pilate, the same stairs that Jesus ascended. These stairs in Rome are supposedly the same stairs. In some mysterious manner they were transported from Jerusalem to Rome and are at the church of Saint John the Lateran. I say, my friend, that is nothing more than "an old wives' fable" that the Scriptures teach us to shun. But, in that era of darkness, an honest man was ascending those stairs in a mode of worship, and as he was on his knees, ascending those stairs, my friend, a thunderbolt of truth that he had read in a Bible that was chained to a pulpit, struck his heart. It was Romans 1:17, ". . . **THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.**" As he ascended those stairs in spiritual darkness, my friend, a ray of light, of truth, struck his soul! He took that truth in hand, and he embraced it, and he began to wield it as a Sword of Truth.

My friend, Romanism had been told, in Revelation 2:16, to "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." That Sword was His Word. That Sword was the Truth of God's Eternal Word. And, my friend, when they would not repent, Martin Luther, ascending those stairs in darkness, saw a break of light that shined through to his soul. And he embraced that truth, that "The just shall live by faith." He took that truth, and embraced it, and wielded it as a sword and, with it, did what Revelation 13:3 calls laying a ". . . deadly wound . . . [to] the beast." Revelation 13:14 said, ". . . the beast . . . [received] the wound by a sword. . . ." That Sword was truth, the Word of God. That Sword, my friend, was the message Martin Luther had revealed to him, that "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17), and not by works.

[Luther] took this Sword and he wielded it as a Sword of Truth, and the supremacy of Rome was broken. Their domination of the landscape, my friend, was ended. This period of the Gospel Day ends with AD 1530, which was when The Augsburg Confession was drawn up at The Diet of Augsburg, in Augsburg,

Germany, and the first Protestant creed was officially formed. This great tree my friend, as great as it was, could not prevent the truth from rising from the ground where it had been cast. Yes, it also was an herb that had been under the ground, in the catacombs and caves. But in the fullness of time God allowed it to break through to the surface. He allowed it to come to light, to come to the surface again, to come out in a public way, to where truth could be seen and heard in a public manner one more time. It could come through, burst through, my friend, and see the light of day one more time, and, so the people of God could come out from the catacombs and caves. [They did] not have to dwell in darkness, to be in a Dark Age any more.

And so, my friend, the eclipse at noon was ending and light was coming back. God was moving on the scene and bringing what we commonly refer to as "the Sixteenth Century Reformation." That herb, although it had been underground and out of sight, was just as the inscription on the walls of the catacombs say: "The Word of God is not bound." When God allowed a time and a space to repent, and they refused to repent, He turned the Sword of Truth loose and found a people that would embrace that truth, herald that truth, and wield it as a sword. And when they did, my friend, that era of darkness was ended. That time of Papal rule was over. My friend, from the ground where the truth had been cast, it sprang forth. It had been a Dark Age, a time when there had been an eclipse at noon, but the eclipse was ending and light was coming back. The Sixteenth Century Reformation, my friend, had come on the scene. So this period of time, from AD 530 to AD 1530, was the thousand-year Dark Age. But in AD 1530, at the Diet of Augsburg, The Augsburg Confession was drafted—the first creed of Protestantism—and, my friend, the dark night ended with that Reformation.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### *THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED - PART FIVE*

*Matthew 13:31 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.*

We have been studying the seven prophetic parables of Christ, which are incorporated here in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13. These seven parables correspond to the seven distinct time periods which compose this Christian Dispensation. We have been studying the third parable, the parable of the mustard seed, which correlates to the third period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time from AD 530 to AD 1530. That time is also known as the Dark Ages. By the help of God we want to continue, and to conclude, our study of this particular parable.

By way of review, we might mention that Jesus speaks in Matthew 13:31 of a "mustard seed." And as Proverbs 30:5 declares, "Every word of God is pure." **EVERY WORD** has divine intent, divine importance, and was purposely employed to convey a truth. So it is in this text. The reason for this employment of this "mustard seed" is because the mustard seed is black on the exterior, portraying a time of darkness, a Dark Age. It was a time when Amos the prophet spoke of in Amos 8:9, where **HE PENNED**, ". . . I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will **DARKEN** the earth in the clear day." So it was during this period of time, in which Matthew 13:31 denotes as a "mustard seed." Matthew 13:32 tells us, "Which is the least of all seeds," teaching us that it started with a minute, a very small, beginning. But as Luke 13:19 declares, it became "a great tree." It dominated the landscape during this time.

Also, this great tree produces little black seeds which the fowls of the air love to eat. We found that this "great tree" represents the religious system that dominated the earth during this time: the system of Roman Catholicism. These black seeds are the doctrines, dear heart, I must say, as we found by studying God's Eternal Word, are not Biblical or Christian doctrines, but rather, they have their origin in Paganism. Revelation 13:2 says, "the dragon [symbolic of Paganism] gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority." And, my friend, a great part of that "authority" is their doctrines and church teachings. Their doctrines and practices are a result of apostate men embracing pagan practices and teachings and supposedly making them Christian.

Now, notice that the mustard seed is black; this tree produces black seeds. Why is that? Well, we must remember that our text says it really is an "herb." Matthew 13:32 denotes that "it is the greatest among herbs." And Genesis 1:12 says, "And the earth brought forth grass, and **HERB**-yielding seed after his kind." What does this tell us, dear heart? It tells us that darkness can only produce darkness. You cannot obtain light or understanding in a place of darkness. To receive light you must, as Revelation 18:4 says, "Come out." You must come out of where darkness is being propagated.

Now, as this tree that our text speaks of (or as Revelation 13:1 denotes as "a beast") dominated the landscape, where were the saints? Where was **THE CHURCH** during this era of time? Revelation 13:7 says, "And it was given unto him [referring to the beast] to make war with the saints." During this period of time, fierce persecution was loosed by this Papal beast. John Fox, in his famed book, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, on page 43 says this: "We come now to a period when persecution, under the guise of Christianity, committed more enormities than ever disgraced the annals of Paganism. Disregarding the maxims and the Spirit of the Gospel, the Papal church, arming herself with the power of the sword, vexed The Church of God and wasted it for several centuries. A period most appropriately termed in history, the Dark Ages. The kings of the earth gave their power to the beast and submitted to be trodden on by the miserable vermin that often

filled the Papal Chair."

History is replete with volumes of atrocities committed by this beast during this period of time. In *A History of The Church*, by Henry C. Wickersham, on page 232, he pens, "It has been computed that fifty millions of Christians have, at different times, been the victims of the persecutions of the Papists and put to death for their religious opinions." It was a time that Jesus prophesied of in the Gospel of John (16:2), when He said, ". . . yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will **THINK** that he doeth God service." Certainly, these words were true in this era of time.

During this time of martyrdom, Revelation 17:6 says, "And I saw the woman [a reference to Papalism] drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. . . ." I say, my dear friend, and I say it with love but must indeed say it, Roman Catholicism is not a Christian system and never has been a Christian system. During this time, God preserved a seed, a remnant, and protected them in the catacombs and caves.

This is where the term *niche* originated. They dug out niches in these catacombs and caves and buried the Saints, as they passed, is where the term *niche* developed.

This was one of the most heated times of persecution in the history of Christendom. But, my friend, even though these people were being martyred during this era, and had to go underground to the caves and catacombs, one of the most frequent inscriptions [found] on the walls of the catacombs was, "**THE WORD OF GOD IS NOT BOUND.**" So, while darkness was the prevailing condition, God had made provision for The Church, provision for the [true] Saints of God. In Revelation 12:6, it says, "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days."

Here, where it says, "And the woman," the reference is back to Revelation 12:1, ". . . a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet," a symbolic representation of The Morning-time Church. And here in verse 6, it says, "And the woman [The Church in this third period] fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of **GOD**, that **THEY**

should feed her.

Now, my friend, we must ask the question, who is the **THEY** that he has reference to here? Well, if you will look, you will see that this word **God**, here in Revelation 12:6, comes from the word **Theos**. And it is the same Greek word that was used in the *Septuagint* [Translation], in Genesis 1:26, where it is penned, "And God said, Let **US** make man in **OUR** image, after **OUR** likeness. . . [Plural]." So the [Greek] word that the *Septuagint* used, was **Theos**, but in the original Hebrew, it was **Elohim**, a plural word. "And God said, Let **US** [In the plural] make man in our image, [Plural] after **OUR** likeness. . . [Plural]. So this word refers to God in the plural: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And that is the **THEY**, my friend, who made provision for The Church throughout this period of time.

So, my friend, The Church was in the **WILDERNESS**. Revelation 12:6 declares. In the Greek, the word here is **Eremos**, which means "lonesome or solitary." It was a secluded, solitary place, a place where the Saints were hid away and provided for during this period of time. I know that many times the thought of a wilderness has a negative connotation. But the word means, "lonesome or solitary." So, the thought of a wilderness, Scripturally, does not always have a negative connotation. Many times it is positive. In Genesis 21:20, it says, "And **GOD** was with the lad; and he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness." In Exodus 3:18, it says, ". . . let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God." Exodus 4:27 says, "And the Lord said unto Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses." Exodus 3:1 says, ". . . he led the flock to the backside of the **DESERT** [The Hebrew word for *desert*, here, is **MIDBAR**, which means 'wilderness.'], to the mountain of God." [The wilderness] is where Moses received understanding and saw the burning bush that appeared there (Exodus 3:2-4). All of these, my friend, were places where God worked and [where] God sent [people], during a period of time. David was God's anointed, and he dwelt in the wilderness and was in favor with God. In both the Exodus account and [in] David's day, God's people had to separate themselves and resort to isolation and solitude



because of the sinful acts of others.

And so it was, in the Morning-time apostasy. The Woman, the Church, because of the prevailing condition of apostasy, and the outgrowth of it (Romanism), ". . . fled into . . ." a secluded place. Perhaps a better rendering, *The Expanded Translation of the New Testament*, by Wuest, renders Revelation 12:6 in this manner, "And the woman fled **into** the uninhabited region where she hath there a place, which is in a state of readiness, having been so prepared by God in order that there **THEY** might be providing her with food, one thousand two hundred and sixty days."

I say, my friend, the thought of a wilderness does not always have a negative connotation. It was in the wilderness that Moses found the burning bush that we read of in Exodus, Chapter 3. It was the Wilderness of Sinai, in Exodus, Chapter 9, where they received God's Eternal Word. It was in the wilderness that Elijah, who had fled from Jezebel, was fed and sustained by God, in 1 Kings 19:4-8. And when the Church came out of the wilderness, what position was She in? Song of Solomon 8:5 says, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, **LEANING UPON HER BELOVED?**" Not in a fallen state, not in a backslidden state, but rather, my friend, She came up leaning upon Her Beloved, Jesus Christ. [She was] leaning, in utter dependence, upon Christ and the Holy Spirit of God, my friend, able to come out of that wilderness condition intact, as it were.

So I want you to see, dear heart, it was a secluded, solitary place, where the saints were hid away and provided for during this period of time. The Lord was indeed faithful to His people during this period of time, [as] Jeremiah declared in Lamentations 3:23, "**GREAT IS THY FAITHFULNESS.**" So, my friend, we found that during this period of time, The Church was in a secluded position. Though there were over fifty million martyrs, still God, in His faithfulness, preserved a seed, a remnant. He had another "herb," as it were, that was underground during this period of time.

Now, in Revelation, in the third of the seven letters to the Churches, which also correspond with the parables and the seven periods of the Gospel day, in the third letter, to

Pergamos, Christ said in Revelation 2:13, ". . .I know . . . where Satan's seat is. . . ." referring to what 2 Thessalonians 2:3 calls the ". . . man of sin, the son of perdition; [And 2 Thessalonians 2:4 says,] . . . he . . . sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." This is a reference, a prophetic expression, referring to the office of the Popes of Rome. In Revelation 2:13, He says, "I know . . . where Satan's seat is. . . ," speaking of that one who ". . . sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (2 Thessalonians 2:4). He [the Pope] was actually sitting in what was denoted by Christ as "Satan's seat." And He said in Revelation, 2:16, "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." Sad to say, dear heart, [but] Papalism did not repent. As a matter of fact, they do not even teach Biblical repentance. So the Lord loosed the Sword (Revelation 2:16).

Now the question is, what is this Sword that He loosed? In Ephesians 6:17, it says, ". . . the **SWORD** of the Spirit which is **THE WORD OF GOD**. . . ." In Hebrews 4:12, it says, "For **THE WORD OF GOD** is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged **SWORD** . . . ." So, my friend, we find that system would not repent, would not take truth as God asked them to, and so, He turned the Sword of Truth loose. A man named Martin Luther, a humble man, was ascending the Scala Sancta, or the Sacred Stairs, in the Saint John the Lateran Church, in Rome, and a thunderbolt of truth struck his heart.

As all in Roman Catholicism are instructed to be, he was filled with works. Those supposedly sacred stairs are nothing but "an old wives' fable." Catholics contend that those were the stairs that were at the very Judgment Hall of Pilate, the same stairs that Jesus ascended. These stairs in Rome are supposedly the same stairs. In some mysterious manner they were transported from Jerusalem to Rome and are at the church of Saint John the Lateran. I say, my friend, that is nothing more than "an old wives' fable" that the Scriptures teach us to shun. But, in that era of darkness, an honest man was ascending those stairs in a mode of worship, and as he was on his knees, ascending those stairs, my friend, a thunderbolt of truth that he had read in a Bible that was chained to a

pulpit, struck his heart. It was Romans 1:17, ". . . The just shall live by faith." As he ascended those stairs in spiritual darkness, my friend, a ray of light, of truth, struck his soul! He took that truth in hand, and he embraced it, and he began to wield it as a Sword of Truth.

My friend, Romanism had been told, in Revelation 2:16, to "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." That Sword was His Word. That Sword was the Truth of God's Eternal Word. And, my friend, when they would not repent, Martin Luther, ascending those stairs in darkness, saw a break of light that shined through to his soul. And he embraced that truth, that "The just shall live by faith." He took that truth, and embraced it, and wielded it as a sword and, with it, did what Revelation 13:3 calls laying a ". . . deadly wound . . . [to] the beast." Revelation 13:14 said, ". . . the beast . . . [received] the wound by a sword. . . ." That Sword was truth, the Word of God. That Sword, my friend, was the message Martin Luther had revealed to him, that "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17), and not by works.

[Luther] took this Sword and he wielded it as a Sword of Truth, and the supremacy of Rome was broken. Their domination of the landscape, my friend, was ended. This period of the Gospel Day ends with AD 1530, which was when The Augsburg Confession was drawn up at The Diet of Augsburg, in Augsburg, Germany, and the first Protestant creed was officially formed. This great tree my friend, as great as it was, could not prevent the truth from rising from the ground where it had been cast. Yes, it also was an herb that had been under the ground, in the catacombs and caves. But in the fullness of time God allowed it to break through to the surface. He allowed it to come to light, to come to the surface again, to come out in a public way, to where truth could be seen and heard in a public manner one more time. It could come through, burst through, my friend, and see the light of day one more time, and, so the people of God could come out from the catacombs and caves. [They did] not have to dwell in darkness, to be in a Dark Age any more.

And so, my friend, the eclipse at noon was ending and

light was coming back. God was moving on the scene and bringing what we commonly refer to as "the Sixteenth Century Reformation." That herb, although it had been underground and out of sight, was just as the inscription on the walls of the catacombs say: "The Word of God is not bound." When God allowed a time and a space to repent, and they refused to repent, He turned the Sword of Truth loose and found a people that would embrace that truth, herald that truth, and wield it as a sword. And when they did, my friend, that era of darkness was ended. That time of Papal rule was over. My friend, from the ground where the truth had been cast, it sprang forth. It had been a Dark Age, a time when there had been an eclipse at noon, but the eclipse was ending and light was coming back. The Sixteenth Century Reformation, my friend, had come on the scene. So this period of time, from AD 530 to AD 1530, was the thousand-year Dark Age. But in AD 1530, at the Diet of Augsburg, The Augsburg Confession was drafted—the first creed of Protestantism—and, my friend, the dark night ended with that Reformation.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN - PART ONE

***Matthew 13:33 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.***

We have been studying these seven prophetic parables that were spoken by Jesus and recorded by Matthew in Chapter 13. We are down to that fourth parable given, the parable of the leaven. By the help of God, this is what we want to examine in Chapter Five.

We found in prior studies that these seven parables correspond with the seven periods that comprise this Gospel Day. This fourth parable coincides with the fourth period of this Christian Dispensation, or the period of time from AD 1530 to AD 1730.

Now we closed out the previous period of time with Christ uttering the words in Revelation 2:16, "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." And in this third letter, in the Revelation, we saw that one system dominated the landscape, and that system was Papalism. They did not heed, history tells us, Jesus' message, and did not repent, have never repented, and do not even teach the Biblical doctrine of repentance. So, true to His Word, He said He would fight against them with "the sword of my mouth." And in Revelation 13:3, it declares, "And I saw one of his heads [Speaking of the Papal beast.] as it were wounded to death. . . ." Revelation 13:3, as well as Revelation 13:12, refers to it as a "deadly wound." And Revelation 13:14 tells us ". . . the beast, which had the wound by a sword. . . ."

Now, what was this sword that dealt this wound to this system that held universal sway? In Ephesians 6:17, ". . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. . ." the sacred write tells us. In Hebrews 4:12, the divine penman said, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword. . . ."

So we find that Roman Catholicism held exclusive power from AD 530, when Boniface II was regarded as the first universal bishop, until AD 1530, when, my friend, the Sword of Truth was loosed in fulfillment of Jesus' Words, and The Augsburg Confession was drawn up, at The Diet of Augsburg, in Augsburg, Germany. Now, when this occurred, Rome's exclusive power was broken. What actually occurred to bring this about? What produced what we commonly know as The Sixteenth Century Reformation?

Let us begin to examine our text, where it gives us an insight into what occurred during this period of time, and address these questions. *Here in Matthew 13:33, it says, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."*

I want you to notice, first, that the sacred writer again employs the phrase, in Matthew 13:33, "Another parable spake He unto them . . . ." This lets us know that this is **NOT** the only parable but, rather, one in a series, and, that they are related and connected. And they must be viewed together to gain the proper understanding. *Jesus started out in Matthew 13:3, and said, "Behold [Or the Greek word is **idou**, which means **lo**, or **SEE**.], teaching us that, in the series, there are some vital truths that He wants us to see. And then, in the second, third, and fourth, parables, in Matthew 13:24, 13:31, and 13:33, the writer pens, "**ANOTHER PARABLE.**"* He uses this common phrase in each of these parables to convey to us, not to isolate these texts one from the other, but to view them together, because they portray a progression or a sequence.

Next, He said in Matthew 13:33, ". . . The kingdom of heaven. . . ." Or, we could say, as in Luke's rendering in Luke 13:20, ". . . the kingdom of God." Here, my friend, we find that Luke's rendering is a parallel text to this text [in Matthew]. And, my friend, in his account, he refers to it as "The Kingdom of God." And, so we can say the Kingdom of Heaven or the Kingdom of God, or, as well, The Church of God, as they are interchangeable and synonymous terms.

Again, Jesus says here ". . . The kingdom of heaven is like. . ." (Matthew 13:33). The word "like" is from the root word in the Greek, **homou**, which means, "at the same place or

time." So when He says, here, that "The Kingdom of Heaven is like," what He is actually saying, my friend, what these phrases teach us, is that what follows in this lesson is a picture of the prevailing conditions that the Church, or the Saints, were facing. The conditions that were taking place at the same time as the time period that is under consideration. And they are represented by the figure employed in the particular parable.

Now, let us begin to examine this prophetic parable. Matthew 13:33, let us read it again, ". . . The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened." Now, immediately upon reading this text, the portion that leaps out and commands our attention is where He said, ". . . The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven. . . ." This particular thought seems to leap out and seize our attention.

But, let us not be diverted by one word in this text initially, but let us examine this closely. The leaven was not what appeared, or occurred, first, or initially. Let us look at this passage again, ". . . The kingdom of heaven [The Kingdom of God, or the Church of God] is like [Or, in other words, this was the predominant condition facing the Church at this period and time.] unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in **THREE MEASURES OF MEAL. . . .**" Now, why is that? What is the importance of this?

Proverbs 30:5 teaches us that, "Every word of God is pure. . . ." This tells us that there is divine significance and import behind every word incorporated in the Sacred Scriptures. So, when He introduces us to this "three measures of meal," what is the importance of it? And the meal had to preexist the leaven, I repeat, or there would not have been anything to add, or hide, the leaven into. So, the first thing that appeared on the scene, my friend, historically, was the "three measures of meal." What is it?

Well, remember the previous period, AD 530 to AD 1530, my friend, that during that period of time, the Bibles were chained to the pulpits, and it was an **AGE OF FAMINE**. In the prophecy of Amos, 8:11, He said, ". . . I will send a famine in the land, not a **FAMINE** of **BREAD**, nor a **THIRST** for **WATER**, but of **HEARING THE WORDS OF THE LORD. . . .**" The appearance of this meal, in Matthew 13:33, is letting us know that the time of famine was over. During the Dark Ages there was such a famine of truth that, my friend, what was meted out was at an exorbitant starvation rate.

In Revelation 6:6 (I must remind you that this is a symbolic book, according to Revelation 1:1), it says, ". . . A measure of wheat for a penny. . . ." The penny, or the **denarius**, actually, was the ordinary wage of a day laborer. The measure, or the **chenix**, of wheat was the usual daily allowance

of food for a single man. According to the rate given, it would require a day's labor to supply daily food sufficient for one man, which was a price about twenty times greater than the normal rate. So it was indeed a time when a man, my friend, could not provide for his family. This was a symbolic expression, my friend, of **A FAMINE OF TRUTH**, to where it could not be put out in sufficient quantity to feed the masses. It was a time of famine. But the good news of our text is that this famine was over. The Dark Ages had ended, and there shall never be another period of time like that time.

Now what does this "three measures of meal" that Jesus spoke of represent? Well, what was the famine of? What was the nature of the famine? In Amos 8:11, we read that it was ". . . of hearing the words of the Lord. . . ." Since the famine was a famine of the **WORDS OF THE LORD**, then the solution, or what Matthew 13:33 calls "the meal," must be **THE WORD OF GOD**.

Let us substantiate this thought. Why does our text employ "three measures of meal," here in Matthew 13:33? Why not one, two, or four? Well, there is a significance here. What is that significance? In the Hebrew culture, three measures of meal was the average normal amount a family needed to make bread. Three measures of meal equals an *ephah*, and this was the ordinary quantity for baking. We see this substantiated in Genesis 18:6; when the Lord and the angels appeared unto Abraham, he commanded, ". . . Make cakes. . . ." One rendering says "loaves," commonly referring to bread. So this "three measures" was what provided normal sustenance for a family. It was the amount of bread that sustained life for a household.

Now, what does this represent? Well, Jesus taught us, in John 6:35, ". . . I am the bread of life. . . ." In John 6:51, He said, "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever. . . ." Now, how do we eat of this bread? He told us, in John 6:35, that it is "the bread of life. . . ." It is the bread that produces and sustains life. Well, what is it, and how did they, and how do we, partake of it? In John 6:63, Jesus said, ". . . the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." So, this bread is the Word.

My friend, what is the lesson of our text? Jesus gave Rome a message, in Revelation 2:16, to "Repent. . . .", so He turned truth loose. As the song writer, Julia Ward Howe, declared in the song, *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, verse one, ". . . He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword; His **TRUTH** is marching on."

In Germany, along with many other places, the yoke of Rome and Babel's lords, my friend, was becoming very galling. The trust was being revealed to the hearts of men who were dissatisfied with the Roman night. Men such as Martin Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Menno Simons, and others, of whom Martin Luther was perhaps the most understanding, and ended the time of famine. That time we know as this era commenced, it was a move of God.

My friend, people had been in in a starving condition. Truth was not heralded in a public manner. People were not privileged to hear the Word of God preached. It was going out at a starvation rate, publicly, and the saints were in the catacombs and caves. But, thank God, God loosed the Sword of Truth, and Jesus, one more time, was able to feed the saints with the message



that could be declared in a public manner. One more time, people were able to take hold of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, at least that minute portion that was revealed in that era. But, my friend, it was enough that it brought sustenance. It brought life. My friend, the "three measures of meal" that our text speaks of (Matthew 13:33), was the average quantity needed to bake bread for a household, to sustain the life of a household, so we see that life was being sustained in this period of time.

Prior to when this Sword was loosed, darkness filled the hearts of the masses so much so that, when Rome decided to raise funds to build what is now St. Peter's Basilica, they sent men such as John Tetzel into Germany. One of the practices he engaged in was that of collecting money from people in exchange for freeing their loved ones from purgatory. It is said that he carried a picture of the devil tormenting souls in purgatory, and that he frequently repeated the words inscribed on a money box which he carried, which were, "As the money in you pop, the souls from purgatory hop."

Another practice he engaged in was the selling of indulgences. J. H. Merle D'aubigne', in his *History of the Reformation*, Book three, chapter one, says, "Tetzel made this claim: 'Indulgences are the most precious and the most noble of God's gifts. There is no sin so great that an indulgence cannot remit. Only let him pay well, and all will be forgiven him. Come, and I will give you letters, all properly sealed, by which even the sins which you **INTEND** to commit may be pardoned. I would not change my privilege for those of St. Peter in Heaven, for I have saved more souls by my indulgences than the Apostle by his sermons.'"

The Lord had already been dealing with Martin Luther when he was in Rome, in AD 1510, and was ascending the Scala Sancta, and the truth struck his soul, of Romans 1:17, ". . . The just shall live by faith." God had already been dealing with him. And, my friend, when Tetzel came to his (Martin Luther's) own area, shamelessly touting these indulgences, Luther drew up his famous Ninety-five Theses against those indulgences and nailed them to the door of the church in Wittenburg, Germany. And thus the Reformation began, and the "beast" that Revelation 13:14 speaks of received a ". . . wound by a sword. . . ." The famine was over, and once again there could be "measures of meal" for all who desired to have the truth.

I say, dear heart, it was indeed a dark night when Tetzel came on the scene and made such claims, and said such shameless words as he would say, and made people feel that they could buy their way out of purgatory, that they could buy their way into forgiveness, not only of present sins, but of sins that were yet to be committed. My friend, this rankled and stirred the soul of Martin Luther, and he arose and took that Sword of Truth and broke through that dark veil of Romanism. And, my friend, because of that, the famine was ended and there were "three measures of meal." There was no longer a starvation rate. It was no longer, "A measure of wheat for a penny" (Revelation 6:6—a man's entire day's wages to buy just enough to sustain his own life that day—but, by friend, there were three measures. There was enough to sustain a family. There was enough to bring life and to sustain life. My friend, truth that had been cast to the ground was springing up and going forth, again, through this period of time, this Reformation. Truth was going forth in a great and marvelous way.

I trust you can see, dear heart, that the Reformation of the sixteenth century was, indeed, a move of God. It was a move of God, my friend, that ended a Dark Age. It was an end that brought partial light. It was a day that the Scripture refers to as "the cloudy day" (Ezekiel 34:12). My friend, light was starting to break through. Understanding was starting to be given. Men in different places were starting to see these precious truths, to embrace them, to take the Sword of Truth in hand and rise up against the dark night and the Papal authority, and to herald these truths. And, once again, people could take hold of truth, take hold of the Word of God, and have understanding, and be able to feed their souls and the souls of their loved ones. And, my friend, there was no longer that famine in the land. There was no longer that thirst for hearing the Word of God. These men publicly heralded these truths, at the peril of their lives, to the place that truth could go forth and break loose the bonds that held people's souls in captivity. It could break through the false teachings that shrouded men's minds and made them fear the system of Romanism to where they were fearful to do anything contrary to what they were told. Thank God, light came on the scene where they could hear and see the light of the Gospel, embrace it in their hearts, put it on in their lives, and be able to experience a work of faith in their hearts and lives. They did not have to live by works, but they could live in a manner that was pleasing to God.

I trust that we can see that this Sixteenth Century Reformation was a work of God. It had "three measures of meal." It brought the Bread of Life, the Word of God, Jesus Christ, back to the people. It brought it in such a way that their souls could be fed, and there could be Spiritual life, my friend, as a public message being declared one more time.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN - PART TWO

**Matthew 13:33 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.**

We have been studying the seven prophetic parables of Christ which are housed here in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13. In Part One we began to consider the fourth of these parables, the parable of the leaven, and, by the help of the Holy Spirit of God, we want to examine this text a little further.

First, I might make mention that it is not our intention to be offensive as we go through this course of study. But, as the Apostle Paul penned in Philippians 1:17, "I am set for the defense of the gospel." My friend, at times truth becomes very plain and explicit. And it becomes very explicit. My friend, through the truth we hear, things that may not be what we commonly think. But as Ephesians 6:12 declares, ". . . we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against ruler of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." It is our desire to Biblically expose those systems where spiritual wickedness is working, that dear hearts will not be duped and deceived by their teachings or by their spirits.

To quickly review what we have learned concerning this parable, it begins in verse 33, with the word *another*. In Matthew 13:33 it says, "Another parable spake he unto them." Let me remind you that this parable is one in a series, or in a sequence. It should not be isolated, but rather, be considered as part of a whole, because, my friend, the truth that is being portrayed in these seven parables are progressive truths. They are truths in a sequence, and to properly understand them, and to do as 2 Timothy 2:15 declares, "rightly **DIVIDING** the word of truth," we must view these parables together.

Also, we must be reminded that the nature of the language of our text is, as Matthew 13:33 denotes, "a parable." This

word comes from the Greek word **parabole**, which means "a placing beside," or **LEARNING** by association. So, as we read in this lesson concerning "a woman," "leaven," or "meal," we are not literally dealing with these items. They are employed as word vehicles to convey a Scriptural truth.

Jesus says, in Matthew 13:33, ". . . The kingdom of heaven. . ." but Luke, in his account in Luke 13:20, records it as, "the kingdom of God." So we found that they are speaking of one and the self-same entity. Therefore, the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Heaven, and the Church of God, are all representing the same thing. When He says, "The kingdom of heaven is **LIKE**. . . ," this word *like* in the original Greek means, "at the same place or time." So the real lesson is that, whatever figure He is employing in that particular parable, it portrays the conditions which were prevailing at that time and which the Church was facing.

Now, this fourth parable corresponds to the fourth period of the Gospel Day, that era of time known as the Lutheran Era, the time period from AD 1530 to AD 1730. We found that Jesus warned Romanism to "Repent" in Revelation 2:16. In other words, the word *repent* means, "Stop! Change your direction!" Change your course, go another direction. He said, "Repent; or else . . ." (Revelation 2:16). There were no alternatives—there were no substitutes. He did not teach them as the system of Catholicism does yet today, to do penance. He did not bring up the thought of penance, He did not ask about penance, or bring up the thought of penance. But rather He said to "repent," which is a totally different term and teaching than the doctrine of penance. He said, "Repent; or else," letting them know that there were no alternatives and there were no substitutions.

He said, Revelation 2:16, "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." We find that that Sword is the Word of God. He turned the Word of God loose. But, notice, He said, "I will come." When truth is being heralded, it is not a man speaking, but God. It is Jesus Christ, my friend, on the scene. And so, He told them, "I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth." History tells us

they did not repent, my friend. So He turned the Sword of Truth loose, and the Sixteenth Century Reformation began.

Certainly the Reformation was, indeed, God sent. Men had been groping in darkness for a thousand-year period of time. The masses had been under Rome's spell, trusting in their works for hope of eternal salvation. But, in the midst of this gross darkness, God shed a light. He turned a precious truth loose. That truth was the truth of Romans 1:17, ". . . **THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.**" In the book, *The Christian Church: its Rise and Progress*, written by H. M. Riggle, page 194 says, "About the same time Luther was preaching the truth revealed to him. Menno Simons also came out and began to preach salvation from sin. About this time Zwingli began to preach the truth of salvation from sin throughout Switzerland. Thus the reformation rapidly spread in every direction. Among the noted reformers who followed Luther may be named John Calvin. Though he held some doctrines which were not Scriptural, yet he effected a great work and led thousands out of darkness."

So, my friend, the reformation was, indeed, a great move of God. It was a move where God revealed precious truths and turned the Sword of Truth loose. But, unfortunately, the purity of this move was short-lived. It started as a divine work, but very shortly, something occurred. Let us examine our text, as it portrays to us what occurred.

Here in Matthew 13:33, Jesus says, "The kingdom of heaven [The Kingdom of God, or the Church of God] is like [here is the prevailing condition that was taking place at this time] unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal . . . ."

Now, we found that the first thing that came on the scene in the sixteenth century reformation, the very initial thing that occurred, was that God provided "three measures of meal." My friend, this is portraying the end of the time of famine, that famine of the Word of the Lord (Amos 8:11). And, so this meal represents "the Word of the Lord" once more being available to feed the souls of men.

But, notice that something occurred, something happened. It says in Matthew 13:33, "The kingdom of God is like unto **LEAVEN**, which a woman took, and hid . . . ." Now, there are

several truths that we need to identify here. First of all, we must see that the meal {or the message, the truth} that they had in this era, was initially pure. But this parable teaches us that, "The kingdom of heaven is like. . . ." In other words, here is the prevailing condition that the people of God had to face in this age. What was it? It was "leaven." Now, what does this represent? What does this word "leaven" actually mean?" The Greek word here (the language of the New Testament being Greek) is the word **zume**, which was a sour dough in a high state of fermentation. The Latin word is **fermentum**, which literally means, "corruption." Rabbinical writers regularly used "leaven" as a symbol of evil. Even the ancient Plutarch penned, "The leaven itself is born from corruption and corrupts the mass with which it is mixed." In bread making, the leaven, a piece of dough, was retained from a former baking which had then fermented, and was either dissolved in water in the kneading trough, before the flour was added, or it was hid in the flour and kneaded along with it.

It was the second custom, the custom where leaven was hid in the flour and kneaded along with it, that Jesus refers to in our lesson. So when He says, ". . . The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven. . . ," it symbolizes corruption. It symbolizes something that is impure.

In the Old Testament dispensation, [the use of] leaven was forbidden during the seven days of the Passover observance, and also at all offerings to the Lord by fire. In Deuteronomy 16:3, it says, "Thou shalt eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat no leavened bread with it; seven days shalt thou eat unleavened bread. . . ." Leviticus 2:11 declares, "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."

Why was this so important? What was this a type of? Certainly all of the occurrences that transpired in the Old Testament, Hebrews 10:1 declares, were types. They were shadows of realities that were to come. And, my friend, there was a divine reason why the leaven was not to be in these sacred offerings. What is it a type of? Think with me. If the

"meal" in Matthew 13:33 represents the Word, the leaven represents corruption, then what type of corruption? It must represent corrupt representation of the Word, or corrupt or false doctrine.

Look how Jesus employs the term in another passage. Matthew 16:6 says, "Then Jesus said unto them, Take heed and beware of the **LEAVEN** of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees." And if you read the entire account, you will find that the apostles initially thought that He was speaking literally, that He was referring to the fact that they had failed to bring bread with them. And I say, my friend, we must ever guard ourselves, when we read Jesus' words, against having our minds run off to literalism, against giving a literal understanding to the words that are being spoken. In the above instance, Jesus began to rebuke the disciples. He said, in so many words, "Did we not have a multitude that needed to be fed? There were five thousand, and yet there was bread left over." And he began to bring to their minds that miraculous event that had occurred. It goes on to say in Matthew 16:12, "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." Leaven typifies **CORRUPT**, or **FALSE, DOCTRINE**.

Now, what is the lesson in our text? This move in the sixteenth century started out as a move of God. It certainly was Christ wielding the Sword of Truth and using human instrumentality to do so. My friend, it started out as a move of God. But something happened. It started out, as Matthew 13:33 declares, as "meal," the unadulterated, pure Word of God that brought and sustained life. These reformers started out with a message of truth. They took what Revelation 2:12 said was, ". . . the sword of my mouth," and laid what Revelation 13:3 calls a ". . . deadly wound. . ." to the Papal beast.

But something occurred; something else happened. Revelation 13:3 calls a ". . . deadly wound was healed. . ." Now, how did this occur? Revelation 13:14 says that they turned around and made ". . . an image to the beast. . ." Now, how did they do that? What is an **IMAGE**, we must ask. Well, the Greek word here is **eikon**, and Thayers *Greek-English Lexicon* tells us, "It is an image, figure, or likeness."

In other words, my friend, the very system that they had protested against, they turned around and they became just like it. They began to inject **LEAVEN**, or false teachings, into the meal, the Word of God. They began to substitute human organizations for divine guidance. They began to form sects and separate over different stances on doctrinal positions. They began to separate one move of the Reformation from the other. They became divisive, carnal, and intolerant. They became a **MIRRO IMAGE**, if you please, of the very system they had started protesting about. George P. Fisher, in his *History of the Christian Church*, page 302, speaking of the most noted reformer, Luther, said, "The vehemence of the reformer's tongue often moved him to use the **ROUGHEST STYLE** of vituperation. There was a plebeian rudeness which, when he was goaded by opposition, found vent in abusive, and even scurrilous, language."

There was a division between Luther and Zwingli of Switzerland. And in the *History of the Christian Church*, on page 310, Fisher tells us, "The efforts of the disinterested men to heal the schism, which threatened to inflict great disasters on the Protestant cause, proved unavailing. The leaders of both parties met at Marburg in AD 1529, and they were not able, either at their private conference or at the public assembly, to come to agreement. Zwingli, with tears in his eyes, offered the handoff fraternal friendship to Luther, but this Saxon reformer **REFUSED** to take it, since he could not join in Christian fellowship."

On page 313, Fisher says, "The cause of reform was hindered, not so much by the number of its enemies, as by the discord of its friends. The Protestant Party was divided into the Calvinists, and the Lutherans, and the Unitarians."

Our lesson text tells us, in Matthew 13:33, ". . . The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman **TOOK**. . . ." I want you to see that it was not given. **TRUTH** was given to them. The **"MEAL"** was given to them. The **LEAVEN** was **NOT** given. It was not given to them, as divine truth was, but they usurped their position and, my friend, took hold of something that was not rightly to be interjected [into the Word]. They started formulating their own teachings and their own



doctrines, **CONTRARY** to God's eternal Word. And when they began formulating those creeds and those doctrines that the **ENEMY** had inspired. They were doctrines that other **SPIRITS** had produced.

If you will look in the Apostle Paul's writings to Timothy, in 1 Timothy 4:1, you will see, there, where it very clearly tells us, "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.

This teaches that behind every doctrine, my friend, there is a spirit working. And, my friend, as these spirits began to work on these men, they became divisive, they became carnal, they became sectarian, they refused to have fellowship one with another. My friend, it was because another spirit had entered in. They began to embrace those doctrines that were not of Divine origin, those that embrace those doctrines that were not of Divine origin, those that they **TOOK**, my friend, that were not given to them, and that caused them to go different ways, have different thoughts, have different thinking, my friend, and it brought division. They ended up dividing one from another.

God was in the Reformation. He was the One who provided what Matthew 13:33 tells us was the "meal." He provided the meal divinely, just as He did for the woman in 1 Kings, Chapter 17. On that occasion there was a famine in the land, which again, is a type of what occurred here. In 1 Kings 17:14, it says, "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth."

Here, because this woman had stepped out by faith and obeyed God's eternal Word, meal was provided. So, it was in the Reformation. They stepped out by faith with what could have meant [physical] death, just as it could have meant death to this woman to feed the prophet first. But, my friend, she stepped out by faith and obeyed. So it was in the Reformation. They stepped out in the face of death, by faith, and took hold of God's Word and performed it, and God provided them meal. But, the reformers, sad to say, got out of the divine order, and they built an **IMAGE**. They started a religious system known

as Protestantism.

Our text says, in Matthew 13:33, that this leaven was hid. In other words, it was not initially apparent. It could not be easily distinguished when mixed with the meal. At first it could not be observed, my friend. But, nonetheless, it had its effect. Matthew 13:33 says, ". . . the whole was leavened." And my friend, the Apostle Paul lets us know that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump (1 Corinthians 5:6). There is no room for a **LITTLE FALSE DOCTRINE** or a **LITTLE ERROR**. My friend, a little leaven, leavens the whole lump. And here in Matthew 13:33 it says, ". . . the whole was leavened." It affected the entire period of time.

Yes, God was in the Reformation, but man formed the religious system known as Protestantism with their leaven. This system is the image that Revelation 13:14 speaks of. This is why the Prophet Ezekiel referred to the era of Protestantism, in Ezekiel 34:12, as ". . . the cloudy . . . day." It was an era of mixture of truth and error, light and darkness, or of meal and leaven, as our text declares. Indeed, it was a cloudy day, and we will look further into it in our next lesson.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### *THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN - PART THREE*

*Matthew 13:33 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.*

As we look into this Scripture text, we once again see before us the parable of the leaven. This parable is the fourth in a series of seven incorporated here in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13. These parables were employed, by Jesus, as vehicles to take us through the entirety of this Christian Dispensation. This Christian Dispensation, also known as The Gospel days. . . ." This teaches us that this Christian Dispensation is composed of seven distinct time periods. And each one of these parables in Matthew, Chapter 13, corresponds to one of these time periods.

This text before us, here in Matthew 13:33, the parable of the leaven, is the fourth parable, and as such, represents the fourth period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time from AD 1530 to AD 1730, the period of time known as the Lutheran Era.

Now, we have found that when Jesus employs the phrase, here in Matthew 13:33, ". . . The kingdom of heaven is like. . . ." He is actually saying that here is the predominant condition that The Church was facing during this period of time.

And we found that the day of famine that Amos prophesied of (Amos 8:11) had ended, and there was, once more, what Jesus denoted in Matthew 13:33, as "meal," that which was used to make bread, which represented the Word of God. This is showing us that God, in His faithfulness, had sent His Word, and a reformation had begun—one we commonly refer to as The Sixteenth Century Reformation. But, unfortunately, The Sixteenth Century Reformation did not stay pure for long.

As we read our text, here in Matthew 13:33, it tells us that leaven, or false doctrine, was introduced, and the outgrowth of that was that another **MAN MADE** religious system

arose. A system known as **PROTESTANTISM**, that, according to the Scriptures, is just as **BEASTLY AND UNGODLY** as the first system.

Now, as we begin to examine this passage of Scripture text, there is a figure that Jesus introduces us to, my friend, that is central to the occurrence of this text. He declares, ". . . The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a **WOMAN** took, and hid in three measures of meal. . . ." This "meal," we found, is an expression of the Word of God, and it was wholesome and pure until the introduction of leaven into it, or of false doctrine. But notice, for this falsity to be injected, required human instrumentality.

False doctrine is a product of spirits. In 1 Timothy 4:1, it says, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in latter times **SOME** [Some what? **PEOPLE** is what He was referring to. *Moffat* says, in his rendering of 1 Timothy 4:1 '...certain **PEOPLE** ...' So here it says some, or certain people} shall depart from the faith, [Why?] giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines, but they use people to do so. These spirits do not spread and advocate religious teachings that are contrary to God's Spirit. But, I want you to see that, not only do these sports produce these doctrines, but they use people to do so. These spirits do not inhabit the atmosphere, but dwell in people, in order to spread and advocate religious teachings that are false and unsound. Behind every false doctrine is a spirit that originates it. These spirits cannot work independently. They get hold of people, and that is what produces systems. These spirits work through people.

When John came off of the Isle of Patmos, and penned those books that are chronologically the last books of the Bible - 1,2, and 3 John - he said in 1 John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: [Why, my friend, should we do that?] because many **FALSE PROPHETS** are [present tense.] gone out into the world." Note, I want you to notice that this verse starts with "spirits," but ends up with "many false prophets"; people, my friend. These spirits took on bodies, and as such, they began to propagate false teachings. I want you to see that this is what

we find in our text.

Jesus introduces us, here in Matthew 13:33, to "a woman" and He lets us know that the "leaven" was injected and introduced into the "meal" by this symbolic "woman," representing humanism, or human instrumentality. It was not just something that was done in some mystical realm, but it was actually done through flesh and blood, through human instrumentality.

Now the question immediately arises, "Who is this 'woman'?" This is where we must do as Isaiah 28:13 admonishes and lay "precept upon precept: and "line upon line." This, my friend, is as "precept upon precept" and "line upon line." This, my friend, is as the prophet declared in Isaiah 34:16, when he told us, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none of the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate . . . ." This is where we must mate up the Scriptures. For every Scripture that is dark or vague, in God's eternal Word, there is another Scripture that is dark or vague, in God's eternal Word, there is another Scripture that the Spirit of God will mate up with it, my friend, that will shed light on it.

Now, who is this "woman" in this fourth parable of the seven? Well, my friend, if we go to Revelation 2:18-29, we will find the fourth of the seven letters that are incorporated in Revelation, Chapters 2 and 3. These seven letters parallel the seven parables in Matthew's Gospel, and represent, in a corresponding manner, the same time periods. My friend, in the fourth of the seven letters, we are again introduced to a "woman." Revelation 2:20 says, "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."

Now we must be reminded that the Book of Revelation is a **symbolic book**, and this **IS NOT** the literal Jezebel. When this letter was penned by John in AD 96, Jezebel had been dead for many centuries. This is a figurative expression, something of which she is used as a symbol.

Now remember, our text tells us, in Matthew 13:33, that this "woman" deals in leaven, and we know that leaven is false doctrine. Revelation 2:20 says, ". . . Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess. . . ." So, my friend, it is referring to Jezebel as a prophetess, one who deals in religious teaching and doctrine.

Now, much of the Revelation is drawn from things that are familiar to Hebrew customs and Hebrew culture, and so it is, here in this text. First of all, we need to understand that this verse, Revelation 2:20, is housed within the letter to the Thyatira congregation. In Revelation 2:18, He declares, "And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write. . . ."

Now, there is a significance in every Scripture, and there is a significance as to why Jezebel was portrayed in this particular passage. The word "Jezebel," here in Revelation 2:20, mean? "Jezebel" literally means, "unhusbanded." Historically, Jezebel was a Phoenician princess who became the Canaanite wife of Israel's King Ahab. Her royal family, of Tyre, was remarkable at that time for its religious fanaticism and its strong temper. Jezebel had a strong, domineering character and was self-willed and forceful. Here we have our dominating female, Jezebel.

Now, spiritually, who is to be the husband? In the prophecy of Isaiah 54:5, he declares, "For thy **maker** is thine **husband**; [Who is that? Read on.] the Lord of hosts is his name; [Well, who is the Lord of hosts? Read on.] and thy **redeemer** the Holy One of Israel. In 2 Corinthians 11:2, the Apostle Paul says,, speaking to The Church, you as a chaste virgin to Christ." **Christ** is the **husband**, and **The Church** is the **Bride**. This is the theme throughout the Scriptures. And the husband is to be the head of the woman. In 1 Corinthians 11:3, the Apostle pens, ". . . the head of the woman is the man. . . ." Just as the husband is the head of the woman, Christ is the Head of the Church. Colossians 1:18 says, "And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church. . . ." But, in this age, the Lutheran Age, they were, as Revelation 2:20 describes, as Jezebel. They refused to be husbanded. They refused to allow Him to be the head, my friend, and developed systems with human heads.

The Revelator caught another glimpse of Protestantism, in Revelation 9:7, where he says, again, using figurative expressions, "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto the battle; [And certainly that is exactly what occurred in this era of time. My friend, the reformers fought one against another. They became carnal and hateful. They became intolerant, and they became bitter. My friend, they battled one against another.] and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, [letting us know that they assumed the position of the head, assumed the position of reigning. They assumed the headship and took the reins of control] and their faces were as the faces of men."

That is exactly who were the heads of these organizations in this era—men. Not Jesus Christ, my friend, but men. And these men were just like Jezebel of old. You can read about her in 1 King. You can read that she was strong and had a domineering character. She was self-willed, and forceful, and had a great temper. We find that same thing occurred with these men that started out as reformers. God gave them "three measures of meal." He gave them the unadulterated Word of God. But they took leaven—it was not given to them—they took hold of thoughts and teachings that other spirits brought to them, and they embraced those teachings. Their spirits changed, and as their spirits changed, they became dominated by spirits. They became carnal, and started battling one with the other, and as they battled one with the other, they formed their own sects and put their own human heads over them. They showed a strong temper with those who disagreed with them, even as Luther did with Zwingli and others. And with their domineering characters, their self-will, and their dominant personalities, they started forming their own systems.

Let us consider Jezebel of old. She was the daughter of Ethbaal, King of Tyre. And when she came from Tyre [to Israel], she brought her own gods. She was a worshipper of Baal. In 1 Kings 16:31, the sacred writer says, speaking of Ahab, ". . . he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Zidonians, [Note: 'Tyre [was] the **best-known** and **most famous** of the ancient cities of Phoenicia, located on the East coast of the Mediterranean Sea, not far from the territory

of Israel, about twenty miles south of Zidon. Zidon was the most **influential** ancient city of Phoenicia, and for its importance through long centuries gave the name "Zidonians" to all Phoenicians.' *Funk and Wagnalls New Standard Bible Dictionary.*] and went and served Baal and worshipped him."

Now, what was Baal? Second Kings 10:27 says, "And they brake down the **image** of Baal. . . ." Baal was an image. What is the picture before us? Here is a dominating female, who caused Israel, God's people, to worship an **image**, a false system of worship, for an entire period of Israelite history. Throughout this period of Israelite history, she more or less dominated their religious practice. She refused to give the true God His rightful place, and through her dominating character and self-will, she caused Israel to worship an **image**.

What is the lesson? Those who had been reformers in the sixteenth century became self-willed, and they refused to allow Christ to be the Husband and the Head. And **they** created an **image**. In Revelation 13:14 it says, "And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an **image** to the beast. . . ." Here it speaks of an **image** to the beast. My friend, it was a false system of worship, a system that dominated an entire era of time.

Remember that our text, in Matthew 13:33, says that this "woman," or "Jezebel," dealt in "leaven," or as Jesus said in Revelation 2:20, she was "to teach, and to seduce." To **seduce** them, in other words, to engage in beliefs and worship of a system that was just as human, just as man-made, as Romanism was. This false prophetess was to dominate the people of God through the **entire period** of time known as the Protestant Era.

In Revelation 13:11, to make it a little clearer, the Revelator says, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth. . . ." Now what is this **earth**? In 2 Corinthians 4:7, the Apostle pens, "But we have this treasure in **earthen** vessels. . . ." In 2 Corinthians 5:1, "For we know that if our **earthly house** of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the



heavens." So, **earth** represents the human or mortal part of man.

This beast, or this image that Revelation 13:14 refers to, was a system that came up out of the earth, or out of the minds of men. It was the Protestant system of religion that came out of the minds of men that were self-willed, and had dominant personalities, in the sixteenth century.

I trust we can see, my friend, that this woman, Jezebel, stands as a symbol of a false system of worship. A system that wants to dominate, by its will and teachings and doctrines, rather than to let Christ assume His rightful and true position. Certainly, this is exactly what occurred during this period of time, from AD 1530 to AD 1730.

My friend, these men that had started out as reformers became lifted up, and another spirit took hold of them. They introduced "leaven" into the "meal," and because of that, they began to form systems that were contrary to God's eternal Word, systems that made an image to the beast. That very thing they had originally protested against, they turned around and made an image, or a likeness, of. During that period of time, God's people were, just as they were in the literal Jezebel's time, subject to having to worship that image, rather than being able to worship the true God in the manner that God ordained. Matthew 13:33 tells us that "the whole was leavened," which means that the entirety of this time period was dominated by this system that was teaching things that were not God-ordained, things that were contrary to God's eternal Word.

This brought religious confusion over the landscape, because one reformer would teach one thing, and another would teach another thing. It brought confusion, and the Bible plainly tells us, in a very clear manner, in 1 Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion. . . ." So, as such He was not the Author of confusion, a system dominated by man, and when we begin to study a little more into this image, we will find more and more evidence that it is not a Christian system. It is just as beastly and ungodly as the first beast.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN - PART FOUR

**Matthew 13:33 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.**

In looking into this text of Scripture, we see before us the parable of the leaven. This parable is the fourth in a series of seven which is housed in Matthew, Chapter 13. These parables were employed by Jesus as vehicles to take us down through the seven distinct periods which compose this Gospel Day or Christian Dispensation.

This fourth parable, which we hope to conclude our study of today, corresponds with the fourth period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time, which was known as the Lutheran Era, from AD 1530 to AD 1730. By the help of God, we want to look a little more closely at what actually transpired during this period of time.

Quickly, by way of review, our text commences with the term "**another.**" He says, my friend, the sacred writer pens, in Matthew 13:33, "**Another** parable spake he unto them. . . ," commencing this text, my friend, with term "another." Which is reminding us that this parable is not isolated, and to properly understand it we must view it in connection with the other parables given. As they are all parts of one discourse, all parts of a whole.

Next, the penman says, here in Matthew 13:33, "**Another parable** spake he unto them. . . ." This is reiterating the truth that the nature of the language of our text is not literal. These parables are not to be taken at face value, but they are representative. My friend, literal realities are used to convey spiritual truths.

Then, the parable proper begins here in Matthew 13:33, with the words, ". . .The **Kingdom of Heaven is like.** . . ."Which, in reality, is saying that this is the prevailing condition that The **Kingdom of Heaven is like.** . . ." Which in reality is saying that this is the prevailing condition that

The Church faced during this period of time.

Now, we found that this era started with a great reformation, Truth was loosed, and a public message went forth. And the dark night of Papalism was broken. The great famine of the Word of God that had taken place, As Amos prophesied (Amos 8:11), was ended, and there was now, as our text denotes, here in Matthew 13:33, ". . . **three measures of meal. . . .**"

But unfortunately, this move which started as a move of God, was short lived, and something else occurred. Here in Matthew 13:33, it goes on to say, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto **leaven**, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal. . . ." First Corinthians 5:6 declares, "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" What began as a glorious reformation, a great move of God, became a corrupt, unscriptural, **man-made** system.

Here in this fourth parable, in Matthew 13:33, He introduces us to "**a woman**." To understand the identify of this "woman," we must look at the fourth of the seven letters in the Revelation, that speaks of this same time period. In Revelation 2:20, it identifies this "woman" that Jesus speaks of in Matthew's Gospel, as "that woman Jezebel."

Now, what is this a figure of? What did Jezebel introduce to the people of God? In 1 Kings 16:31, it says ". . . that he [referring to King Ahab] took to wife Jezebel . . . and served Baal, and they brake down the **image** of Baal." Baal was an image. Here, the literal Jezebel of old, caused Israel who were God's people in that era, to worship an image, which was a false system of worship. For an entire period of Israelite history she dominated their religious practice. She refused to give the true God, and true worship, its rightful place.

Now, what is the lesson? My friend, those who had been reformers became those who introduced leaven, or corruption, and caused God's people to worship an **image** for an entire period of time. They refused to allow God's people to worship otherwise.

Let us examine this more closely. Our text, in Matthew 13:33, says, "The kingdom of heaven [Or, as we found, the Kingdom of God, or the Church of God; they are interchangeable

and synonymous terms.] is like [Meaning that this was what transpired at the same place and time; this was the prevailing, predominant condition of the time.] unto **leaven**, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened."

Now, there are several truths that are portrayed here. First and foremost, it started out good and pure. It started, my friend, with "three measures of meal" (Matthew 13:33). God was, indeed, in the Reformation. It was He who, my friend, spoke and said that He would turn the sword of truth loose, and such He did so through the great reformers, heralding a message of justification by faith as opposed to works and to resting and trusting in a religious system (Romans 1:17). And so, my friend the "three measures of meal," the true and living Bread, was once again restored as a public message, and the famine in the land (the famine, not of bread and water, but of the Word of the Lord that Amos prophesied about, [Amos 8:11]) had ended. The dark night of Papalism was broken. And it started out good and pure with "three **measures** of meal." There was (past tense) a time, my friend, when it was true and not corrupt. But something happened.

The second thing that Matthew 13:33 portrays to us is that the introduction of the "leaven" was not God's design. It says, "**A woman**" sowed the "leaven." It says, my friend, that "a woman took and hid" this leavening [in the meal], so it was a result, not of divinity, not of divine will, but it was a result of people. It was how **they** handled what was placed in their hands. It was **man**, my friend, that introduced this corruption. It says, they **took** the leaven. It was not **given to them**. It was not divinely given, it was not inspired, but it says they **took it**. They did just as Eve did of the forbidden fruit. In Genesis 3:6, it says, "she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat." And, just as she was out of divine order, my friend, by taking hold of that forbidden fruit, so it was with this woman, Jezebel, a portrayal of the false religious leaders of this particular era. My friend, they took something that God never ordained that they lay hold to, and they took something that God never ordained that they lay hold to, and they began to handle it, and they introduced this

**leaven** into the **meal**. And corruption, or, my friend, a human, corrupt system developed and took place.

It says also here, in Matthew 13:33, that, ". . . the whole was leavened." In other words, the entire system is corrupted. You cannot take leaven out after it has been injected. Once leaven is injected, then our text tells us, "The whole was leavened." The entire system became a corrupt system of man. It affected the whole. This is why God commands, in Jeremiah 51:7-9, "Babylon [Or religious confusion] hath been [past tense] a golden cup in the Lord's hand . . . Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed . . . We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her . . . ." And Jeremiah 51:6 says, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon and deliver every man his soul. . . ."

But, my friend, let us notice that he tells us that, "Babylon **hath been**. . . ," in the past tense (Jeremiah 51:7). There was a time, my friend, when God used these religious leaders and these reformers to bring the "measures of meal," a public message, back to mankind. But it goes on to say, in Jeremiah 51:8, that "Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed. . . ." They fell from that position that God had lifted them up to, by taking hold of this "leaven" and concocted and devised their own doctrines, and fell. And, my friend, Babylon now will never rise again. Because, once the "leaven" is injected, it cannot be removed; and the whole became "leavened" or corrupt. And so the cry is, in Jeremiah 51:6 says, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul. . . ."

But let us notice something else about this "leaven," or about this corruption. In Matthew 13:33, when He talks to us about how the "woman took, and hid" this "leaven" is injected, it cannot be removed; and the whole became "leavened" or corrupt. And, so, the cry is, in Jeremiah 51:6, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul. . . ."

But, my friend, let us notice that he tells us that, "Babylon **hath been**. . . ," in the past tense (Jeremiah 51:7). There was a time, my friend, when God used these religious leaders and these reformers to bring the "measures of meal," a public message, back to mankind. But, it goes on to say, in

Jeremiah 51:8, that "Babylon is suddenly fallen and destroyed. . . ." They fell from that position that God had lifted them up to, by taking hold, just as Eve did, of that which was not to be taken hold of, that which was forbidden. And my friend, they took hold of this "leaven" and concocted and devised their own doctrines, and fell. And, my friend, Babylon now will never rise again. Because, once the "leaven" is injected, it cannot be removed; and the whole became "leavened" or corrupt. And, so the cry is, in Jeremiah 51:6, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul. . . ."

But, let us notice something else about this "leaven," or about this corruption. In Matthew 13:33, when He talks to us about how the "woman took, and hid" this "leaven," something we need to consider is that "leaven" rises. And, this leaven, or corrupt doctrine, or a corruption of the Word, my friend, the Word of God, gave rise to something. What did it give rise to? The same thing that Jezebel of old did. When Jezebel, my friend, of old, was allowed a free hand in Israel, she brought in an **image**, a false religious system, and the people of God were subjected during that era, to that false system of worship. And so it was in the Protestant Era, this Lutheran Era. That which had begun as a reformation ended up having "leaven" injected into it—corrupt doctrine, or a corruption of God's eternal Word. And it gave rise to something—the same thing that Jezebel of old did, an **image**, or a false religious system.

In Revelation 13:11-15, John caught a glimpse of it here and said, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an **image** to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live. And he had power to give life unto the **image** of the beast, that the

**image** of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the **image** of the beast should be killed."

Now, certainly, we do not have time to examine this text in its entirety, but there are several very pertinent points that we want to look at concerning this text. So here we find in verse 11, what happened and what it produced. In Revelation 13:11 it said, "And I beheld another beast. . . ." Now, first, he lets us know that this is the **second** beast, that we were introduced to in Revelation 13:1. So, we find here that it was in direct chronological succession to the **first** beast.

Secondly, he immediately identifies its nature when he tells us, here in Revelation 13:11, "And I beheld another [I repeat, that lets us know that this was not the first beast, but it was another beast. And that it was a successive beast, immediately succeeding the first beast.] beast coming up out of the earth. . . ." So, it reveals its time frame, by letting us know it is immediately successive because it is "another" beast. And, then secondly, it identifies its nature as a "beast." Or my friend, as beastly and as ungodly as the previous beast, the Papal beast. The Greek word here for "beast," both in this text in Revelation 13:11, and Revelation 13:1, is **therion**, which means, "a dangerous animal: (venomous, wild) beast," according to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*.

Now, we must be reminded that the Revelation is a **symbolic book**. In Revelation 1:1, the penman declares, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and **signified** it. . . ." The nature of the Revelation language is that it is **signified**, which means "revealed by signs." And the word *sign*, one definition, according to **Webster's New World Dictionary**, is "a symbol." So the nature of this language is that it is **symbolic language**. This beast, in the Revelation, is symbolic of something.

Now, we must begin to study and consider what it was that he was identifying here. Well, let us look where it came from. In Revelation 13:11, again, it says, ". . . another beast coming up out of the earth. . . ." Now, what does this portray? What is the "earth" a figure of? In Jeremiah 22:29,

the prophet cried and said, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." He was not speaking of this **terrestrial ball**, not of **terra firma**. But he was referring to **man**. Because when we come over to the writings of the wise man, in Ecclesiastes 12:7, speaking of **man**, it says, "Then shall the **dust** return to the **earth** as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." So, **earth** is a representative figure of **man**, who is **dust of the earth**.

In 2 Corinthians 4:7 the Apostle Paul says, "But we have this treasure in **earthen vessels**. . . ." Now, what are these **earthen vessels**? Second Corinthians 5:1 says, "For we know that if our **earthly house** of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Now, what was he speaking of when he talked about this **earthly house**? He goes on down through this chapter and lets us know in 2 Corinthians 5:4, "For we that are in this tabernacle [This **earthly house** of this tabernacle 2 Corinthians 5:1 speaks of. He tells us there] do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that **mortality** might be swallowed up of life." So, this **earthly house of this tabernacle** represents our **mortality**, or the **mortal** part of man which was made from the dust of the earth. So, "earth" represents man. Therefore, this beast in Revelation 13:11, is a religious system that came **up out of the minds of men**.

Someone may say, "Well, I can see where it's coming up out of the earth means that it comes up from among men, but when it talks about the beast, how do you know that it is a religious system?" Because the thought of beasts represents the outgrowth of the actions of the minds of natural, but religious, men. In 2 Peter 2:1, Peter says, "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. . . ." We are dealing with religious individuals and religious practices. Now drop to 1 Peter 2:10, where he says, "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh [Speaking of **men**, not some sort of creature.] in the lust of uncleanness, and



despise government. Presumptuous are they, self-willed, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities."

These ones are ones that walked in the flesh. They were able to think. They had a will. They could speak. First Peter 2:11 goes on and tells us about how they brought accusations, and 1 Peter 2:12 says, "But these, as **natural brute beasts**. . . ." In other words, my friend, practicing, and were advocates of, religion. In Jude 1:10, he says, "But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as **brute beasts**. . . ." Now I want you to see, my friend, that this is a people, **men**, my friend, that were the outgrowth of their apostate thoughts, the outgrowth of their departing from truth and operating on a natural human level. And so, we find here that this beast is a religious system.

We go on to find here, notice this beast, in Revelation 13:11, has, ". . . . two horns. Daniel 8:20 says, "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the **kings** [Or, one rendering says kingdoms] of Media and Persia." In the case of the Revelation beast, they are two political powers that aided the beast, the Protestant beast. They are Germany and England. They sided and protected the rise of Protestantism.

Now, the reason we see this beast coming out of the earth, as opposed to the first beast coming out of the sea, is that this religious move came out of the minds of men, but the move of the first beast was much more massive—it held worldwide sway—and the sea is more massive than the earth or land. And that is why the first beast came out of the sea and the second came out of the earth.

Revelation 11:7, talking about this second beast, says, "the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit." What does it mean to be bottomless? Well, actually, we know that it means "no bottom or, no foundation." But, what is the Bible Foundation? First Corinthians 3:11 says, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." So a bottomless pit, my friend, is building an organization without the proper Biblical Foundation.

But, I want you to notice distinct things about this system. It says in Revelation 13:11, that ". . . he spake as **a dragon**." Its doctrines and teachings do not have their

origin in the Scriptures, but in Paganism. Infant baptism, for instance, is not a Scriptural truth, but a product of Paganism. But my friend, Protestantism incorporates it in their teaching, and Lutheranism did. Having a plurality of supposed Christian faiths is not a Biblical practice, but a Pagan doctrine. We can see in Acts 17:16, when the Apostle Paul, "saw the city wholly given to idolatry." That was a Pagan practice. So, Protestantism, my friend, their doctrines are not divine, but dragonistic.

Notice Revelation 13:14 says, ". . . make an **image** to the beast. . . ." In this era, Luther and the other reformers came out protesting against the evils of Roman Catholicism, but then, the very thing that they decried, they turned and became just like it. The word, in Revelation 13:14, for **image** means, "likeness." They became just like the system they left. Popery has a human head. Protestantism has a human head. Popery has doctrines, creeds, and practices that are not based in truth. Protestantism has doctrines, creeds, and practices that are not based in truth. Rome held to the sacrament of transubstantiation. So did Luther. ***The History of the Christian Church***, by George C. Fisher, on page 309, says, "Luther affirmed the objective presence of the glorified body and the blood affirmed the objective presence of the glorified body and the blood of Christ in connection with the bread and wine. So that the body and blood, in some mysterious way, are actually received by the communicant whether he be a believer or not." Such teaching as this, my friend, nullifies the truth that he was revealed to of Romans 1:17, ". . . The just shall live by faith."

"And he spake **as a dragon**" (Revelation 13:11). Paganism propagated "lying wonders" that the Scriptures do not teach. Protestantism, my friend, propagates those same types of lies. My friend, Paganism put armies on the field. Papalism put armies on the field. And in the thirty years' war in Germany, Rome put soldiers on the field, and Protestantism put soldiers on the field. This beast, or as Revelation 13:14 calls it, "an image" mirrored Rome.

Notice the third thing. Revelation 13:12, ". . . and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to **worship the**

**first beast. . . ."** What does this tell us? First, that Protestantism is no more of a Christian system than papalism is. Second, Protestantism's worship is just a more deceptive manner of worshiping the first beast, Roman Catholicism.

I trust we can see that this is what took place in this period of time, from AD 1530 to AD 1730. But God, in His faithfulness, reached down, in the seventeen hundreds, and got hold of some men. He gave them a message that, indeed, was as our next parable describes, in Matthew 13:44, a "treasure," and a new period of the Gospel Day commenced in AD 1730.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE PARABLE OF THE TREASURE - PART ONE

*Matthew 13:44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for the joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.*

As we begin to examine this Scripture passage, we first of all find that this is the fifth in a series of seven parables which Jesus gives, that are incorporated in Matthew, Chapter 13. These parables take us, in sequence, down throughout this Gospel Day, with each parable corresponding with, or typifying, a time period which comprises this Gospel Day.

By the help of God, we want to direct our attention to Matthew 13:44, and consider this fifth parable, the parable of the **treasure**, which typifies the fifth period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time which is approximately from AD 1730 to AD 1880. We will establish how these dates were derived, further in our study.

Now, first we want to notice, as we begin to examine our text, that our text begins with the term or the word, "again." "**Again**, the kingdom of heaven is like . . . ," Jesus tells us. This is the first parable that introduces us to this term, and if you will study, you will find here, and as a matter of fact, that the last three parables employ this word. Matthew 13:44, Again, the kingdom is like. . . ." So here we find that this is the first parable that introduces us to this term, but, the last three parables all begin with, and employ, this word "again."

This teaches us that these last three periods of time are a restoration of precious truths that were enjoyed previously in the Gospel Day. The employment of this word, "again," lets us know that, although their message may have sounded radical or unorthodox or novel in the period in which it was heralded, but that in reality, according to Ecclesiastes 1:9, the Wise Man declares, ". . . there is no new thing under the sun." In

other words, after the dismal scene of the morning-time apostasy, the dark night of Papal rule, and the faint light of the first portion of the cloudy day, or the cloudy light of the Lutheran Era, we are now seeing a moving back, as John declared in his Epistle, in 1 John 1:1, to "That which **was** from the beginning."

And certainly as ones would begin to restore these precious truths that were lost sight of in these previous eras, they would indeed appear radical, drastic, and to some, no doubt, even heretical. But, in reality it was an onward march. It was a march back to the light of the morning, a gradual restoration of truth which was lost sight of through the apostasy of the morning time and the ensuing Dark Ages.

Next, we might notice how Christ addressed the object of which He was speaking. Here in Matthew 13:44 He says, "Again, the kingdom of **HEAVEN**. . . ." And, my friend, we might notice that although, during this time period, that there was no **VISIBLE** body, no open message on the Church, that God still had a people. My friend, certainly down through the dark and cloudy day (Ezekiel 34:12), there was a people of God. He still had a people that had a Kingdom experience. They had done as Jesus admonished in the Gospel of Luke 16:16, where He talks about the Kingdom, and said, ". . . and every **MAN** presseth INTO IT." They had pressed in. These during the third, fourth, and fifth periods of time, were the antitype of what Acts 7:38 denotes as, ". . . the church in the wilderness. . . ."

Just as the Israelites came out of Egyptian bondage and journeyed, stopping to worship here and there, my friend, as they worshiped en route, they were certainly God's people. And they were en route to the Promised Land. They had not arrived at the Promised Land. They were still out there in a place, my friend, that was not ordained of God for the people of God to reside. But, they were traveling. They were on a journey and as they stopped and worshiped, my friend, Stephen in his address refers to them as, "the church in the wilderness" (Acts 7:38).

And so it was, my friend, down through the Gospel Day, God had a people. And since the morning-time apostasy they had been journeying and worshiping as they go, en route back to the Promised Land, back to the land of truth, back to the Church where God's people were to dwell in unity and in harmony. Speaking of those in the Old Testament, Stephen referred to them as the church in the wilderness and certainly these ones in the dark and cloudy day, are the antitype of that.

Now, let us look a little further. Jesus said in Matthew 13:44, ". . . the kingdom of heaven [the Kingdom of God or the Church of God, these are synonymous terms] is **LIKE**. . . ." Or again, the Greek based word here is HOMOU, which means, "at the same place or time." The word "like" portrays the prevailing conditions taking place at the same time. When our text Matthew 14:44 employs this phrase, "the kingdom of heaven [the Kingdom of God or the Church of God] is like. . . ." it means that this was the prevailing or predominate condition working, during this era of time under consideration.

Now, let us look right into the heart of the parable itself. To what does He liken this age? Here in Matthew 13:44 it says, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure **HID** in a field. . . ." The actual or the original Greek inverts this and it reads, ". . . **A HIDDEN TREASURE**. . . ." in [THE EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT].

Let us stop and consider this. Let us examine this text closely. If this had been an instantaneous, one-time experience as some would advocate, if it were a treasure chest he could have just taken it. But, why does it teach us here in Matthew 13:44 that he, ". . . selleth all that he hath, and **BUYETH** that field?" There is a reasoning behind this. This **HIDDEN TREASURE**, as the Greek reads actually portrays to us the sense of it is that this "treasure" is not a pot or chest of money, or riches, or gold, or a treasure chest that could be taken instantaneously for then there would have been no need to buy the field. But, according to Jewish rabbinical law, if a man finds scattered

money, these belongs to the finder, so it must have been something other than just something that could have been taken and removed. The true sense of this "hidden treasure" is that it was a **RICH MINE**. It was a **RICH MINE** which he found, my friend, that he could not get at or work at without turning up the field. And, for this purpose he bought this field. Here in Matthew 13:44 when it says, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid **IN** a field. . . ." The actual understanding and meaning is that it was within the field. It is a picture of a rich mine, such as a gold mine or a silver mine.

Before we look to see what the "treasure" was, that this particular age enjoyed and rejoiced in, we want to examine where it was found. Here in Matthew 13:44 it says, ". . . treasure hid in a **FIELD**." We found that this "treasure hid" is actually "hidden treasure," or the sense is that of a mine, such as a gold mine or a silver mine. Now, where is this **FIELD** that these are hid in? Immediately our minds would run to previous study and think the **FIELD** is **THE WORLD**. But, in this particular parable the "field" is NOT the world. There is **NO** divine treasure in **THIS** world. But, Galatians 4:9 says, only ". . . weak and beggarly elements. . . ." We also know the "field" is not the world because when a man buys this treasure, he does not go and buy the world; he gives it up. Matthew 13:44 says, ". . . he **SELLETH ALL THAT HE HATH**." So we must dismiss the thought that He is speaking here of **THIS** "field" as being the world.

What actually is this "field" in which this treasure was hid? In the book of Proverbs 2:1-5 it says, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

Now, let us look at what he is speaking of here. In Proverbs 2:1 he said, "My son, if thou wilt receive my **WORDS**, and **HIDE MY COMMANDMENTS**. . . ." Now, what are these

typified as? We read in Proverbs 2:4, "If thou seekest her as **SILVER**, and searchest for her as for **HID TREASURES**. . . ." What are these "hid treasures?" He tells us in Proverbs 2:3, "Yea, if thou **CRIEST** after KNOWLEDGE, and liftest up thy **VOICE** for **UNDERSTANDING**. . . ." Proverbs 2:5 says, "Then shalt thou **UNDERSTAND** the fear of the Lord, and find the **KNOWLEDGE** of God." So here we find what these "hid treasures" are, that he speaks of in Proverbs 2:4, he talks here about "hid treasures." What are these hid treasures? They are **KNOWLEDGE** and **UNDERSTANDING**.

Now, where are these "hid treasures" found? In the rich mine. In Proverbs 2:4 he says, "If thou seekest her as **SILVER**, and searchest for her as for **HID TREASURES**. . . ." So here, my friend, he let us know that silver is something that has to be mined. Here is something that has to be dug in the earth for. It is in a "field," if you please. So, these "hid treasures" are knowledge and understanding.

Where are these "hid treasures" found? In the rich mine of GOD'S WORD. Proverbs 2:1 says, "My son, if thou wilt receive my WORDS. . . ." So, we find that the **RICH MINE** that the hid treasures of **KNOWLEDGE** and **UNDERSTANDING** are found in, is the WORD of GOD. Proverbs 2:1 talks about precious truth, talking about "my words" and "my commandments." And precious truth is likened to precious jewels which must be mined. In Proverbs 3:13-15 here the wise man says, "Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it [what? wisdom and understanding] is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies: and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her."

Now, notice that each of these precious items which he mentions here in Proverbs 3:14, he brings up the thought of silver and gold, and in verse 15, he brings up rubies. Notice that each of the precious items that he mentioned, **MUST BE MINED**. They come from a mine. They come from, my friend, in the depth. They come from being **IN A FIELD**.

There is a truth here that we need to catch. And I want us to notice, my friend, he uses these precious objects to



be emblematic. He tells us in Proverbs 3:13 of "wisdom" and "understanding." Now, what is wisdom? Who is wisdom personified? The Apostle Paul penned in 1 Corinthians 1:24, "But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, **CHRIST** the **POWER** of God, and the **WISDOM** of God." So, Christ is the **WISDOM** of God. And John, Chapter 1, teaches us that He also is the Word. In John 1:1 it says, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:14 says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. . . ." Who was it? In John 1:17 it says, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by **JESUS CHRIST.**" And John 1:14 states, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." Who was this? **JESUS CHRIST!** So, **CHRIST** is the **WORD** and the **WORD** is **WISDOM.**

He is teaching us, my friend, how we might find this "treasure." He is teaching us that these "hidden treasures" are found **IN THE FIELD OF HIS WORD.** You see, people constantly want to think , and supposed Bible scholars advocate it, that **CHRIST** is the treasure." Christ is the "pearl" (Matthew 13:46). But, think with me. Words are vehicles employed to convey truth, and if they all were to symbolize the same thing, they would be meaningless and mean nothing. If everything represents the same thing, then the usage of symbolic language is meaningless.

Look at 2 Corinthians 4:7 here the Apostle Paul pens and says, "But we have this **TREASURE** [What is this treasure? He talks about our having this treasure] in earthen vessels. . . ." Well, what is it? What has he been speaking of? Back up to 2 Corinthians 4:2, "But [we] have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the **WORD OF GOD.** . . ." So, he is speaking of the **WORD OF GOD.** In 2 Corinthians 4:3 he says, "But if our **GOSPEL** be hid. . . ." In 2 Corinthians 4:4 he talks about, "the light of the glorious **GOSPEL.**" Then in 2 Corinthians 4:7 he says, "But we have this **TREASURE.** . . ." What actually is the **TREASURE?** It is this **LIGHT,** or the **GLORIOUS**

**GOSPEL.** It is, my friend, having a divine understanding of the precious GOSPEL, or of the **WORD OF GOD.**

Here he speaks in 2 Corinthians 4:3, "But if our gospel be **HID**. . . ." He lets us know, my friend, that what he is speaking of as being **HID**, in 2 Corinthians 4:2 is "the word of God." And during this period of time, during this era of time, most of the Word of God had been hid from public view. There had been a very small restoration of truth under the Lutheran Era, the truth of Romans 1:17, ". . . The just shall live by faith." But most truth at this juncture, was still hid in the field. The book, the Word of God, was no longer chained to the pulpit. It WAS opened. But, my friend, it was opened ever so slightly, with the single truth concerning justification, during the Lutheran Era. Then they turned and built an image to the beast, and put "leaven" in the "meal," and the whole was leavened (Matthew 13:33). God had to set His hand, another time and raise up another ministry, a ministry that found this "treasure" in the "field." He had to get them back to the field, back to the Word of God, and away from the teachings of men. Then, in that Word of God, in that "field," He revealed a "treasure" or knowledge and understanding.

In Colossians 2:3 it says, "In whom [speaking of Christ; Colossians 2:2] are hid all the **TREASURES** of wisdom and knowledge." So, I want you to see that this "field" that our text in Matthew 13:44 speaks of, is the Word of God. This "treasure" is knowledge and understanding or truth or of a particular, precious truth during this era of time.

Now, we must ask some questions. Why was it hid? Well, there is at least a two-fold symbolism here. Number one, it was underground. Because this portrays a truth which was lost sight of during the dark night of Romanism, and also through the cloudy day, up to this particular era. It also shows us that while the woman, Jezebel (representing spiritual Babylon or religious confusion) was hiding "leaven" in the "meal" (Matthew 13:33), that God in His faithfulness, was hiding a "treasure" that the people of God could receive when a people were ready and in a position for it.

Also, in Matthew 11:25, Jesus said, ". . . because thou hast HID these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." He is teaching us that the Gospel is the "field" in which this "treasure" is hid. It is hid as milk is hid in the breast. It is hid as marrow is in the bone. It is hid as manna is in the dew. It is hid as water is in the well. And it is hid as honey is in the honeycomb. These are all Biblical expressions, teaching us that truth often lies buried. It is like rich veins of ore in the sacred Scriptures. It must be searched out with diligence, the Scriptures teach us. Jesus in John 5:39 said, "Search the scriptures. . . ." In 2 Timothy 2:15 the Apostle Paul enjoins us to "Study. . . ." In Acts 17:11 it says they, ". . . searched the scriptures daily. . . ." I say, my friend, that this is how truth comes.

This man in our text was not specifically looking for a treasure. He found it in the course of his daily duties. In the course of his daily faithfulness he found it. And if we will just faithfully perform our services for Christ daily, He will reveal the treasures of His Word, that belong to Him, to you and me in the very day and time in which we are living. If we will search the Scriptures, that He will be faithful to reveal precious truth through His Spirit. Truth still comes as a divine revelation. In 1 Corinthians 2:10 it says, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit. . . ." Truth comes through the avenue of revelation. But it comes as a result of one who is diligent in their daily devotion and activity.

So it was in this age, a ministry was in the Word of God. They were dissatisfied with current conditions. They were dissatisfied with their own experience in that particular era of time. Their heart was craving more and crying for more, and as they craved and as they cried, or as our text said in Matthew 13:33, this man as he was in this "field" (the Word of God), it said something was found. As he was studying, God in His faithfulness to the effort, and honoring the desire of their heart, gave them a revelation of divine truth. This era found a "treasure." They gained knowledge and understanding that came from the "field" of

God's eternal Word. So, in this period of time, this very fifth period of time, from A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1880, God got hold of a man or men that saw a revelation of a truth and they began to take a stand and declare that precious truth.

Next time, we will look a little further into what this particular "treasure" was, that this era of time had.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE PARABLE OF THE TREASURE - PART TWO

**Matthew 13:44** *Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for the joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.*

In this passage of Scripture text we see Jesus relating the parable of the treasure. This particular parable is the fifth of seven that are housed in Matthew, Chapter 13. Through the vehicle of these parables, Jesus takes us down throughout the seven periods that comprise this Gospel Day or Christian Dispensation. Since this is the fifth parable, it corresponds with the fifth period of the Gospel Day, or that period from A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1880. In our last lesson we began our study of this text, and in this lesson, by the help of God, we want to examine it further.

By way of review, we want you to notice that our text begins with the employment of the term in Matthew 13:44, of "again." This is the first parable that employs this term, although each of these last three parables: the parable of the treasure, the parable of the pearl, and the parable of the net, all incorporate and begin with this word. This is teaching us that in these last three periods of time there is a restoration of precious truths that were enjoyed previously in the Gospel Day. This portrays a gradual restoration of truth in order to get us back to the light of the Morning Time.

Once again, we also see in this text, the phrase employed in Matthew 13:44, "the kingdom of heaven" which we found is synonymous with The Kingdom of God, or The Church of God.

Also, we find the term "like" is again utilized, which comes from the Greek base word HOMU, which means, "at the same place or time." My friend, it portrays to us when it is saying, "the kingdom of heaven is like," in reality, our lesson is conveying to us, that here is the predominant condition that the Church faced, that was taking place at this

same time.

Now, our text declares that the prevailing condition during this time period, A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1880, was as Matthew 13:44 declares, ". . . The kingdom of heaven is like unto **TREASURE** hid in a field. . . ." Or, the original Greek [The Emphatic Diaglott] inverts this phrase and says, "aa hidden treasure" (Matthew 13:44).

Now, this phrase here, when it says, ". . . is like unto treasure hid [Or the Greek says, 'hidden treasure.'] in a field. . . ," it means just that. The actual meaning is that it was IN, or within, the field. The sense here is of a mine, a **RICH MINE**, such as where gold and silver are mined.

In Proverbs 2:1-5, the wise man pens: "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou sleekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for **HIDDEN TREASURES**, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God."

Here he says, in Proverbs 2:1, ". . . receive my words, and hide [Or, in other words, count it as treasures] my commandments with thee. . . ." And Proverbs 2:4 says, "If thou sleekest her as silver [How is silver sought? It is mined. Silver comes from silver mines.], and searchest for her as for hid treasures. . . ." So the "field" where the "treasure," in Matthew 13:44, is hid is the Word of God, and the "treasure" is what Proverbs 2:5 tells us, "Then shalt thou understand . . . and find the knowledge. . . ." So, my friend, the "treasure" that Matthew 13:44 is speaking of, according to Proverbs 2:5, is understanding and knowledge that comes from God's Word. In this era of time, from A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1880, it was a particular truth that was there all of the time—that which is within a mine is there all the time. It was there all of the time, but it had been lost sight of ever since the Morning-Time apostasy. As Matthew 13:44 says, it was "hid."

Now, the questions that we must address, my friend, that our text teaches us, that we must begin to examine, are here in Matthew 13:44, where it says, ". . . when a **MAN** hath found.

. . ." We want to determine, who is this "man?" Who is he representative of? And, secondly, what actually was this "treasure?" Or this knowledge and understanding that they received in this period of time? Our text gives an insight to the truth that they received. It was a revelation of truth that they received during this era of time. This will become clearer as we examine this text more closely.

Let us examine it. We found that the previous period, the Lutheran Era which lasted from A.D. 1530 to A.D. 1730, had been given what Jesus denotes in Matthew 13:33 as "three measures of meal (which was the amount of meal necessary to sustain the life of the average family), portraying that the age of spiritual famine was ended and there was once again a public message being declared that produced and sustained spiritual life. That the Living Bread was again able to be consumed, because it was heralded in a public manner. But, unfortunately, that move, my friend, those who received that truth, failed to progress on in truth. And, my friend, they stopped, and became a sect, and built an image to the beast, as it were, and became just like those whom they had started out protesting against. So once again, my friend, God had to get hold of a people. He had to set His hand again and raise up brethren that would take more light and more truth.

Now, what was the truth that they did have? They already had light on Romans 1:17, "The just shall live by faith." They had light on justification; light, my friend, that produced the Living Bread; light, that produced spiritual life, as a public message one more time.

But, then what? Let us look here in Matthew 13:44 where it says, "Again, the kingdom of heaven [This lets us know, again, that He is restoring a truth that has been lost sight of.] is like unto a treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath **FOUND**. . . ." Now I want us to notice here, "a treasure a man hath found." What was their message? Let us look very closely at Matthew 13:44, for ". . . a treasure [that] . . . a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth ALL that he hath. . . ." Now, here it begins to give us an insight to the message they had in this period of time. It says, ". . . he . . . hath . . . ." Now, here it

begins to give us an insight to the message they had in this period of time. It says, ". . . he . . . goeth and selleth all that he hath. . . ." Here is a picture of **TRUE BIBLICAL DISCIPLESHIP**.

Jesus taught us this in the Gospel of Luke 14:33 which says, "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not ALL that he hath, he CANNOT be my disciple." So, there we find that the requirement of discipleship is that one must forsake ALL that he hath. I might just mention, by way of clarification, [that] too many today are under the assumption that because there were the disciples in the Morning Time, when they think of disciples, they only think of the twelve disciples. But Jesus said in Luke 14:33, "whosoever shall be my disciple—" . . . whosoever he be of you. . . ." This let us know that discipleship is something that He desires all mankind possess. The word disciple comes from the same root word, **DISIPULUS**, in Latin, which means "discipline." Or, it is the same root word our word discipline comes from, teaching us that one who is a disciple is one who is committed to obeying the discipline of Jesus Christ. And it is yet a universal call: Luke 14:33 says, "So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not ALL that he hath, he **CANNOT** be my disciple."

Look at Jesus' words to the rich rule. In Matthew 19:21, "Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have TREASURE in heaven: and come and follow me."

This passage reveals several truths us. He tells us the requirements of discipleship: "Go and sell all that thou hast" (Matthew 19:21). That one must be willing and committed to give all. Again, this is a portrayal of what constitutes discipleship—giving all. He says, "If thou wilt be perfect" (Matthew 19:21). This tells us that perfection is not only possible, but Scripturally required; and that true discipleship is necessary to have spiritual perfection.

Now, notice what Jesus said, here in Matthew 19:21, ". . . If thou wilt be **PERFECT**. . . thou **SHALT** have **TREASURE** . . . ." My friend, what is this telling us? What was the "treasure?" It was the Biblical truth that they received in



this period of time. They received the truth of **SPIRITUAL PERFECTION** or **HOLINESS** They received the light and truth that once one gained salvation, they obtained spiritual life, and that spiritual perfection was required to maintain that life.

In the Gospel of Matthew, 5:48, Jesus speaking here, says, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." Now, we must stop to consider what Biblical perfection consists of. How is the Father in Heaven perfect? **HE IS A PERFECT AS HE KNOWS HOW TO BE.** He is as perfect as His knowledge entails. And, so, my friend, Jesus is laying forth to you and me, that Biblical perfection is walking in the light, the understanding that is shed on our pathway; and walking in the understanding that is given unto us. By doing this, my friend, we CAN live in **SINLESS PERFECTION.**

Now certainly, we cannot, as human creatures, live in **HUMAN PERFECTION.** We have erring judgment and erring thinking. But, my friend, He is not talking about the moves we make in our humanity. But He is talking about our spiritual state, how that we might have **SPIRITUAL PERFECTION.** This is a doctrine that Jesus and the disciples taught in the Morning Time. But, sad to say, it was lost sight of through the apostasy and the dark and cloudy day, until it was restored in this period of time. And, my friend, until the apostasy, the teaching of perfection and holiness was commonly understood and accepted as Bible doctrine.

In 2 Corinthians 13:11, the Apostle Paul says, "Finally, brethren, farewell. Be **PERFECT.** . . ." This lets us know, not only can one be perfect, or is admonished to be perfect, but that perfection is to be a continual and constant state being. In Philippians 3:15, here again Paul pens, "Let us therefore, as many as be **PERFECT,** be thus minded. . . ." In Colossians 1:28, it says, "Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we [This is in the plural.] may present every man spiritual perfection, a possibility, but provision has been made, according to the Scriptures, that ". . . EVERY man [may be] **PERFECT** in Christ Jesus" (Colossians 1:28).

This truth had been lost sight of, but here, in Matthew

13:44, in our lesson, it says, that this "man" found this truth when he was in the "field" of God's eternal Word. Now, who was this "man," and why does this period commence with the approximate date of A.D. 1730? Because in A.D. 1729 a group of students, which included John and Charles Wesley, at the University of Oxford, in England, began to assemble in a group known as **THE HOLY GROUP**, or later known as Methodists.

Two brothers, John and Charles Wesley, as they dug in the "field" of God's Word, they found what Matthew 13:44 denotes as ". . . a treasure. . . ." They gained some knowledge and understanding of a truth that, up until this time, had been, as our text, Matthew 13:44, declares, ". . . hid. . . ." It had been "hid" since the Morning Time.

Truth, that through the apostasy and the Dark Age of Papalism, had been pushed to the ground. My friend, it had been "hid," as it were, from public view. It was down in that "field," it was in God's eternal Word, all along. But, God's eternal Word had become a closed book during the thousand years of the dark night of Roman Catholicism. It had been chained to the pulpit, as it were. And Amos prophesied of how there had been ". . . a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord. . ." (Amos 8:11). It had been pressed to the ground. Truth had been cast to the ground. But, all along, it was "in" this "field."

My friend, as hungry hearts were willing to walk in truth, God, in His faithfulness, reached down and got hold of these brethren, John and Charles Wesley, and as they dug in the "field" of God's eternal Word, they found this "treasure." They gained knowledge and understanding of a truth that, up to this time, had been "hid" since the Morning Time.

It was, indeed, as Jesus told the ruler in Matthew 19:21, when He told him, ". . . If thou wilt be perfect [teaching us perfection was an ability that man could have, not through his own strength, but how that one had to], go and sell [all] that thou hast . . . ," teaching us that discipleship costs [all] that thou hast. . . ." This teaches us that discipleship costs all. But if one would yield all, and truly be spiritually perfect, and enjoy spiritual perfection, He said, ". . . thou shalt have treasure. . . ." This treasure, this knowledge and

understanding that they had, was that man might enjoy spiritual perfection, the Biblical truth on perfection and holiness.

Some may ask, "Was this the knowledge and understanding that this particular era, that we commonly call the Wesleyan Era, received? In *The History of the Christian Church*, by George C. Fisher, it says, "There was another point in Wesley's teaching which excited much displeasure. This was his doctrine of Christian perfection, which he held to be attainable, by the believer, in this life. By perfection, Wesley did not mean such an absolute purity as dispensing with the need of praying daily, but he meant an uninterrupted reign, in the heart, of love to God and man. The Wesleyan preaching made everything turn on the acceptance or rejection of Christ as a Saviour. Its doctrine of assurance of hope as the privilege of all, and a complete deliverance, was embraced in its announcement of a free, complete salvation, held out to every transgressor."

The *Illustrated Columbia Encyclopedia* states, "They took the emphasis on conversion and holiness." *Funk and Wagnalls New Encyclopedia* says, "Wesley clearly developed the doctrine of Christian perfection."

So, as we look here in our text, here in Matthew 13:44, when it speaks of ". . . a man. . . ," this man, or this ministry that God raised up, my friend, was first of all, John and Charles Wesley, that found this "treasure," or gained a knowledge and understanding, in the "field" of God's eternal Word, [of] this truth concerning perfection and holiness. And they began to herald that truth during this era of time, the truth of perfection and holiness.

It is, indeed, a Biblical truth. In the Gospel of Luke, 1:74-75 it says: "That he would grant unto **US** [in the plural], that **WE** [plural] being delivered out of the hand of **OUR** [Plural.] enemies might serve him without fear [How?], In holiness and righteousness before him [When? Not in some future point in time, or some golden age to come.], **ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIFE.**"

These brethren began to see the truth. They received a revelation as they were in the "field," the Word of God, and

their heart was hungering and thirsting after righteousness, a deeper experience, one that was a powerful experience that would give them the power to live in a consistent manner. My friend, as they were in this "field," they found a "treasure." They gained knowledge, they gained understanding, of ". . . holiness and righteousness [as we should be,] before Him, **ALL THE DAYS OF OUR LIFE**" (Luke 1:75). As the historian, Professor Fisher, said, it talks here about how we should have "an uninterrupted reign, in the heart. . . ." How, my friend, that we can have "all the days of our life" to live in a right manner before Him.

The Apostle Paul reiterated the same truth. In the Epistle to Titus 2:11-12 he says: "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto ALL men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, WE should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. . . ."

This was the beautiful "treasure" that the Wesleyan Era found, my friend. As they were in the "field," in the Word of God, they came across this "treasure." They came across the knowledge and understanding of this precious truth. And they did as Matthew 13:44 says—they sold all they had, they sold out, that they might be able to walk in this light and enjoy this treasure that, my friend, was revealed to this particular era. So it was the beautiful "treasure" of holiness and righteousness, sinless perfection, that man could live in this time world. And certainly it is, indeed, yet today, a very precious truth, a very precious treasure, when one can truly understand, by the Scriptures, how they ought to live in this very time world.

So this was the "man." [It] was the ministry [of the] Wesleyan Era. And this was the truth—perfection and holiness—that they received, and that they heralded, in this period of time, from A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1880.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE PARABLE OF THE TREASURE - PART THREE

**Matthew 13:44** Again the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for the joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field.

We have been studying in the seven prophetic parables which are incorporated here in Matthew, Chapter 13. And through the vehicle of these parables, Jesus takes us from the inception of the Gospel Day, or as He declares in Matthew 13:6, ". . . when the sun was up. . . ," a picture of the Morning Time, (as that is when the sun rises). He takes us from the inception of the Gospel Day, or the Morning Time, to the very end period of the Christian Dispensation, when Matthew 13:46 says, ". . . when it was full. . . ," or complete.

So, my friend, the Gospel Day a is comprised of seven distinct time periods, and through the vehicle of these particular parables, He takes us down through those seven periods that comprise this Gospel Day. This is why the Revelator, in his writings, saw-in Revelation 5:6, ". . . seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth," because there are seven time periods in this Gospel Day.

Ephesians 4:4 tells us, ". . . There is one . . . Spirit." So when the Revelator says that he saw seven Spirits, what is the meaning of seven Spirits here in the Revelation? It says in Revelation 5:6 they were, ". . . sent forth into **ALL** the earth." To truly do that, they had to be sent forth to all mankind throughout the duration of history. So it tells us that the duration of history is composed of seven time periods, and that the one Spirit will work in each of these seven periods of time.

In the prophecy of Isaiah 30:26, he calls these periods, ". . . seven **DAYS**, in the **DAY**...", "the **DAY**" being the Gospel Day, being the Gospel Day, and the "seven **DAYS**," the periods of time, my friend of which the Gospel Day consists.

This parable, the parable of the treasure, is the fifth in a series of seven parables, and as such, it corresponds to the fifth period of the Gospel Day, that period of time from A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1880—a period of time that is also known as The Wesleyan Era.

We found that this delineation of time is founded in the fact that in A.D. 1729, a group of students, which included John and Charles Wesley, at the University of Oxford, in England, began to assemble in a group known as **THE HOLY GROUP**, or later known as Methodists. They, John and Charles Wesley, were, my friend, the ones that Matthew 13:44 refers to as ". . . the man. . . ." My friend, it was these ones that, because of the satisfaction that their souls lacked, they were searching for satisfaction. And, my friend, they were "in" the "field," in the Word of God, and Matthew 13:44 says they found ". . . a treasure hid in a field. . . ." The "field" they were searching in was the Scriptures. The "treasure" was the knowledge and understanding of the precious truth, and the particular truth that was given too this age was the message of holiness and sinless perfection. Funk and Wagnall's New Encyclopedia declares, "Wesley clearly developed the doctrine of Christian perfection." The Illustrated Columbia Encyclopedia says, "They took the emphasis on conversion and holiness." So God, in His faithfulness, was bringing a restoration of precious truth back to mankind.

But notice [that] our text, here, stops with a single "treasure." In Matthew 13:44, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto **TREASURE**. . . ," in the singular. Something happened—in other word, they found knowledge and understanding. However, they failed to progress on in truth, and so something necessitated God having to reach down again, in Matthew 13:45, and secure yet another ministry. But the question arises, what happened? What transpired in this age, this Wesleyan Era, to stop the progress of truth?

Well, to rightly understand this, we must do as Isaiah 14:14 declares, "Seek ye out the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate. . . ," teaching us that for every obscure portion or saying, in God's eternal Word, there is another Scripture that mates up to it,

that sheds light and understanding on that particular passage or question. So, we must mate up the Scriptures to obtain the complete picture.

Now, remember that this is the fifth parable of seven. Now if you will go to Revelation 9:1-2, here we have the fifth trumpet angel, of seven, which represents the exact same time period, from A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1880. Now let us read to see what transpired in Revelation 9:1-2: "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and unto him was given the key of the bottomless pit, And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit."

Here we have the fifth trumpet angel, five of seven. I repeat, it is representing the exact same time period. Now, as we view this text we must be mindful of the nature of Revelation language. In Revelation 1:1, it says, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and **SIGNIFIED** it.." The word signified means "revealed by signs," and one definition of "signs," in Webster's New World Dictionary, is "symbols." So, these are symbolic representations.

Now, as we view this text, we must be mindful of the nature of Revelation language. In Revelation 1:1 it says, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it. . . ." The word signified means, "revealed by signs." One definition of signs, in Webster's New World Dictionary, is "symbols." So these are symbolic representations.

Now let us look at what occurred in this time period. In Revelation 9:1 it says, "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a **STAR** fall. . . ."

Again, we must get literalism out of our mind, because the Scriptures expressly teach, in Isaiah 40:26 where the Divine Penman declares, "Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number: he calleth them all by names by the greatness of his

might, for that he is strong in power; **NOT ONE FAILETH.**"

Now, here it said that the ones that come out, ". . . their host by number: [that] he calleth them by names, [and] **NOT ONE FAILETH:** (Isaiah 40:26). Now, what was He referring to? In Psalm 147:4 it says, "He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth **THEM ALL BY THEIR NAMES.**" Therefore, these hosts that came out, my friend, that He called by names, are the stars. And it said, my friend, in Isaiah, that **NOT ONE FAILETH** (Isaiah 40:26), which teaches, my friend, that in reality stars do not fall. So, contrary to common thought, literal stars do not fall.

So what is the text teaching us here, in Revelation 9:1, when it says, ". . . I saw a STAR fall. . . ."? It is a symbolic expression. What is a STAR? In Revelation 1:20, in red letters, Jesus speaking says, "The mystery of the seven STARS which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels [Or the Greek says aggelos, meaning "messengers," or "ministers"] of the seven churches. . . ." So here, my friend, it tells us that this is a ministry that Christ had had in His right hand and [in] His control. They were in His palm, under His guidance, under His direction; they had been in His hand. And so the term star, here, refers to a ministry.

Now, why did He employ the thought of a "star"? A star is a bright luminary agent in a dark night, and the ministry is a luminary agent, to shine forth the light of Christina's sin-benighted world. In Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 2, it was a star that led the wise men to Christ, and the ministry still leads those who will be wise to Christ. The star is in a high, exalted position, that its light might radiate, that men might see light, and the ministry is raised to an exalted position, held in the right hand of Christ, under His control and guidance, to shine out light in the midst of a sin-benighted world.

However, here the Apostle John said in Revelation 9:1 that he, ". . . saw a star fall from **HEAVEN.** . . ." Now, what is this "heaven" of which he is speaking? There are three heavens mentioned in the Scriptures: In Genesis 1:8 it says, "And God called the firmament Heaven. So there is the **FIRMAMENTAL**



heaven." In Ecclesiastes 5:2, the wise man penned, "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God: for God is in heaven. . . ." So, my friend, there is a **CELESTIAL** heaven, in which God dwells. Then in 2 Corinthians 12:2 the Apostle Paul pens and says, ". . . such an one caught up to the third heaven. . . ." Certainly since this Scripture mentions a third heaven, it reiterates the fact that there must be at least three heavens. Now, what is this third heaven? Ephesians 2:6 reads, ". . . And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in **HEAVENLY** places in Christ Jesus. . . ," or the Greek says in The Emphatic Diaglott, ". . . the **HEAVENLIES**. . . ." (The Emphatic Diaglott) The third heaven is an **ECCLESIASTICAL** heaven that you are lifted up to, through the Spirit, to enjoy spiritual realities and enjoy precious truths.

So, there are three heavens: (1) The **FIRMAMENTAL** heaven, (2) The **CELESTIAL** heaven, and (3) The **ECCLESIASTICAL** heaven. It is in this "ecclesiastical" heaven, or this exalted spiritual position, where Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:1 denoted as that third heaven, he said, "I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord." It is that exalted position where one receives a vision and revelation of precious truth. And my friend, this particular ministry-this Wesleyan Era ministry-had been lifted to an exalted position by having had a revelation of truth in this particular era of time. So, this is the heaven that this "star" enjoyed.

But then something happened. The Apostle John saw in Revelation 9:1 where he said, ". . . I saw a star [or a ministry; that which had been in an exalted, lifted-up position, that which had been one that had shed light in the midst of darkness.] fall from heaven unto the EARTH. . . ." In other words, it fell from "heaven," that exalted position in Christ Jesus, "unto the earth," it fell to an earthen, human level. "Earth" represents man. In 2 Corinthians 4:7 Paul very clearly says, "But we have this **TREASURE in EARTHEN** vessels. . . ." Then in 2 Corinthians 5:1 he says, "For we know that if our **EARTHLY** house of this **TABERNACLE**. . . ." And then in 2 Corinthians 5:4, he tells us that, ". . . **TABERNACLE** [is our]... **MORTALITY**. . . ." Therefore, my friend, "earth"

represents man. So here this ministry fell from an exalted, divine state, down to a human, earthen, "man" level.

Now, what happened? Well, if we will look closely, this text tells us very explicitly. In Revelation 9:1-2 it says: ". . . to him [to this star, to this ministry] was given the **KEY** of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit. . . ." Now, what was this "key" that they possessed? Jesus tells us in Luke 11:52, "Woe, unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the **KEY** of knowledge. . . ." This time period had been, as Revelation 9:1 says, ". . . given the 'key,' the truth concerning holiness. However, they took that knowledge, and that influence that they had and, as Revelation 9:2 says, they ". . . opened the **BOTTOMLESS PIT** . . . ." Now, what does that really mean? Think with me, something that is "bottomless" obviously has no bottom. But what does that mean? When it is without a bottom, it has no foundation. Biblically, there is only one acceptable foundation. First Corinthians 3:11 says, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

After the death of the Wesley Brothers, after, my friend, John and Charles Wesley had passed off the stage of action, **MEN** took their teachings, and took their influence—took the "key" of knowledge that they had—a knowledge and understanding of the truth on holiness and sinless perfection—they took their teaching, they took their influence, and they built a system, a supposed church, on a foundation that was not Biblical.

God never ordained that any man, or group of men, build a church. My friend, the Scriptures are very explicit and very plain. Jesus said, in Matthew 16:18, ". . . **I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH**. . . ," in the singular. And He also let us know that He, personally, would divinely institute and build this Church. And anywhere, my friend, any man tries to build anything else, or any other organization, they are opening a "bottomless pit," a system that has no Bible foundation.

Now notice what is in Revelation 9:2, which he denoted as the "bottomless pit." In Revelation 11:7, it says, ". . . the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit. . . ." What "beast" is he referring to? The Protestant **BEAST** of Revelation

13:11, that John saw, ". . . coming up out of the earth. . . ." or out of the minds of men. This is the one that Revelation 13:14 denotes as ". . . an image to the beast. . . ."

What actually happened in this era of time? After the death of the Wesleys, **MEN** took control. And **MEN** used the "key," used the knowledge, and used the message that the Wesleyan brethren had been given, and the influence that they had amassed, and took control, and turned around, my friend, and made an image. They made a human organization, just like [any] other human organization. They had their accepted practices, their creeds, and, ultimately, [they] even fell away from their own message, to where they would no longer accept the message on holiness.

Is this what happened? *Eerdman's Hand Book to the History of Christianity*, on page 450, says this: "Methodism then began, not as a church or a sect, but as a society. Only at his death did the declaration, in 1784, it assured that, on Wesley's death, his authority would pass to the Methodist Conference, represented by one hundred of its members. By the close of the century, the Methodist church was ready to spread across the world."

No wonder that Revelation 9:7 likens them to ". . . locusts. . . and their faces were as the faces of men." From this time on, it became another "sect." It became like "locusts"-when, my friend, these men took control, they swept over the landscape-with "the faces of men" (in the plural) at the head of it, It became another "sect," an organization operated by men, with men's thoughts.

They became so humanly guided that Revelation 9:2 says, ". . . the sun and the air were darkened. . . ." That "sun," a picture in Malachi 4:2 is, ". . . the Sun of righteousness. . . ." This is Jesus Christ, whom John 1:1 tells us is ". . . the Word. . . ." And John 3:6-8 tells us that the Spirit is like the air, or like ". . . the wind." So the sun and the air being darkened was that the Word and the Spirit could not shine forth any longer, because they were obscured by this "beast" and this system that came up out of this "bottomless pit"-out of the minds of men that were operating under the flesh, and operating according to human dictates, and

formulating systems and creeds that were contrary to the sound teachings of God's eternal Word.

And so, the Word and the Spirit could not shine forth any longer. They were obscured by this system. They so apostatized, my friend, from their own teachings, to where Frank S. Mead, in his writings, **THE HANDBOOK OF DENOMINATIONS**, on page 187, says, "There is a wide freedom in the interpretation and practice of all doctrines. Liberals and conservatives work in close harmony.

**THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, ITS RISE AND PROGRESS**, by H. M. Riggle, on page 190, says, "The very doctrine with which Wesley started his reform is today rejected by a large number of Methodist divines. A number of years ago, B.T. Roberts and several other Methodist ministers began to preach holiness, and the result was excommunication."

I say, that is an image to the beast. That is just like the beast, Roman Catholicism. Roman Catholicism excommunicated those who did not adhere to its teachings and its precepts. **MAN** put them out, and anything MAN can put you out of, is not Divine. And so here, this was an image. My friend, they did just as Roman Catholicism did. They excommunicated. They built an image to the [Papal] "beast." The Wesleyan Era was, indeed, part of the Protestant Era. They were part of the "cloudy day" that Ezekiel talks about, when Ezekiel 34:12 talks about a ". . . cloudy day. . . ." My friend, a cloudy day is one that is mostly clouds with few rays of light.

My friend, truth is composed of three parts. When Jesus spoke in the Gospel of Mark 4:28, it says, "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." So, my friend, truth is composed of three parts: the blade, or the message that Luther received on **JUSTIFICATION**; the ear, the message [the] Wesleys received on **HOLINESS**; but the full corn, the message on UNITY, was not heralded until January of 1880, when Daniel Sidney Warner began to preach a unity message. And, then, the full corn, or a complete Gospel message, could be enjoyed. [But until then] it was indeed a day that was a cloudy day. My friend, we need to understand that Revelation 17:5 talks about, ". . . **THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS**. . . ." And Roman

Catholicism is that **"MOTHER OF HARLOTS."** But my friend, Protestantism contains the harlot daughters. And all of them, my friend, are not having the Husband, which is Jesus Christ. They are systems of man. And so, we need to understand that, dear heart, this Protestant Era was one that was, some light and some darkness. It started as a move of God. But, unfortunately, it got out of Divine order and gave rise to a beastly system known as Protestantism.

But, my friend, thank God, although men had stopped, and would not progress in truth, God reached down again, in A.D. 1880, and got hold of another ministry. Bro. D. S. Warner, and other brethren, began to preach, and the unity of God's people, and a visible body of Christ, one more time appeared on the landscape.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### *THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL - PART ONE*

*Matthew 13:45 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 we begin to examine our Scripture text, we see Christ here in the midst of a prophetic discourse—a discourse where He gives seven distinct parables, which take us down throughout the entirety of the Gospel Day, or Christian Dispensation. The Gospel Day consists of seven distinct time periods, and Christ, in His wisdom, uses these seven parables as vehicles, to convey the truth to us of what transpired in each of these periods of time.

Our text contains the sixth parable, the parable of the pearl, and as such correlates with the sixth period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time from A.D. 1880 to A.D.1930. A little later in our study we will verify and substantiate how these dates were obtained.

Now, as we begin to consider this text, we must review what has transpired to bring us up to this place. We saw that when Christ came on the scene in His first advent, that Matthew 13:6 says, ". . . the sun was up. . . ." In other words, as the Apostle Peter said in his writings in 2 Peter 1:19, ". . . the day dawn[ed]. . . ." There was a new day that had dawned, a new era that had commenced, a day of light, when ". . . the Sun of righteousness. . . ," as Malachi 4:2 denotes Him, arose and a dispensation of time, the Christian Dispensation, commenced.

But, unfortunately, the morning-time glory that was so bright initially, was short lived, and in Matthew 13:25, Jesus gives us a revelation and tells us that, ". . . men slept. . . ."denoting that an apostasy began to take place. And, my friend, we find that, not only did it begin to take place, but as a result, it became so predominant that Revelation 8:8 declares that ". . . a great mountain burning with fire and

cast into the sea. . . ," portraying a massive, full-scale apostasy. That, my friend, which had been "a great mountain with fire" was extinguished. The fire was out, as it were, as a prevailing condition that could be publicly viewed. And so, a massive apostasy took place and much of what had been a divine organism, the Church, in the hands of God, became a human organization that fell into the hands of men.

Up out of this same sea of apostasy, out of the minds of these same men, a religious system arose. One that John the Revelator caught a glimpse of in Revelation 13:1, where he penned, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a **BEAST RISE UP OUT OF THE SEA. . . .**" This beast that dominated the landscape for a thousand-year period of time was the religious system of Roman Catholicism.

After a space of time, God turned the sword of truth, or as He denoted in Revelation 2:16, ". . . the sword of my mouth. . . ," loose. And, thus, the Sixteenth Century Reformation began, with the truth of Romans 1:17 being heralded, that ". . . The just shall live by faith." But, again, men took matters in their own hands, and what started as a divine move, the Reformation, gave rise to another man-made, beastly system that John saw rise up in Revelation 13:11; it is that religious system of Protestantism.

God, again, in His faithfulness, and in His desire to get man back to Biblical truth, reached down and enabled some men to find "a treasure," as Matthew 13:44 portrays. And they did, indeed, for "aa treasure," as Matthew 13:44 portrays. And they did, indeed, for a season, have a knowledge of the beauty of holiness. But after John and Charles Wesley passed off the stage of action, this "star," too, fell, and opened "a bottomless pit" condition, as the pit, to reign for a period of time.

In light of Biblical truth, dear heart, I must say, the system of Protestantism is not a religious system that God ordained. The religious system of Protestantism, my friend, is not, and never has been a Christian system. It was authored and developed by men, and by the **WILL** of men, not by the will of God.

So, it is against this backdrop that our text commences.

Notice that it says, here in Matthew 13:45, "**AGAIN**, the kingdom of heaven is like. . . ." We find again that our text commences with this word "again," so, my friend, it indicates a truth to us. And this word "again," so, my friend, it indicates a truth to us. And not only does this text begin in this manner, but each of these last parables [do]. In Matthew 13:44, the parable of the treasure; in Matthew 13:45, the parable of the pearl; and in Matthew 13:47, the parable of the net; each commences with this same word: "again." This teaches us that the truth of these texts, the truth that these texts portray, the era of time that they represent, is a restoration of precious truths, my friend, that He is bringing again. [He is] bringing back that which was previously known but [was] lost sight of during the dark and the cloudy day.

Now, again, He employs this phrase, here in Matthew 13:45, "...the **KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**..." or we could just as easily and as well say, the Kingdom of God, or the Church of God, without doing any disservice to the text, as they are interchangeable and synonymous terms.

Next, He says, in Matthew 13:46, ". . . the kingdom of heaven is like. . . ." The word "like," here, comes from the Greek root base word homou, which means, "at the same place or time." In other words, this depicts the prevailing condition that was taking place at the same time. This is the predominant condition that the Church was dealing with in the era that is under consideration in the passage which we are viewing.

Here we find He goes on and gives us the real burden and heart of the lesson or of the text. Now, let us look right into our lesson and see what Jesus is portraying to us. Here in Matthew 13:45, He says, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a **MERCHANT MAN** seeking goodly pearls. . . ." So first we find He likens this era unto a "merchant man. Now, what is a merchant? Well, *Webster's New World Dictionary* tells us that a **MERCHANT** is "a person whose business is buying and selling goods for profit."

Now, do the Scriptures deal with such thoughts as buying and selling goods and [making a] profit? Well, we must remember that He is using literal items that you and I can



readily comprehend and understand as word vehicles to convey spiritual truths that are not so readily perceived and understood. So the question arises, "Do the Scriptures use such terms as buying and selling and profiting in a Spiritual sense?" Well, the Wise Man penned in his writings, in Proverbs 23:23, he wrote, "**BUY** the truth, and **SELL** it not, also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding." Here the Wise Man brings up the thought of buying and selling, and then [he] tells us what type of goods the saints are to deal in: truth, wisdom, instruction and understanding. Each and every one of these items that he enumerates is a spiritual commodity. Jesus, in Revelation 3:18, declares, "I counsel thee to BUY of me gold tried in the fire. . . ." In these verses we see demonstrated the thought of buying and selling.

And, the Apostle Paul told the young minister, Timothy—who was around eighteen years of age when he penned this epistle to this young minister—he admonished him, in 1 Timothy 4:13, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine." Then he says, in 1 Timothy 4:15, ". . . that thy profiting may appear to all." So here we have buying, selling, and profiting, my friend, of spiritual commodities, letting us know, in a symbolic sense, that, certainly, we are to be merchants.

Now, notice, in each of the instances—the buying, the selling, and the profiting—those things which constitute the activity of what Matthew 13:45 denoted as, ". . . a merchant man. . . ," were in regards to truth, or an understanding of truth. Now, what is truth? Pilate heralded that question in bygone ages, and Jesus answered it. In the Gospel of John, 17:17, He said, ". . . thy word is truth."

So, here we find that this "merchant man" is one who deals in spiritual commodities. His goods are spiritual goods. His goods, my friend, consist of precious truths, and [the] instruction and understanding and wisdom which pertain to them.

Truth, and an understanding of it, is spoken of in the Scriptures as merchandise. In Proverbs 3:13, here the Wise Man, again, is speaking, and saying, "Happy is the man that **FINDETH** wisdom, and the man that **GETTETH** understanding. For

the **MERCHANDISE** of it [What? Wisdom and understanding] is better than the **MERCHANDISE OF SILVER**, and the **GAIN** thereof than **FINE GOLD**." So, the "merchandise" that is being dealt with is precious truth and the understanding of it. To make it a little clearer, Proverbs 3:13, in The Amplified Bible, renders it in this manner, ". . . the man who gets understanding [drawing it forth from God's Word]. . . ."

Now, who is this that deals in this merchandise? It is referred to in our text, Matthew 13:45. As "... a **MERCHANT MAN**...", but, who, in reality, does this represent? What is it emblematic of? Who is this one that deals in this merchandise of precious truth? Well, from this verse, my friend, we find that it is, indeed, "a merchant," one who buys, sells, and profits. Now, who is it that deals in this merchandise? In Proverbs 31:10, my friend, the Wise Man poses a question, "Who can find a virtuous woman?" And if you will read the remainder of this text, in the original language of the Hebrew, from this verse on, verse 10 through the remaining verses of this chapter, the last 22 verse of this chapter is a praise of a "virtuous woman." And in the original Hebrew, they are alphabetical and go through, consecutively, the Hebrew alphabet, from the first character to the last. All the alphabet is used to describe the attributes of this "virtuous woman." So, what she represents is something that is all-inclusive, something that meets man's needs from A to Z, from beginning to end, if you please. It is, my friend, that one that God has placed in this time world to be able to minister to the entirety of man's needs.

So, who is this woman? What does she represent? Well, if we would survey the Book of Proverbs, we would find that throughout this writing there are two predominant women. There is the strange woman that is spoken of in the Proverbs. And spoken of in great detail in the seventh chapter of Proverbs. There is the strange woman representing, my friend, a whore. This is representing, my friend, false religion or "mystery Babylon," (Revelation 17:5) if you please. And then, my friend, there is also the virtuous woman in Chapter 31, who is portraying The Church.

Now, someone may ask, "Is this what she represents? Is it

The Church? Well, there in Proverbs, Chapter 31, we begin to examine this text a little more closely and we find here in Proverbs 31:10, the question is posed, "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies." But if you will read it in The Greek-English Septuagint, the Scriptures that was used at the time of Christ's first advent, it says, Proverbs 31:19, ". . . such a one is more valuable than precious stones."

Now, where else do we see precious stones mentioned and elaborated upon? In the Book of Revelation 21:19 we find it here where it says, "And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of **PRECIOUS STONES.**" So, we look here and we find, my friend, that this "foundation of the wall of the city" is certainly within the city.

Now, what were these "foundations of the wall of the city" (Revelation 21:19)? So, we look here and we find, my friend, that this "foundation of the wall of the city" is certainly within the city.

Now, what is this wall that he is speaking of? If you will look in Isaiah 26:1, the prophet, heralds and says, "In the day [A prophetic expression of the Gospel Day.] shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city; [Right back again to that City] salvation will God appoint for walls. . . ." Or The Greek-English Septuagint says, ". . . its wall. . . ." Because, my friend, there is only one salvation. There is no salvation in any other. Acts 4:12 says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved," So it is exclusive. It is one wall. And the wall is salvation. Now, back to Revelation 21:19, ". . . the wall. . . ." is salvation.

What is the city he speaks of? Revelation 21:19 says, "And the foundations of the wall of the CITY were garnished with all manner of precious stones." Well, if you would backup, you would find in Revelation 21:9, "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." So, here we see we are getting a revelation, in a vision, of "the bride, the Lamb's

wife which is The Church. And, my friend, we find that all of mankind's needs can be **MET** or addressed in Her. Because Psalm 87:7 says, ". . . all my **SPRINGS** are in thee." So, what we are seeing here, is we are seeing a picture of The Church.

In Proverbs 31:14, it says, "She is like the **MERCHANTS'** ships; she bringeth her food from afar." Now, notice what the true people of God do. It says, "bringeth her food from afar." They do not eat what everyone else does. "Her food is from afar." It is not of this world. It is from afar.

Proverbs 31:18 says, "She perceiveth that her merchandise is good; [How does She know?] her **CANDLE** goeth not out by night." She knows it is good because it keeps Her light shining.

Here, my friend, is a picture of "the city." The Church, reappearing on the "hill" as Matthew 5:14 declared.

Now, what connection does this have to our lesson text? Well, we found, that truth is likened unto "merchandise." And The Church is likened unto "a merchant."

Now, look at our text in Matthew 13:45, ". . . a merchant man, **SEEKING** goodly pearls. . . ." Let us look a little closer and see what Jesus was trying to convey in this text. Here in Matthew 13:45, is "a merchant man."

In the prior parable, the parable of the treasure, Matthew 13:44, it merely records, ". . . a man. . . ." The man digging in the field was not necessarily searching for a treasure. But, it was found unexpectedly in the routine course of his digging.

But this man, Matthew 13:45 declared, was "seeking." He was in active pursuit. He spent his life in the search. He devoted his life exclusively to this.

Now, notice, though he is as Matthew 13:45 declares, ". . . a merchant man. . . ." That he is indeed a specialist. He only dealt in one item. Matthew 13:45 says, he was ". . . seeking **GOODLY PEARLS**. . . ." Now, what does "pearls" typify in the Scriptures? In Matthew 7:6, Jesus said, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your **PEARLS** before swine. . . ."

Now, pearls are most delicate. More so than jewels, and here He is speaking of truths. But truths that are most

delicate. Truths that are most precious. Truths that are rare indeed.

And in this lesson we find, my friend, a people who no longer would take the weak and beggarly elements that this world had to offer. No longer would take what religious institutions wanted to offer. No longer would take what religious institutions wanted to give unto them. They wanted "food from afar" (Proverbs 31:14). They wanted that food that would keep the "candle" (Proverbs 31:18) burning brilliantly and brightly. They wanted to see that City restored and set back up on a "hill" where, my friend, that it could truly be, as God ordained, that light to the world.

These were honest, hungry, seeking hearts that were looking for rare truth—for a rare message. And in this lesson we find that a rare message is found. And a rare people embrace it and live it.

Here in this lesson, we see this "merchant man." In Matthew 13:45, it says, this ". . . merchant man, seeking. . . ," is emblematic of an age that was not satisfied. He is symbolic of a people, who at the close of the fifth period, in the proximity of the mid-eighteen-hundreds, was searching for fullness. These were a people who did not want what man had to offer and to feed them. They wanted that **GOOD MERCHANDISE**—that food from "afar." They were dissatisfied with Protestantism and what it offered mankind.

The people of God were being stirred into a state of unrest. Jeremiah 50:6 says, "My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have **FORGOTTEN** their resting place." God had His people in a state of unrest. So that they might be as Matthew 13:45 says, ". . . seeking. . . ." And as Jesus taught in Matthew 7:7 ". . . seek, and ye shall find. . . ."

In Part Two we will look to see how they sought, and we will see what occurred.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL - PART TWO

*Matthew 13:45 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.*

Before us we have the parable of the pearl, the series of seven parables that Jesus gave us, that are recorded in Matthew, Chapter 13.

In this chapter, Jesus employs these parables in a prophetic sense to take us down through the seven periods that comprise the Gospel Day. Through the vehicle of these parables, He reveals to us much of what has transpired down through the course of this Christian Dispensation.

Since this parable, the parable of the pearl, is the sixth parable, it coincides with the sixth period of the Gospel Day, that period of time from A.D. 1880 to A.D.1930. We will validate these dates as we go through the course of our study.

Our lesson text begins, here in Matthew 13:45, with the word "**AGAIN**. . . ." Which lets us know, that as Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 1:9, ". . . there is no new thing under the sun." But, what we are seeing portrayed here in this lesson text, is a restoration of a truth that had been understood and enjoyed previously.

Next, He proceeds to say here in Matthew 13:45, ". . . the **KINGDOM of HEAVEN**. . . ." Which is an interchangeable term with The Kingdom of God or The Church of God. Since the day of Pentecost they are synonymous and interchangeable terms.

Then Jesus declares, here in our text, in Matthew 13:45, ". . . the kingdom of heaven is **LIKE**. . . ." This word "like" comes from the Greek word, which has its base as the root word homou which means, "at the same place or time." This teaches us that this was the predominant condition taking place at the same time as our text is dealing with.

Now, we found in our last study, that during this period of time, Jesus speaks of and He declares here in Matthew

13:45, "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a **MERCHANT** man. . . ." Now, the questions arise: Why did He employ this particular term? What does it denote to us? To answer that, we must pose the question, What is a merchant? Webster's New World Dictionary tells that "a merchant is a person whose business is buying and selling goods for profit." And we found that the Scriptures do speak about buying, selling, and profiting. In Proverbs 23:23, the Wise Man declared, "Buy the truth, and **SELL** it not. . . ." In 1 Timothy 4:13, he says here, "Till I come, give attendance to reading. . . ." Now, why did the Apostle Paul admonish the young minister of this? First Timothy 4:15, ". . . that thy profiting may appear to all." So, the Scriptures do speak in terms of buying, selling and profiting.

Precious truth, and the understanding of it is likened unto "merchandise" in the Scriptures. In Proverbs 3:13-14, again the Wise Man declares: "Happy is the man that **FINDETH** wisdom, and the man that **GETTETH** understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the **MERCHANDISE** of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold." Now, who deals in this merchandise?

Proverbs 31:14 declares, "She is like the merchants' ships. . . ." What is the picture before us? Here The Church is likened unto a virtuous woman. In Proverbs 31:10, it says, "Who can find a virtuous woman?" And this **VIRTUOUS WOMAN** is the antecedent of this word SHE in Proverbs 31:14, where it declares "She is like the merchants' ships. . . ." What is the picture? The Church is like unto this "virtuous woman," and she in Proverbs 31:14, where it declares "**SHE** is like the "merchants' ships". . . ." What is the picture before us? The Church is like unto this "virtuous woman," and she is like the "merchants' ships."

How? Proverbs 31:14 declares, ". . . she bringeth her food from afar." In other words, she does not eat what everyone else does. Her food is from afar. It is not of this world. It is from the other shore. It is not of this time world. But it is beyond the realms of time. It is in, my friend, the eternal realm and comes from the other shore.

What is the lesson? At the close of the fifth period of

time, we find it in Revelation 9:1-2. It tells us there in Revelation 9:1, that ". . .I saw a star fall. . . ." This is a portrayal of a ministry who fell. This ministry fell. They failed, my friend, to hold their position. And Revelation 9:2 says, "And he opened the bottomless pit. . . ." And in so doing, he again loosed the hideous beast of Protestantism.

But, in the face of it all there was a people, a pure people, who would not eat the sayings of men. They were as Matthew 13:45 declares, saying they were ". . . like unto a merchant man. . . ." They only wanted to deal in truths.

Our text in Matthew 13:45 says they were ". . . seeking **GOODLY PEARLS**. . . ." Pearls are rare. They are delicate and precious. And the truth that they were "seeking" and crying out for was delicate, fragile, and rare indeed.

They were as Matthew 13:45 denotes, "seeking" because they were in a state of unrest. God had troubled them so they would see. Back in the prophecy of Jeremiah 50:6, it says, ". . . they have forgotten their resting place." And certainly, through the dark and cloudy day, the saints of God could find no abiding place. There is no resting place in the realms of sectarianism.

Now, let us look and catch a glimpse of how they, my friend, were seeking. So, that we might know how they came to find what Matthew 13:46 calls ". . . one pearl of great price. . . ."

And, we know that this "pearl" was not as many in the realms of religion suppose. It was not Jesus, because, my friend, they already had the message of justification by faith (Romans 1:17) that came in the Lutheran Era. They already had the message of holiness and sinless perfection that was restored through the Wesleyan Era. And, so my friend, these people were not seeking for Jesus. They already had an experimental knowledge of salvation. They were already virtuous.

Now, how did they go about seeking? They sought and applied of the proper source.

Now, let us begin to study what was transpiring at the close of the fifth period of time. Where God, my friend, was troubling a people and causing them to become dissatisfied.



And troubled to where they began to seek that divine resting place, or the abiding place that God desires that mankind enjoy in this time world.

In the book of Revelation 6:9-11, we want to begin reading, the penman here declares, "And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled."

Now, here we have before us, my friend, a portrayal of the time period that Revelation 6:9 here denotes as, ". . . the fifth seal. . . ." My friend, or that period of time from A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1880. This is the time period that was commonly known as the Wesleyan Era.

Now, let us see what sets the stage for the sixth period of this Gospel Day. Or for this "merchant" to find this precious "pearl." Let us examine this text closely.

Now, remember, as we study, that the nature of the Revelation is that it is, indeed, a symbolic book. In Revelation 1:1, here John declares, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and **SIGNIFIED** it. . . ." The nature of Revelation language is that it is signified, which means "revealed by signs." And if you read in Webster's New World Dictionary, his definition of a "sign," he will tell you that it is "a symbol." So, the Book of Revelation's nature is that it is symbolic. And that its expressions are symbolic expressions. Now, we must keep that ever before our minds as we study here in Revelation, Chapter 6.

Now, let us begin to look at this text in Revelation 6:9 where it says, "And when he had opened the fifth seal, [That period of time from A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1880—the Wesleyan Era—it said] I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain

for the word of God. . . ."

Now, immediately, our minds want to run off with the thoughts of literalism and think of martyrs and martyrdom. But, my friend, these are not martyrs. Again, we are dealing in symbolic expressions. And this era of time from A.D. 1730 to A.D. 1880, the Wesleyan time period, historically was not an age of martyrdom.

Now, let us consider what these symbolic expressions portray. Here it says in Revelation 6:9, that he ". . . saw under the altar the souls. . . ." Now, what do "souls" typify in this symbolic expression? Back in Genesis 12:5, it says, "And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the SOULS that they had gotten in Haran. . . ." Here it talks about the "souls" that they had gotten in Haran.

Now, we know that was not a literal occurrence. Abram and Sarai certainly did not take disembodied spirits or the spiritual or eternal portion of man with them. It was not speaking literally of souls. This is an expression that merely means people. The New International Version renders Genesis 12:5, ". . . and the **PEOPLE** they had acquired. . . ." The actual Hebrew word here in this text in Genesis 12:5, which is the original language of the Old Testament, is the word naphash which means, "a breathing creature." So here we are referring to people. And, so, my friend, these "souls" are merely people. So, when it says here in Revelation 6:9, ". . . I saw under the altar the souls. . . ." it is simply talking about a people.

Now, we go on and we find here that it says, ". . . I saw under the ALTAR. . . ." Now, what does this represent? When he brings up the figurative expression of an "Altar," what is this? In Hebrews 13:10, we find here that the Apostle penned and declared, "We have an **ALTAR**. . . ." Now, what was he speaking of? What was the topic of his writing? What was he addressing? Back up to Hebrews 13:8, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." So, my friend, what is this "Altar?" What is he speaking of? This "Altar" is **JESUS CHRIST**. He is the true sacrifice for mankind. So, this "Altar" is a figurative expression of Jesus Christ.

When it says here in Revelation 6:9, ". . . I saw **UNDER** the altar the souls. . . ." It merely means that he saw, in this symbolic expression, a people who were under Christ—a people who were yielded and in submission to Christ. It goes on to say here in Revelation 6:9, that these people "... were **SLAIN** for the word of God..." Now, again, drop the thought of literalism. Again, do not allow your mind to run to the thought of martyrdom, when it says, they were "slain" for the Word of God. What is he seeing here? When he sees a people who were "slain" this is an expression to represent that these were a people who died out. A people who were sold out, died out, totally consecrated and yielded to Christ.

Is this what it means? In Matthew 16:25, let us look at the words of Jesus where Jesus spoke and said, "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." And, certainly He was not speaking of losing literal life. But, He was speaking of laying down your life and of dying out in the sense of consecration, and being totally yielded and in submission to the will of God. And truly having our own will, as it were, slain and died out to Him.

In Galatians 2:20, the Apostle Paul declares, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. . . ." So here we find it is a picture of those who died out. Those who, my friend, are consecrated to the 'Nth degree. These were the true people of God, towards the end of the Wesleyan Era, that had died out.

It tells us here in the Revelation that they had "white robes." In Revelation 6:11, it says, "And white **WHITE ROBES** given unto every one of them. . . ." My friend, this "white robes" is a symbolic expression of holiness and righteousness. In Revelation 19:8, it says, And to her [Speaking of the Lamb's Wife, The Church] was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." So, these "white robes" was a portrayal of a people that were living in righteousness and holiness, and living the holiness message. These were the true saints who had embraced the holiness message and had died out.

And one thing we find, friend, is that true holiness is

a yearning. True holiness yearns fellowship with all others who have true holiness. So, my friend, we find these were the ones who had embraced the holiness message. They had died out and were consecrated. And the one thing that true holiness yearns is fellowship or unity.

But, the sectarian beast kept them divided by sectarian walls.

So, these dear saints, who dealt in truth, as our text in Matthew 13:45 declares, who were ". . . a merchant man." They were seeking and they were seeking for the natural extension of holiness which is unity and harmony.

Now, how did they seek it? Revelation 6:10 here says, "And they **CRIED** with a loud voice. . . ." Now, what does this portray? In Psalm 39:12, the Psalmist penned it and said, "Hear my prayer, O Lord, and give ear to my CRY. . . ." So, the cry here is prayer. In Psalm 61:1, he reiterated it again and said, "Hear my **CRY**, O God; attend unto my prayer." So, this **CRY** is prayer.

Now, how did they pray? What was it they were seeking? In Revelation 6:10, again, "And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" So, what was their prayer? Their prayer, in essence, was "Lord put judgment on them that dwell on the earth."

Now, again, drop the thought of literalism. These were not disembodied spirits in some eternal realm looking back and crying for vengeance on people on the earth. Far be that from a Christian Spirit. And certainly, those in the eternal realm are not aware of the sorrows and tribulations of this time world. But, here was a people who were a holiness people, under the Altar, in submission to Christ.

And they were crying for judgment to be poured out on them that dwell on the earth. Now, what does the earth represent? In Revelation 13:11, where we see the Protestant beast portrayed, it says, "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth. . . ." So, my friend, this Protestant beast came up out of the earth." They were praying for judgment to be put on Protestantism—on that system that divided and separated them from their brothers and sisters.

Now, what reply did they receive? In Revelation 6:11, it tells us here, ". . . that they should rest [And Hebrews 4:3, tells us 'For we which have believed do enter {present tense} into rest. . . .'] It says they were to continue in their rest from the labors of sin.] . . . until their fellow servants and their brethren, that should be killed as they were. . . ." Now, that clause "as they were," is paramount and important to understanding this text.

How were they killed? Or, how were they "slain" as Revelation 6:9 speaks of. They had died out. So what is the lesson here? What is he saying? When, my friend, he was telling them here that they would ". . . rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that they should be killed **AS THEY WERE**. . ." (Revelation 6:11).

What was He saying? He was saying for them to hold steady and keep praying. And to keep enjoying their rest from the labors of sin. And as soon as He could get a people in position to where they were, as they were totally sold out, totally died out. A people, that regardless of what man thinks, who would take full truth. That regardless of what man thinks, who would take full truth. That as soon as He got a people in that position, as soon, my friend, as this could be "fulfilled" as the last word in Revelation 6:11 declares, He would move and answer in regard to their prayer.

And in Revelation 6:12, when He got such a people in place, it says, ". . . he . . . opened the sixth seal. . . ." My friend, He opened the sixth seal when a people was found that would be totally sold out and committed to take the full message of truth, they found the precious "pearl" of unity and of oneness.

And in January 1880, Daniel Sidney Warner began printing a paper that heralded the message of the unity of God's people, the oneness of the body of Christ,

The holiness movement brought the people of God to the "Kadesh-Barnea" of The Church. And then D. S. Warner was the one used of God to be the "Joshua" who took them into the "Promised Land." That took them into "Canaan Land"—to the land where the "milk and honey," or the Word and the Spirit, flow.

Therefore, as the saints cried and sought, just as Jesus said in Matthew 7:7, ". . . seek, and ye shall find. . . ." They sought for the unity of God's people. And, my friend, when God got a people in position, the Sixth Seal was opened. The "pearl" was found. And as these people prayed and sought for the unity of God's people, it was found in AD 1880 when this message began to be declared one more time.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL - PART THREE

***Matthew 13:45 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.***

In this passage of Scripture text, we see Christ in the midst of a prophetic discourse. In this particular text He relates to us that portion of His discourse that we commonly know as the parable of the pearl. By the help of God, we want to examine this parable a little further.

In Matthew, Chapter 13, we see recorded seven parables that Jesus uses, in a prophetic sense, to take us down throughout the entirety of the Gospel Day.

This particular parable, the parable of the pearl, is the sixth parable in the series. And as such corresponds with the sixth period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time from A.D. 1880 to A.D.1930. By way of review, we found that our text commences with the word, "Again. . ." here in Matthew 13:45. This is letting us know that this is not something new. But, rather, it is a restoration of truth that had been previously understood, but had been lost sight of during the dark and cloudy day of Papalism and Protestantism.

Next, we see the phrase employed here, in Matthew 13:45, ". . . the kingdom of heaven. . ." Which we know is an interchangeable term with The Kingdom of God, or The Church of God.

Then He goes on to say here in Matthew 13:45, ". . . the kingdom of heaven is like. . ." Or the word "like" coming from the Greek root word homou which means, "at the same place or time." This is portraying to us that this was the predominant condition that The Church was facing during this time period.

Now, during this time period, A.D. 1880 to A.D. 1930, He depicts this age here in Matthew 13:45, as ". . . a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls. . ." Webster's New World

Dictionary tells us that, "a merchant is a person whose business is buying and selling goods for profit." And we find that the people of God in this era were actively engaged in this practice. In Proverbs 23:23, the Wise Man declared, "**BUY** the truth, and **SELL** it not. . . ." And in 1 Timothy 4:15, ". . . that thy profiting may appear to all." So, the saints, my friend, were this "merchant man" that Matthew 13:45 speaks of that were dealing in truths or truth as a Spiritual commodity.

Notice, the people in this period were "seeking," Matthew 13:45 declares. They were in a state of unrest. Why? Think with me—the Lutheran Era saw the truth of Romans 1:17, ". . . The just shall live by faith." The truth concerning sinless perfection and holiness was restored in the Wesleyan Era.

And true holiness is not satisfied alone. True holiness yearns for Divine fellowship and unity. In the General Epistle of 1 John 1:3, the aged John pens, ". . . that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." This verse portrays a truth, that those whose fellowship is truly with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ, have a great desire to have fellowship with all others who are enjoying this fellowship with the Father and with the Son.

It was for this that they were "seeking" as Matthew 13:45 declares. Or "cried" as Revelation 6:10 declares, And as soon as God got a people in position, Revelation 6:12 says, ". . . he had opened the sixth seal. . . ." Or in the language of our text here in Matthew 13:46, ". . . he had found one pearl of great price. . . ." In January 1880, D. S. Warner began to declare the message of the unity of the faith—the oneness of the body of believers, and the message of **ONE** visible Church.

Someone may ask, "Is this **REALLY** what the 'one pearl of great price' that Matthew 13:46 speaks of, represents?" Certainly so! We must dismiss the thought that religious advocates teach that this pearl is Jesus. These people already had Jesus. They had justification, they had salvation, and they had holiness. But, because they were a holiness people, they yearned and sought for something more. They yearned, their heart craved Bible unity. And a heart that does not desire unity and harmony, is not a truly holy heart.



Religion cannot properly see this pearl as it is because they refuse, sad to say, to accept the message on The Church and the unity of the body of believers. Because the acceptance of that message would be the ruination of the existence of their organizations.

Now, again, the question is this, my friend. Is this really this "one pearl of great price" of which Matthew 13:46 speaks? Is that truly what it represents? Let us examine it to see.

Notice, He said here in Matthew 13:46, ". . . one pearl of **GREAT PRICE**. . . ." Now what does this tell us? That a **GREAT PRICE** a supreme price was paid to obtain this pearl. Now, what was this price, this **GREAT PRICE**? In Acts 20:28, a very familiar verse of text, here Luke pens, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which he hath **PURCHASED** with **HIS OWN BLOOD**." That was a **GREAT PRICE**. That was the supreme price. My friend, when He paid and purchased The Church of God with His own blood. That was a great price. He not only suffered physically but, Isaiah 53:12 says, ". . . he hath poured out his **SOUL**, unto death. . . ." Ephesians 5:25 says that, ". . . Christ . . . **LOVED** the church, and gave **HIMSELF** for it. . . ." What was this "great price" that Matthew 13:46, in our text, speaks of? It is Jesus, that Ephesians 5:25 says, "gave himself." And who not only gave as Acts 20:28 denotes, "His own blood," but "gave Himself." Or as Isaiah prophesied in Isaiah 53:12, "poured out His soul." This was, indeed, the **GREATEST OF PRICES**.

Now, what did it produce? According to Acts 20:28, all this was the purchase price of ". . . the church of God."

Now, notice, our text clearly states here in Matthew 13:46, ". . . he had found **ONE** pearl. . . ." This is in the singular. This is clearly and expressly singular. And if you go back to the writings of the Wise Man, in Song of Solomon 6:9-10 where he portrays a figurative expression of **THE CHURCH**, he says this: "My dove, my undefiled is but **ONE**; **SHE** [not they] is the only one of her mother, **SHE** [not they] is the choice **ONE** of her that bare **HER**. [Not them] The daughters saw **HER**, [not them] and blessed **HER**; yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised **HER**. Who is **SHE** [not they] that

looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as **AN ARMY** [singular] with banners?" The Scriptures are very emphatic that **THE CHURCH** is singular. It was easy to see from this reading what the burden of the Wise Man's heart was as he was attempting to convey the singularity and oneness of The Church. My friend, here we find the Wise Man's heart was as he was attempting to convey the singularity and oneness of The Church. My friend, here we find explicitly told to us that it is not a multiplicity of **THEM** but **ONE**. In Ephesians 4:4, the Apostle Paul pens and says, "There is **ONE** body. Now, what is this body? In Colossians 1:18, it says, "And he [speaking of Christ.] is the head of **THE** [singular] body, [singular] **THE CHURCH**. . . ." [Singular.]

What is the lesson? In our text, we have here in Matthew 13:45, ". . . a merchant man **SEEKING**. . . ." These people knew experimentally, what salvation was. That holiness was, but yet they yearned. They were seeking for something more. And Matthew 13:46 says, ". . . when he had found **ONE PEARL** of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." In other words, he found a truth so profound, so precious, so priceless, that he realized that unless he obtained it he could never be satisfied with the truths that he had previously.

How does this relate to The Church being as Matthew 13:46 denotes a "pearl?" Well, because a pearl is an organic product, it is not a mineral, not a gem. Minerals and gems are produced by the earth. But, a pearl is unique in that it is produced by a living being. And The Church was produced by a Living Being, Jesus Christ. And just, my friend, as it is that The Church is an organism, not an earthly organization, so the pearl comes from a living organism.

My friend, The True Church did not come up out of the earth as sectarianism did in Revelation 13:11, but, came up out of the side of Jesus Christ. Just as a pearl comes out of the oyster, this verse, Matthew 13:46, where He talks about the ". . . one pearl of great price. . . ," that **GREAT PRICE** was the vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ. And, my friend, just as the oyster has to die and is forced open to retrieve the pearl, Jesus Christ died. And, my friend, through force a

spear pierced His side and forthwith flowed blood and water (John 19:34) which was His Bride. The blood was for the remission of sins. The water was for regeneration that makes one a new creature and a candidate to be inducted into The Church. So, forthwith, out of His side came His Bride. And, my friend, He produced it out of His side at His death. It came out forcibly. Just as the pearl comes forcibly out of the oyster.

Was this the precious message on unity and oneness of the Body of Christ that Bro. D. S. Warner had? Is this actually what he saw? Is this actually the "pearl" that was found? I say, it was indeed the precious message on unity and the oneness of the Body of Christ that Bro. Warner saw and began to herald in A.D.1880.

Some may ask, "Was this the truth, or the message that Bro. Warner declared in his era? Well, let us glean some excerpts from his book, *The Cleansing of the Sanctuary* to see what the precious pearl of truth was that he found and he declared.

In this writing, *The Cleansing of the Sanctuary* on page 237, Bro. D. S. Warner writes this: "So then men's sects do not make visible God's church: but on the contrary they obstruct her life, and obscure her glory. These are facts of history that no honest, intelligent man can deny. The babel of human sects has long obscured the sight of the church of the first-born. Until the evening light revealed the true church, as she shone out in the morning of the dispensation, everybody looked upon the man-built substitutes as the divine church, and the body of Christ, which only is the church, was scarcely discerned at all."

He said, on page 240 of the same writing: ". . . the infinite grace of God is manifestly sufficient to mold all men into one harmonious body, there is no need of but one church of the living God. Every description of the church shows that it is but one. Every relation that she sustains to her God demands that she be one. Accordingly, we are told that Christ 'is the head of the body, the church.'" Therefore as there is but one head, there can be but one body."

On page 241 of the same book, it says, ". . . many . . .

Scriptures, declare in the most positive terms that God acknowledges but one body. There is but one true church or assembly, just as there is but one God, one true God. Since we are called of Christ into one body, the call to join various bodies must proceed from the antichrist. There is absolutely but one body, and one Christ, its head."

On page 244, he declares: "We have just seen that God's church is one fold, one family, one body. We shall next prove from the Scriptures that her divine author demands perfect harmony in all her members, has fully provided for that unity, and forbids all divisions. The community of God is not only one body, but all divisions of that one body are condemned in strongest terms."

On page 262, he writes: "Here again this beautiful fruit of perfected holiness is recorded; namely, unity."

On page 263, he says: ". . . we must expose the perverse reasonings of modern heretics. In one strain of logic they affirm that it is all right that the Christian world is divided into so many different shades of belief, and variety of church-organization; that thereby the gospel has been more extensively spread and more people evangelized, because everybody can find a church to suit him. And when the Word of God is brought forward to show that all God's people should be one, they seek to cover the enormous sin of schisms by saying, '"All God's people are one.'" Now while it must be admitted that there is a measure of inward fellowship, and a tendency to draw together, in the hearts of all who possess any degree of saving grace, it is equally true that there is such a thing as the sin of division."

On page 264, he pens: "Perfect unity is the order of God's church, and his will in all that believe; The disciples of Christ, may be in a scattered condition in sects, and such are all the Protestant sects, so far as real disciples compose their membership; Where separations of any kind are brought in between truly converted men, the church is not in the normal state, between truly converted men, the church is not in the normal state, between truly converted men, the church is not in the normal state. And spiritual death must sooner or later ensue to the body thus disintegrated; and being spiritually

dead it is no longer God's church; The formation of sects, or organizing divisions, both destroys the church and prevents the salvation of the world."

On page 266, he pens: "It is true there is in these last days a large sisterhood of Protestant bodies calling themselves churches, but the Lamb's wife owns no kin to them. They are of an entirely different family. Their mother is '"Mystery, Babylon, the mother of harlots."' As God is one, only one religion can emanate from Him. As '"God is not the author of confusion,"' His church cannot be split up and confused with a lot of rival institutions. He recognizes no sisterhood of churches. If, therefore, there is but one church that emanated from God, whence come the rest? Martin Luther would answer, '"Whatever is not of God is of the devil."'

On page 267, he declares: "God's church is exclusive, like Himself. And he who is not willing to commit himself exclusively to God and to the church that Jesus purchased with His own blood, but endorses the great wicked babel of isms, and by so doing avoids persecution—he is not fit for the kingdom. While men have held a place both in God's church, and man's creeds, through ignorance, yet when the true light comes they have no cloak for their ignorance and must cut loose from the one or the other. If they then refuse to walk in the light, '"It shall be taken away from them that which they have."'

I would say from these readings, even though there have been very excessive readings, it is very clear what the truth was that the Warner Era had. They, indeed, had a clear message on the oneness of the Body of Christ—the oneness of the body of believers. That God, my friend, has one Body, one Church over which He governs. And it is not His desire that they be separated or in division. And division is sin.

God, my friend, wants His people together in harmony and unity. And this was the message Bro. D.S. Warner received the light entry on. The message of unity of God's people. And I say, dear heart, it is a precious message. It is a precious pearl. It, my friend, is a truth that came at a Great price. Because G because Jesus, the scripture says, "gave himself for it," (Ephesians 5:25) or for The Church. And, my friend, the

enemy is working, even today, to blind the minds of men. And get them to separate over differences that are not Scriptural or Biblical and bring schisms and divisions. But, I am here to tell you that the Word of God still declares, "There is one body" (Ephesians 4:4). The true Body of Christ cannot be divided. And when one separates from the Body of Christ, they are separating from Christ. And when they separate from Christ, they no longer are Christ's, they are in sin, albeit the sin of division.

So, I say, it is very clear what the truth was that the Warner Era had—a clear message on the oneness of the Body of Christ, The Church.

In Part 4, we will look a little closer, and we will look at what Matthew 13:46 denotes as the ". . . pearl. . . ." And we will study its attributes and find why Jesus employed this particular expression to portray the beauty of the message of The Church of God.

I trust we can see it. I trust you will open your heart to God's Eternal Word, and let Him give you a true revelation of Bible truths.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL - PART FOUR

*Matthew 13:45 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.*

We have been studying the seven prophetic parables of Christ. Which are recorded here in Matthew, Chapter 13. Jesus has taken us down throughout this Christian Dispensation, and the seven time periods of which it is composed of, through the vehicle of these parables. Today's text, Matthew 13:45-46, records the seven time periods of which it is composed through the vehicle of these parables. Today's text, Matthew 13:45-46, records the parable given by Jesus which we commonly call the parable of the pearl.

We want to continue our study of this particular parable. This parable is the sixth in a series of seven which is housed in this chapter. Being the sixth parable it coincides with sixth period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time from A.D. 1880 to A.D. 1930.

We found that this period commences with this date, because in January, 1880, Daniel Sidney Warner, more frequently known as D. S. Warner, began publishing a paper that heralded forth the message of **CHRISTIAN UNITY**, or the **ONENESS** of the Body of Christ.

Now, as we begin to examine this Scripture text, it begins with the employment of the word "again." In Matthew 13:45, Jesus said, the employment of the word "again," the kingdom of heaven is like. . . ." The employment of this word "again" is portraying to us that this is no new thing, but rather, a restoration of hat which has been.

When Bro. D. S. Warner began to declare the message of unity and oneness, that was entrusted to him, and those with him, it was a message that seemed a very strange message. But even though it was one that seemed to be strange, novel and appeared to be a new and a radical concept, it was as old as

the morning time of the Gospel Day.

Jesus expressly prayed in the Gospel of John 17:22, ". . . that they may be one, . . ." That is God's Word, and that is God's will. And this, my friend, was His intent and purpose from the beginning.

So, my friend, I repeat, the employment of this word "again" means that this is no new thing, but, rather, a restoration of that which has been. When Bro. D. S. Warner began to declare the message of unity and oneness that was entrusted to him and those who were of his company, it seemed, many times, to those who were foreign to the message, a very strange message. But, yet, it was not a new or radical concept but it was that which as John heralded in his Epistle that bears his name, "That which was from the beginning. . ." (1 John 1:1). It is God's Word and God's will.

Now, why are God's people not one? Well, it is because of man. It is men who separate people, not God. In Ecclesiastes 7:29, the wise man declares, "Lo, this only have I found, that God made man **UPRIGHT**; but **THEY** [Who? Man] have sought out **MANY** inventions." Sectarian, man-made organizations that separate God's people are man-made inventions. God did not design it, desire it, nor direct it. It is the work of man operating under a contrary spirit other than the Holy Spirit.

So, the employment of the word "again" in Matthew 11:48, tells us that we are merely seeing the reestablishment of a truth that as John penned in his Epistle in 1 John 1:1, "**WHICH WAS FROM** the beginning. . . ." We are seeing a restoration back to the original.

Now, how is this particular age portrayed? Here in Matthew 13:45, it declares, ". . . the kingdom of heaven [Or we found it could well be expressed by saying The Kingdom of God or The Church of God. They are synonymous terms.] is **LIKE**. . . ." Or here in this era this is the predominant condition that The Church was facing.

Now, how did Jesus depict it here? In Matthew 13:45, He says, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a **MERCHANT MAN**, seeking goodly pearls. . . ." The portrayal is of a "merchant man." Webster's New World Dictionary tells us that "a merchant is a person whose business is buying and selling



goods for profit." Someone may say, "God's work should never be regarded or spoken of in the sense of a business." Well, what are you going to do with Jesus' Words? In Luke 2:49, when He declared, ". . . wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" The Father has dealings in terms of **BUYING, SELLING, and PROFITING**. The Wise Man penned in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy the truth, and sell it not. . . ." And in 1 Timothy 4:15, the Apostle Paul instructed the young minister Timothy, ". . . that thy profiting may appear to all." But, these goods, these commodities are Spiritual. During this age, or leading up to it, my friend, a people as Matthew 13:45 denotes, leading up to it, my friend, a people as Matthew 13:45 denotes, were ". . . seeking. . . ." At this juncture in history, they already had a salvation message. Already they had the truth concerning holiness. But, they did not have the one truth that true holiness yearns for and that is fellowship or unity. They were dissatisfied with the wall of sectarianism dividing them from their brethren. They were crying out for judgment to be poured out on the divisive systems of men.

And as soon as the Lord got a people totally sold out and in place, He ". . . open[ed] the sixth seal. . . ," as it tells us Revelation 6:12.

Or as the language of our text, Matthew 13:46 says, ". . . he had found one pearl of **GREAT PRICE**. . . ." This "great price" was the supreme price that Christ paid to produce The Church. In Acts 20:28, it tells there very expressly, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and unto 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**." His own blood was the purchase price. So, indeed, my friend, we find that it was a very great price. It was this supreme price that Christ paid to produce The Church. My friend, He paid His own blood, indeed, I repeat, a great and supreme price.

Now, let us examine this more closely. Why did Christ employ the figure here in Matthew 13:46, of ". . . **ONE PEARL**. . . ," to represent the message or truth concerning The Church? Think with me—a pearl is unique, and it is an **ORGANIC** product. It is not a mineral or a gem. Minerals and gems are

produced by the earth. However, a pearl is produced by a living creature.

Now, my friend we need to begin to think of what this represents to us. It is telling us that The Church did not come up out of the earth, but rather, it came as a product of a living creature, Jesus Christ.

Think of how a pearl is formed. A pearl is formed by an irritating object, such as a grain of sand, finding its way into the mollusk or oyster shell. As that oyster finds supreme discomfort and irritation within its shell it secretes a nacreous fluid. And the fluid gathers and forms in response to that constant irritation and thereby a pearl is formed.

Now, what does this portray to us? Jesus employed this particular imagery to convey, my friend, Spiritual truths to us. What does it portray? First, a pearl is an **ORGANIC** product. And, The Church, my friend, is an **ORGANISM**. It is a body. In Colossians 1:18, the divine penman says, "And he is the **HEAD** of **THE BODY, THE CHURCH...**"

A pearl is produced by a living creature and at the cost of the life of that creature. And Christ came to give life. In the Gospel of John 10:10, He cried and said, ". . . I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." To give the pearl to the world it cost the life of its producer. To produce The Church, Christ gave His life. In John 10:17-18 He says: ". . . I lay down my life. . . No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself."

An oyster must leave its habitat and be placed in the hands of men for the pearl to be extracted. And Christ has left his habitat, heaven, to be placed in the hands of sinful men and order that the pearl, THE CHURCH, might be produced and extracted from his side.

Now, look at how the pearl was formed and what it represents. A pearl is formed by an irritating object. What is this? Sin. Sin, my friend, entered into the world and it is, indeed, an irritant. The oyster finds supreme discomfort and irritation. God and Christ hate sin—they experience supreme discomfort.

But, what happened? It secretes a nacreous fluid, which is a picture of the Holy Spirit. What does it do? What does He

do? In response to that constant irritation a pearl is formed. In other words, it takes the same irritating objects and covers it with a nacreous fluid and makes it into a pearl.

What is the picture before us? It is a picture of that from which He makes The Church. The Apostle Paul penned in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 and he began to enumerate there and said: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were [past tense] some of you: But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." So here he tells us, my friend, in 1 Corinthians 6:11, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed. . . ." That nacreous fluid, the Holy Spirit, dealt with that irritating object, SIN, took that one who had been a sinner, and through salvation makes him part of the pearl, **THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD**.

Seafood Data Research says, "The oyster has to be forcibly opened to get the pearl." And Christ, on Calvary's Tree, was forcibly opened by the sword. For we read in the Gospel of John 19:34, that the Sacred Writer says, "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." So, my friend, Christ, on Calvary's Tree was forced open by the sword, visibly and forcibly.

And, my friend, The Church came out of His side—with blood for the remission of sins—and with water, depicting the Spirit of God. My friend, it is the Word and the Spirit that work salvation that makes one a member of The Church of the Living God. Therefore, on Calvary's Tree, His side was forcibly opened by the sword so that The Church could come out of His side.

Just as the oyster forfeits its life to yield the pearl, so Christ yielded His life to produce The Church, **THE CHURCH OF GOD**. This was the message that was restored in this era of time—the truth on The Church.

- How it was produced.

- That it was divine.
- And that it was singular.

Notice our lesson text is explicit. Here in Matthew 13:46, it says, ". . . Who, when he had found **ONE PEARL** of great price. . . ." There was only **ONE SUPREME PRICE** that was paid. The Hebrew writer tells us in Hebrews 9:26, ". . . but now **ONCE** in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." There was only **ONE** purchase price. He appeared **ONCE** in the end of the world. He sacrificed Himself, and shed His own precious blood. And so, my friend, since there was only one purchased price, there could only be one thing purchased. And that was this **ONE PEARL** that was, my friend, what Ephesians 4:4 calls, when it says, "There is **ONE** body. . . ." I want you to notice, dear heart, that it is in the singular.

- There was only **ONE** purchase price.
- There is only **ONE** body.

The Scriptures are replete with references that show the singularity of The Church. In the Song of Solomon 6:9-10 we find the words of the Wise Man when he declared: "My dove, my undefiled is but **ONE**; she is the only ONE of her mother, she is the choice **ONE** of her that bare her. The daughters saw **HER**, [not them] and blessed her; [not them] yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised **HER**. [In every occasion here it is in the single tense. In every occasion here it is in the single tense. In verse 10 he says,] Who is **SHE** [in the singular] that looketh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as **AN ARMY** [in the singular] with banners." So we find there was **ONE PURCHASE PRICE**, the blood of Jesus Christ. And He, my friend, could only purchase ONE thing. And He purchased **THE CHURCH**, and it is a singular body. Ephesians 4:4 says, "There is **ONE** body. . . ."

Now, let us look at some other qualities of this pearl. A pearl is an organic product. So the Church is an organism; it is not a mineral or a gem. And pearls are not cut or polished by man as gems are. In other words, The Church is untouched by man.

- It is Divine in its entirety.

- It does not need men to cut it, to separate it, or to try to polish it up, or fix it in order to make it attractive to the world.

- But it has a natural beauty—it is not cut or polished by men, such as are gems that come out of the earth.

This teaches us that these systems of religion that come out of the earth have: Men who form them, Men who cut them out of the earth, and Men who fix them and try to make them attractive to others. We need to understand that The True Biblical Church is untouched by man. It is Divine in its entirety. It does not need man to cut it, to separate it, to fix it, or to try to polish it up.

A pearl must be worn or put on to keep its luster. The True Church does not need man's additives. It doesn't need to be polished up to shine. It just needs to be put on and worn, so it will shine. It will have a natural luster. A pearl's luster comes from the body oils with which it comes into contact. And likewise, when God's true people put on this truth and make it a part of them, a part of their lives, there is a natural luster that will shine forth.

A pearl is circular, denoting completeness. This lets us know that in this era of time—the sixth period of time—these brethren had a complete Gospel message: They had the message of salvation, They had the message of holiness, And now they had the message on the unity of God's people. So they had a complete message of truth.

These pearls are also very soft, and they are injured by acids or heat. As organic products they are subject to decay. Now, what does this reveal to us? That The True Church cannot thrive in every atmosphere or environment. That it is fragile and must be lovingly cared for and preserved. Sad to say, there are many localities over our land where this pearl once shone, but no longer shines forth. Why? Because it is decayed, things became too heated, and there was too much acid around. Therefore, the **PEARL** was destroyed.

In the ancient world, a pearl held a very special place in man's heart. People desired it for its beauty. They considered it to be lovely. And we must remember that our text says in Matthew 13:45, ". . . the kingdom of heaven [or The

Kingdom of God] is the loveliest thing in this time world.

God told the prophet, and he penned it in Zechariah 2:8, ". . . for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye." So, we find that The Church, according to Zechariah 2:8 is ". . . the apple of his eye." This reveals to us that She holds a very special place and shines forth with a radiant beauty that comes from love—from the Bride to the Bridegroom. And She is the loveliest thing in this world, because Her face and life shine and radiate with the beauty of Christ. The beauty of love that comes from a Bride (The Church or The Kingdom) enthralled with Her Husband (Jesus Christ) is the loveliest thing in this time world. This was the message and the truth this era found. And it is, yet today, a lovely message of truth. It is not just lovely to hear, but it is also lovely when a people are found who will embrace it, put it on, and let it shine and radiate out through their lives.

Certainly it is no wonder that Jesus chose this particular image in Matthew 13:46 this, ". . . one pearl of great price." It cost a "great price"—the blood of Jesus Christ. And this "great price" produced a beauty that is so rare and so exclusive that the Scriptures denote in Matthew 13:46, that there is only "one pearl" of this type. There is only one body, the Body of Christ, The True Church of the Living God.

And, dear friend, these people in this sixth period of time had a beautiful vision of this Church.

And I would ask, dear heart, is your vision clear? Do you see the beautiful vision of this Church? If you do not see this "one pearl of great price," God certainly desires that you do.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### *THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL - PART FIVE*

*Matthew 13:45 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.*

For several lessons we have been studying this parable which is commonly known as the parable of the pearl. By the help of God, we want to give further consideration to this Scripture text. This parable is the sixth of seven which are housed in Matthew, Chapter 13.

By way of the employment of these parables, Christ takes us down through the seven periods of time which comprise the Gospel Day, with each parable corresponding with a period of time in this Gospel Day.

The parable before us, the parable of the pearl, is the sixth parable and corresponds with the sixth period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time from A.D. 1880 to A.D. 1930.

In prior study, we found that this age which Matthew 13:45 says, ". . . is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls. . . ." This Scripture indicates several truths to us. First, it indicates to us when He likens this age to "a merchant man," it denotes to us that a merchant is one who devotes himself to business. When we begin to consider the thought of "a merchant," we find that a merchant who is successful devotes himself to business, and he has a singleness of purpose. Likewise, the people of God during this era were in earnest about the goods and commodities in which they dealt, and they had a singleness of purpose.

Secondly, during this time period, leading up to finding this pearl, we find it tells us, very explicitly in Matthew 13:45, that they were "**SEEKING** goodly pearls."

Now, we must notice that Matthew 13:46 says, "Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had. . . ." Now what did he possess? I ask you, "What did

he deal in?" Matthew 13:45 tells us that he dealt exclusively in "pearls" or in truth. Therefore this man, or this age, had already accumulated several pearls. We find that he was "a merchant man." And that he was one who was interested and successful, with singleness of purpose. He was actively engaged, actively employed in seeking out "goodly pearl," and he dealt exclusively in pearls.

Matthew 13:46 says that he ". . . sold all that he had. . . ." Now, what did he have? Well, my friend, what did he deal in? He dealt exclusively, Matthew 13:45 says, in "pearls" or truths. So this man, or this age, already had several "pearls," in the plural. They already had the truth of the Lutheran Era which was: The truth of Romans 1:17, ". . . The just shall live by faith," or justification. And also, they already had the truth of the Wesleyan Era concerning holiness, or sinless perfection.

However, the truth that they **FOUND** here in Matthew 13:45, was the ". . . one pearl of great price. . . ." This was the rare, singular, and exclusive message on the **ONE** Body of Christ, **THE CHURCH**. When they found this truth, they had the **FULL GOSPEL MESSAGE** restored. We found a "pearl" is singular, denoting a complete message of truth.

However, in this prophetic text, we find in prophetic language, that "truth" is spoken of in the plural. In Matthew 13:45, it is called "pearls" in the plural. We find in prophetic language, truth consists of three parts. In the Gospel of Mark 4:28, Jesus speaking says, "For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself: "First the blade, [Which was the Lutheran Era message on justification.] then the ear, [The holiness message that came in the Wesleyan Era.] after that the full corn in the ear" [Which was the evening-time message of the unity of God's people]. In this period of time they did not just have a singular message. The "pearl" was circular. So, my friend, they possessed a well-rounded message—they not only understood the message that was given to them, but they also understood the light of the previous periods of time as well.

Now, let us look a little more closely at the truth that was revealed to them during this era of time. Someone may ask,



"Why is it needful that we examine the truths of this time period so closely?" Because, dear heart, the truth that they had was so rare and so outstanding. Not only was it rare and precious in their day, but it is also rare and outstanding even yet in our day. My friend, it is vitally needed in the day and time in which we live. And it is even more precious, because of its rarity in our era, more than it was in their time.

You see, what makes a pearl valuable is its rarity. If they were plentiful and commonplace, they would not have any value. But here in our lesson text, we see a pearl so rare, that text says there is only one. Let us read it again. In Matthew 13:46 it says, "Who, when he had found **ONE PEARL** of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it." Here it is denoted in Matthew 13:46, as "**ONE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.**" This is letting us know that this is extremely rare, and hence extremely valuable.

Now, let us examine the message or the truth that they had. Back in the prophecy of Ezekiel 34:11-16 he declares: "For thus saith the Lord God; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick: but I will destroy the fat and strong; I will feed them with judgment."

Here, as we begin to examine this prophetic text, we gain a view of the message the brethren heralded in this era of

time. In Ezekiel 34:11 the penman declares, ". . . I, even I, [God speaking through him] will both search my sheep, and seek them out." This period of time was when God said, He would **SEEK THEM OUT**. Why? Because Ezekiel 34:12 says, ". . . his sheep that are scattered. . . ."

What happened? We see the morning-time apostasy portrayed in Ezekiel 34:2 where it says, ". . . Woe be to the shepherds of Israel that do feed themselves!" We found that an apostasy took place, and men became selfish, lovers of their own selves. Isaiah 56:11 says, they are ". . . shepherds that cannot understand: [Why? What happened?] they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter." So here we find in the morning time there was an apostasy, when men became lovers of their own selves. A perilous time appeared on the stage of action as, my friend the Apostle Paul prophesied that it would (2 Timothy 3:1-2). Men became selfish, and they began to look to their own way. And they began to feed themselves rather than to feed the flock. So, the shepherds actually ceased to be true shepherds, caring for the flock of God or for the sheep. And because of that, Ezekiel 34:5 says, ". . . they became meat to all the beasts of the field, when they were scattered." The outgrowths of this apostasy were the "beasts" of Papalism and Protestantism. And during these periods of time, there was no visible unified Body of Christ.

What was the message of this sixth period of time? Ezekiel 34:12 declares, ". . . so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all the places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." When they found this one "pearl" of which our text in Matthew 13:45 speaks; or as Revelation 14:1 tells us, they found the Lamb standing on Mount Sion. Or when they realized as Ephesians 4:4 says, "There is one body. . . ." They received a Divine revelation that all these other religious bodies, so numerous in number, could not be the **ONE BODY** of which the Scriptures speak. My friend, when they received a revelation of truth, they realized that there was only "**ONE PEARL**." Or as Ephesians 4:4 says, "There is one body. . . ." In Revelation 14:1, when they

saw the Lamb on the Mount Sion, it was in the singular position.

And, so they received a revelation that all these other religious bodies, though so numerous, and the multiplicity of positions they occupy, because of the mere diversity and number, could **NOT BE** the one body. They realized that these multitudinous religious bodies that separate God's people could not be the one Body of which the Scriptures speak. With this revelation that there was only one, they recognized that all these other systems with their teachings and claims, my friend, were nothing more than the cause of religious confusion. And in 1 Corinthians 14:33, the Apostle Paul declared, "For God is **NOT** the author of confusion. . . ." Therefore He could not be the Author of sectarianism.

With all the many systems of religion, each saying something different, and yet claiming they are right, it became, my friend, as at the time of the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9). Everyone was talking, but, each was saying something different and could not understand the other. In Genesis 11:9, God said, "Therefore is the name of it called Babel. . . ." Or the Septuagint says, "confusion." And the word for Babel and the word for Babylon is, in the original language, the same. What is the lesson? These brethren in the sixth period of time here, realized that all the religious confusion from the systems of the dark and cloudy day, constituted Spiritual Babylon. Not the one Body of Christ that the Scriptures speak of, but a spiritual confusion that held God's people captive as Babylon of old did. And, so, God's desire was as Ezekiel 34:12 declares, ". . . so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them OUT of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day."

These brethren had a message to call God's people out of every man-made institution. In Jeremiah 51:6, here Jeremiah penned and said, "Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul. . . ." In Revelation 18:2, the Revelator penned, ". . . Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." And, therefore, the call is as Revelation 18:4 says, "

. . Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

They had a clear-cut come-out message. This was such a vital portion of the message of their age that they became known as the "Come-outers." They only had to declare this message, and it was to incite persecution from the ranks of organized religion. But the message that God entrusted to them, my friend, was a message that God desired that they come out and come back to Zion's fair height and be united with the people of God. Then they truly became one throng, one body, and enjoyed this "one pearl."

They not only had a clear vision of The Church, but they knew where they were prophetically. They had a clear understanding of their position, or as The Church in the evening time. They realized that as Jeremiah 51:9 declares, "We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed: forsake her. . . ." They realized, my friend, that "Babylon **HATH BEEN** a golden cup in the Lord's hand. . ." (Jeremiah 51:7). But, because of their disobedience and failure to go on with the message of truth, that God had left Babylon. And, my friend, had then ordered a people to come forth and come out of Babylon. That in the evening time they were to be a separate and a distinct people.

Isaiah 62:12 says, "And they shall call them, The holy people, The redeemed of the Lord: and thou shalt be called, Sought out, A city not forsaken." So, we find here they were a sought out, called-out people, if you please. They had a clear vision of their day. They knew what their message was. Jeremiah 51:2 says, "And [I] will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land. . . ." It is the Lord's desire to empty Babylon, false religion, or religious confusion of every saint.

Now, what are these "fanners" that Jeremiah 51:2 speaks of? In Matthew 3:12, John the Baptist is speaking, and he is speaking of Christ, and he says, "Whose fan is in his hand. . . ." Now, what was in His hand?

In Revelation 1:16, the Revelator penned, "And he had in his right hand seven stars. . . ." Now, what are these symbolic of? Revelation 1:20, will give us an insight, "The

seven stars are the angels. . . ." Or the Greek says aggelos, which means, "The messengers, or the ministers of the Churches." So, the "fan" in His hand or the fanners are a true ministry that will preach the **WHOLE COUNSEL OF GOD**. That will put judgment on Babylon and call a people out of sectarian religion and bring them home to Zion.

In Ezekiel 34:13 he says, "I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, [Well, what is this land? Read on.] and feed them upon the mountains of Israel. . . ." He is talking about bringing them back to that Promised Land. But, it is a New Testament Promised Land.

Because in the New Testament, there is a new Israel. In Galatians 6:15, it says, "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, [What? A new creature.] peace be unto them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God?" Those who "walk according to this rule. What? They are **NEW CREATURES**.

So, when He said that He would bring them, my friend, out and gather them and bring them to the mountains of Israel (Ezekiel 13:12), He is talking about bringing them out of spiritual confusion—out of spiritual Babylon and bringing them back to the Promised Land. My friend, the **NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH**.

You see, where ever the truth is being heralded in its fullness, Babylon will be mentioned. In Psalm 87:4, he says, "I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon. . . ." And that is always one real indicator of where **THE TRUE CHURCH IS**. And where the **REAL TRUTH** is being heralded in its fullness, you will hear mention made of Babylon, of confusion, of that which separates and holds God's people in bondage.

These brethren had a clear vision of their message, my friend. And they knew where they were prophetically, they understood it, and they taught it. In the song, Light Breaks at Last, written by D.O. Teasley, he gave a very vivid portrayal of the Gospel day and their Understanding of where they were prophetically. He penned in verse 1) "In the morning of grace, when the Sun first arose, and the gospel divine put

to flight all its foes, The nations rejoiced, but forsook it so soon, For the Sun in its strength was darkened at noon." Verse 3)"Behold, now we see by the evening's fair light, As it gleams from mount Zion in radiance bright, That the mist of confusion is passing away, As the darkness recedes at breaking of day."

I say, my friend, they taught that there was a morning time, and then the Sun was darkened at noon. Then there were the Dark Ages. Then they saw the cloudy day, of part light and part darkness, of the Protestant Era. And they saw, explicitly clear, the truth of Zechariah 14:7, where the prophet declared, ". . . at evening time it shall be light."

They understood that there had been no visible Body of Christ through the dark and cloudy day of Papalism and Protestantism. They understood that during that era, my friend, there had been no separate and distinct people. But, my friend, as the evening light shone forth in this evening time, as Isaiah 52:8 declared, there was a time ". . . when the Lord shall bring **AGAIN** Zion." They realized their message was to bring again Zion. And to restore the Body of Christ to a position of public view, to call the saints out of Babylon, and to gather God's sheep together unto one fold with one Shepherd.

Jesus spoke in the Gospel of John 10:16 and He said, "And other sheep I have, [Those who are out in the realms of religion] which are not of this fold shall be **ONE** fold, and **ONE** shepherd."

My friend, these brethren realized that it was their responsibility to embrace the truth revealed to them. And do as Isaiah 52:8 declared, to ". . . bring again Zion." They realized that if they preached the message of truth, in such a clear and understandable manner, they could restore The Body of Christ to a position of public view. To where they could call saints out of Babylon to gather together God's sheep unto one Fold and one Shepherd. And Jesus says in John 10:14, "**I AM** the good shepherd. . . ." This was their message when the evening time commenced. These were the truths that had been entrusted to them. And, dear heard, the message of truth that was entrusted to them is still truth today. It is still the

message today in this evening of time that still exists. It is still a truth that God wants heralded and laid forth. And if you are His sheep, the call to you is the same as it was in that era. In Revelation 18:4, "...Come **OUT** of her **MY PEOPLE**." God desires that you come out of man-made religion and that you flee out of the midst of Babylon. And that you deliver your soul and come up hither to Mount Zion to THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD. Where you can hear the truth heralded in its fullness and clarity. I trust we can see it.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL - PART SIX

*Matthew 13:45 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.*

Before us again, we have a portion of Jesus' discourse, that is commonly known as "The parable of the pearl." We have been studying this particular parable for several lessons. And, by the help of God we want to examine it a little further and conclude our study of this particular passage. Here in Matthew, Chapter 13, Jesus gives us seven parables. These are parables that He employs, in a prophetic sense, to take us down through the seven distinct time periods that compose this Christian Dispensation.

This parable, "The Parable of the Pearl," being the sixth parable, corresponds with the sixth period of the Gospel Day, or that period of time from A.D. 1880 to A.D. 1930.

Our lesson begins with the word "again." Here in Matthew 13:45, Jesus says, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like. . . ." So, He commences this parable with this word "again." This indicates to us that the message that this era possessed, was not something newly devised or concocted, but rather, it was a restoration of that which had been.

The supreme burden of The Church in this time, was as the Apostle John expressed in his day, where it was recorded in 1 John 1:1, when he said, "That which was from the beginning. . . ." Their burden and their desire was to see the truth brought back before man's minds, in the manner in which it was originally declared in the BEGINNING of the Gospel Day. Their burden and their supreme desire was to see the truth proclaimed in such a manner that they would, as Isaiah prophesied, in Isaiah 52:8, be able to ". . . bring **AGAIN** Zion."

They realized that the visible Church had been lost sight of through the dark and the cloudy day. And they wanted to see



The Church restored to Her primitive pristine glory. And they had a message that God gave them, my friend, that accomplished that in their particular era.

The people leading up to this era were "seeking" as it tells us in Matthew 13:45. But, they were very selective. They were not interested in man's ". . . wood, hay, or stubble. . ." as Paul defined it in 1 Corinthians 3:12. But, they sought only truths. Our text tells us here in Matthew 13:45, they dealt **ONLY** in "goodly pearls."

My friend, we realize that this ministry had precious revelation of many truths. They had pearls, in the plural. But though they had the "pearl" of justification, and the "pearl of holiness, they were still not satisfied in the depths of their souls.

There was something more that they yearned for. And true Bible holiness yearns for it yet today. And that yearning that they had, that which they longed for in the depths and recesses of their being, was UNITY. And Jesus taught us very plainly in the Gospel of Matthew 7:7, ". . . seek, and ye shall find. . . ." And our Scripture text in Matthew 13:45 says, they were "seeking." In Matthew 13:46 it says, they "found."

And the message or truth that they were given is represented in our text in Matthew 13:46 where it declares, ". . . one pearl of great price. . . ." Now, where else do we see the thought of "one pearl?" This pearl, in the singular, being so exclusive, being so extraordinary, being so unique—where else do we see the thought of "one pearl" brought up in the annals of the Scriptures? In the Book of Revelation 21:21, we find the Revelator brings the same thought to bear when he pens and says, "And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of **ONE PEARL**. . . ."

Now, what was the Revelator speaking of? What was the topic of his address? He was speaking of **THE CHURCH**. In Revelation 21:9, it says, "And there came unto me one of the seven angels [or aggelos, meaning "a messenger, a minister or a ministry] which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, [And the preceding chapters tell us these plagues, or these vials, were filled up with judgment. In other words, my

friend, that it takes a clear-cut judgment laid forth from God's Eternal Word to give a revelation of truth] and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife."

Now, to identify who that is, we merely need to go back to the words of the Apostle Paul, when he penned in 2 Corinthians 11:2 and said, "For I am jealous over YOU with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present **YOU** as a chaste virgin to Christ." Now, we know that every **TRUE BRIDE** that is the bride that God intended that she be, is a chaste virgin. Now, who is this "bride" or this "chaste virgin?" Well, the Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:2 repeatedly refers to her as YOU.

Now, who was the "you" that he was addressing? Go back to where he introduces us to whom he was speaking and addressing in this particular epistle. In 2 Corinthians 1:1, he says, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto **THE CHURCH OF GOD.**" So, the "you" that he is addressing is The Church of God. And, so, The Church of God is this "Chaste Virgin" or this Bride, the Lamb's wife, as the Revelator spoke of it.

So, the vision that John is receiving is a vision or an understanding, a revelation of truth, concerning The Church. And it says in Revelation 21:21, that ". . . every several gate was of **ONE PEARL.** . . ." In other words, this is portraying that regardless of which direction you approach the truth or The Church, that you have to come through the same message, the same Divine revelation of truth.

Revelation 21:12 declares, ". . . at the gates twelve angels. . . ." The word "angels" is again the Greek aggelos, which means "a messenger, or a minister, or a ministry." This is telling us that you have to come by the angel, by the ministry. In other words, the message must be heard. You must hear the message of truth. And then through embracing and understanding that message, you enter into an understanding of the truth, before you can ever enjoy the beauties or the benefits of The City, The Church. In other words, my friend, he must come out, one must come out. And come through the gates of Babylon and come out of Babylon. And then come

through the gates of Zion. Or come into a knowledge and an understanding of the truth, before they can enjoy those beauties and benefits that God has in His Church. This was the glorious message that they had. They had the message and the truths of what, in our text in Matthew 13:46, denotes as, the ". . . **ONE PEARL**. . ." The one Body of Christ—a visible body of believers.

Now, let us clarify a couple of points of truth. The truth that Martin Luther was, indeed, truth. The truth that John and Charles Wesley had was truth. Indeed. The error of those ages was their failure to continue to walk in the light. When we read the words of the Apostle John, in 1 John, he puts a condition here that it is contingent—that our fellowship is contingent. In 1 John 1:7 he says, "But if we walk in the light. . . ." Now walking, my friend, is not something one can do when progress stops. But, **WALK** means to continue, it means to progress, it means to advance. And here, my friend, we are enjoined and they were enjoined to "walk in the light." Jesus spoke in this manner in the Gospel of John 8:31, and told them very explicitly, ". . . If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed. . . ."

So, here we find that, though they had truth, my friend, they did not continue to walk in truth in those particular eras. The Lord could have restored full truth in any of these eras of time. Had these men continued, a full restoration of truth could have occurred in A.D. 1530, during the Lutheran Era, or in A.D. 1730 in the Wesleyan Era. My friend, they could have had a full restoration in any one of these periods of time. But the enemy of sours was allowed to work and to move in. And men failed to keep pace with light. However, this does not discount the truth that they received.

But, my friend, in our day the Devil uses the fraction of truth that men received in these by-gone eras in order to make organizations that bear the names of these reformers. And he uses these organizations of men to be deceptive and bring confusion of the religious landscape and to the hearts of mankind.

In Revelation 17:4, we find that even the one that Revelation 17:1 calls ". . . the great whore. . ." was

according to Revelation 17:4, ". . . decked with . . . pearls. . . ." She looked like she had some truths, but when you look a little deeper than on the surface, she is still an impure, immoral, illicit whore. This is the picture of these religious systems that have tried to inject themselves with the reformers' truths. But, when you look past the surface, look past that, my friend, of the initial glance and begin to examine her teachings, her stance, and her living, by the Scriptures; in reality, you find they are impure and unclean. And as a whore, they are without the Husband, Jesus Christ.

Now, sad to say, just as every move of God of the past, after a period of time something occurred, even right in this sixth period of time. Bro. D. S. Warner and the brethren who, my friend, embraced the evening-time message and were greatly used of God, was, indeed, a faithful ministry. However, many of those men who rose to prominence, after his demise, started moving away from the message of truth. And some were even bold enough to ridicule and renounce the very teachings that Bro. Warner had heralded when he was used of God in a great manner.

We can Scripturally see what occurred by turning and looking in the vial series in the Book of Revelation.

Now, we must again be reminded that the Revelation speaks in symbolic tones. In Revelation 1:1, here the divine penman says, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and SIGNIFIED it. . . ." This reveals to us that the nature of Revelation language is, that it is "signified," which means, "revealed by signs." And if you will look in Webster's New World Dictionary, under one definition of a "sign," it will tell us that it "is a symbol." So, here we find that the nature of Revelation language is that it is, indeed, a symbolic book—a book of figurative representation.

Now, in Revelation 14:1, John declares and says, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Zion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads." Now, immediately, men's minds run off again to literalism. But, we must remember we are dealing in symbolic expressions.

Here we see, in Revelation 14:1, it says, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb. . . ." The first figure that drew John's attention and commanded his attention was, my friend, the Lamb. Now, this Lamb, again being figurative, is a picture of Jesus Christ. Because John the Baptizer heralded in John 1:29, "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the **LAMB** of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." So, this word "lamb" is a symbolic expression of Jesus Christ.

It says, in Revelation 14:1, he saw that this ". . . Lamb stood on the mount Sion. . . ." This is a picture of Christ being restored back to His rightful position, in The Church, as its Head. Since Mount Zion, Hebrews 12:22-23 tells us: represents The Church.

And we find here that those, my friend, that Revelation 14:1 says, were ". . . with him. . . [And it says, those that were with Him,] having his Father's name [Which is **GOD**.] written in their foreheads." Now, what is in your forehead? Your mind. In other words, they had an understanding of the Father's name, God, in their minds. They understood the Divinity of The Church. And Whose it was, Whose it was to direct, and Whose name it bore. They had a message on The Church, the visible Body of Christ. They understood the "one pearl" which our lesson text speaks of; the message on **THE CHURCH OF GOD**.

But, sad to say, something began to work on the people in this period of time. Revelation, Chapter 16, speaks of a vial of judgment being poured ". . . upon the sun. . . ."—which represented The Church in this particular era.

For Revelation 12:1, when it portrays the morning-time Church says, it was ". . . clothed with the sun. . . ." Or Malachi 4:2 refers prophetically of Jesus Christ, as ". . . the Sun of righteousness. . . ."

But in this time period, or the latter portion of it, it says here in Revelation 16:8, that he ". . . poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch **MEN**. . . ." It says, the vial was poured on the Sun, The Church. However, what got scorched was men. What is the lesson before us? There was more **MAN** than **SUN**. Had they been where they

ought to have been: truly in the Sun, in the message, in the truth, the fire could not have hurt them. But, they were not in the Spiritual position they should have been.

How do we know? Look at their reaction. Revelation 16:9 says, "And men were scorched with great heat. . . ." That which used to be, as Revelation 12:1 says, ". . . clothed with the Sun. . . ," now could not take the heat of their own message.

And what did they do? Revelation 16:9 says, they ". . . blasphemed the name of God. How did they do that? They did that by discrediting, my friend, the men and the message of God.

Let me give you some excerpts to portray what was working in the end of this period—and how that it was blasphemy. In the book, *The Teachings of D. S. Warner and His Associates, A Survey and Analysis*, by C. W. Naylor, he says on page 2, "I know D. S. Warner personally. I knew D. S. Warner and loved him with reverential affection." But, then shortly thereafter he begins to assault him. He goes on to say, on page 3, "He was a poet, a dreamer, and an idealist and a perfectionist. He was not a logical thinker. In hundreds of instances He misinterpreted and misapplied texts. We have been compelled to reject a very large portion of his exegesis because it has been proved to be unsound." On page 6, he says, "Bro. Warner had an extreme view of unity. He advocated a type of unity that never existed and never can exist in this world, We have seen the necessity of modifying his teachings to make them conform more nearly to the possibility." I say that is blasphemy. To take a clear Biblical message that was given by God, that was preached, practiced and produced results. And then to say it has never been and never will be, that indeed is blasphemy.

He goes on to assault the truths Bro. Warner advocated and says on page 8, "The text 'at evening time it shall be light' (Zechariah 14:7) has no reference whatever to our day. Thrashing Babylon never was God's plan. I am glad that most of us have stopped that sort of preaching."

Then on page 9, he says, "Revelation 18:4 has no chronological dating in the Scriptures. For all they set

forth, the fulfillment of this Scripture may lay a thousand years in the future."

It is very easy to see from these excerpts that here is a man, who if he ever really had a vision of what The Church and the message of The Church was, he certainly had lost it. He had lost sight of the message and the truth revealed to his brethren.

On page 16, he says, "I love our movement. But, I long to see it freed from the things that have impeded its progress. I am sure that better, richer, more glorious days lie ahead of us. For we are making genuine progress and getting rid of many things that have stood in our way."

They fulfilled the type that we find recorded in Daniel 8:5-6 where, my friend, the ram and the he goat are embroiled in bitter battle. In other words, this is portraying that the Movement, The Anderson Movement, or what became a movement, turned against, my friend, the very people and the message. And they turned and attacked what had been accepted previously.

Edward Ellis, says in his book, Troubles of The Church of God Reformation, on page 17, "They had drifted so far from the message of truth God gave us, in the beginning of this great work, that there is affinity and fellowship, down there in Babylon, with those things they would have cried out loud against before they drifted away.

God, as in all ages, was faithful to this time period. He was faithful to the Warner Era. But, what started out as a great move of God, ended up as a movement of men—The Anderson Movement. He was faithful to send truth to them, but as Revelation 16:9 says, ". . . they repented not. . . ."

And so in A.D. 1930, Bro. W. S. Goodnight, was inspired of God to begin preaching a message known as "The Seventh Seal Message." This was a message that, as Revelation 10:7 declares, ". . . the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound. . . ." My friend, this message commenced to be sounded. And, my friend, when that happened God set His hand another time and got a second remnant. And this message commenced to sound. And there was, my friend, a second portion to the evening-time message.

And I trust we will see that as we study in the next parable, "The Parable of the Net."



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE PARABLE OF THE NET - PART ONE

*Matthew 13:47 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.*

The passage of Scripture text which we have before us is the seventh and final parable in this series that is incorporated in Matthew, Chapter 13.

There are seven prophetic parables that were given by Christ. These parables are employed as vehicles to convey truth to us, concerning what occurred during the seven time periods that comprise this Christian Dispensation. Or this is the time period that we commonly refer to as, "The Gospel Day."

In this text, we see portrayed the seventh parable, which corresponds with the seventh period of this Christian Dispensation—or that period of time from A.D. 1930 through to the consummation of time.

As we begin to examine this portion of Scripture, we must first notice that just as the previous two parables: "The Parable of the Treasure," and "The Parable of the Pearl," it commences with the word AGAIN, here in Matthew 13:47. This, again, is teaching us as the Wise Man penned in Ecclesiastes 1:9, ". . . there is no new thing under the sun." In the earlier portion of Ecclesiastes 1:9, he declares, "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be. . . ." These words, as well as the incorporation of the word "again," in our lesson text, here in Matthew 13:47, teaches us that what was occurring here was a restoration of previous truth.

Now let us look a little further into our text here in Matthew 13:47, again, where Jesus employs the phrase, "**THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**. . . ." Or, we could just as well say, The Kingdom, or The Church of God, which are synonymous terms since the Day of Pentecost.

He goes on to say in Matthew 13:47, ". . . the kingdom of heaven is LIKE. . . ." And we found that the Greek base word here is homou, which means "at the same place or time." This is a portrayal that this is the predominant or prevailing condition facing The Church during the time period under consideration.

Now, what does He liken this age? Here in Matthew 13:47 He said, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a **NET**. . . ."

Now, we must stop to give consideration, because, my friend, Proverbs 30:5, tells us, "Every word of God is pure. . . ." This teaches us that there is Divine design and Divine significance behind every word that is incorporated in the Sacred Scriptures. There are no unessential words, and the words that Jesus chose to employ, in these parables, were specifically chosen, because they portray a very graphic and specific truth to the time period that He wanted to bring before our mind.

Now, to what does He liken this age? He likens it unto what is called here in The King James Version, as ". . . a net. . ." (Matthew 13:47). Now, we must begin, as we examine this text, to ask, "What is this net? What does it portray to us? And, what is the truth that Jesus is attempting to convey to you and me?" What does it portray. Well the original language of the New Testament, as every Bible student knows, is Greek. And the Greek word here for net is sagene. And, my friend, it actually was the dragnet, or, the "seine" net or trawl. The "seine net" was a great square net with cords at each corner and weighted. So that at rest, it hung as it were upright in the water. When the boat began to move, the net was drawn into the shape of a great cone. And into the cone all kinds of fish were drawn when swept.

Here we see several truths portrayed. The first and most obvious, is that the net was an implement used in fishing.

Now, why is this important? What is important about this being an instrument employed in fishing?

Well, let us remember that the previous age, the Warner Era, had". . . one pearl of great price. . ." according to Matthew 13:46. But, towards the end of that era something occurred. And, as has so many times occurred down throughout the Gospel Day, what started out as a move of God, ended up as a movement of men. Consider what Bro. C.W. Naylor penned in the beautiful song entitled, The Reformation Glory:

*Verse 1) "There's a mighty reformation sweeping o'er the land,*

*God is gathering his people by his mighty hand;  
For the cloudy day is ending and the evening sun is bright,*

*With a shout of joy we hail the light."*

However, my friend, what started as a mighty reformation or a restoration of precious truth, ended up as a movement of men. Or, that which is commonly known as The Anderson Movement.

Sad to say, the same C. W. Naylor, who penned in The Reformation Glory, these words in Verse 2):

*"When the voice from heaven sounded, warning all to flee,  
From the darksome courts of Babel sounded, warning all to flee,*

*From the darksome courts of Babel back to Zion free;  
Glad my heart to hear the message, and I hastened to obey,*

*And I'm standing in the truth today."*

Sad to say, this same man who later turned from this truth and wrote these words, "Thrashing Babylon never was God's plan. I am glad that most of us have stopped that sort of preaching." From the book, The teachings of D. S. Warner and His Associates, A Survey and Analysis, written By C. W. Naylor, on page 8. So, here we have one who said he was **STANDING** in this truth and he was **GLAD** to hear the message. But, later he turned and said it was **NEVER** God's plan and he was glad that type of preaching had been discontinued.

In the end of the sixth period of time we see portrayed the prophecy of Daniel 8:5, where ". . . an he goat came from the west. . . ." Notice, from the **WEST**, not from the **EAST**, which east is the source of light. But here, my friend, was represented a figure that was going **WEST**, that was moving away from light. That was moving and turning its back on light, as it were. And here we see this "he goat" came from the west. It came not from the east, the source of light. But they turned their backs on light, and were moving away from light.

And Daniel 8:6 says, "And he came to the ram that had two horns. . . ." This "Ram" represents the body of Christ. You can go back to the words of the Patriarch Abraham in Genesis 22:8, when he said, ". . . God will provide himself. . . ." My friend, and he found ". . . a ram caught in a thicket. . . ." (Genesis 22:13). So, the "Ram" represents the Body of Christ. In Daniel 8:6, it ". . . had two horns. . . ." Two powers, my friend, which is representative of the Word and the Spirit.

However, the rough "he goat" that came afterwards that succeeded this two-horned "Ram," my friend. This rough "he goat" that succeeded it and came afterwards portrays a ministry who turned from light. They turned, my friend, against their own message and against their own people. And they fought against the very message that they once preached and held.

In reality, sad to say, The Anderson Movement, turned and made an image to the image of Protestantism. And, today it is no different from any Protestant, sectarian body, except much more responsible and in deeper darkness and deception. Jesus plainly taught us to do as John 12:35 says, "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you. . . ." And in another place He said, ". . . [Oh!] how great is that darkness!" (Matthew 6:23). There is no greater darkness than having once had light and having turned away from that light and turned, my friend, your back on that light and understanding. And turning against the very truths that you once espoused and stood for. My friend, there is no greater darkness than one who has had brilliance of light and has clearly seen.

And so, my friend, these, and sad to say, many even yet today turn their backs against precious truth and fight against the very cause of God. This was the cause they once espoused, and against the people of God who embrace the very message that they once heralded. So, here we find my friend, that they were more responsible. And became in more deep deception and darkness as a result.

But, why is our age here in Matthew 13:47, "like unto a net," a fishing implement? Because it is time to fish again. Why is that? Because of the let down on the message at the close of the sixth period of time. My friend, because of that let down, many of the "fish" went bad. They were no longer fresh. They were no longer fit for the public to partake of. So, my friend, just as Jesus says, in Luke 5:4, when He spoke those words, ". . . Launch out into the DEEP, and let down your nets for a draught."

At the end of the sixth period of time the move was to speak against the truths that God had revealed. And in prophecy the Lord said, in Isaiah 11:11, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that said, in Isaiah 11:11, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand against the **SECOND** time to recover the Lord shall set his hand again the **REMNANT** of his people. . . ." Here in this seventh period of time, in the second portion of the evening time. And God set His hand a second time and raised up a ministry and established a second remnant.

In approximately A.D. 1930, Bro. Walter S. Goodnight did as Jesus said, in Luke 5:4, when He spoke and said, ". . . Launch out into the deep. . . ." Bro. Goodnight devised a Revelation chart that portrayed the Revelation truths in a deep manner. And made, my friend, deep truths concerning prophecy and the Revelation clear to be understood. He made deep truths plain. And just as Jesus promised it produced "a draught." Precious souls responded to the truth of the Gospel being sounded forth. And, my friend God used those brethren, as they preached and heralded the precious truths of God's Eternal Word. Based on understanding of the Revelation message, He used them to set His hand a second time in this evening time. And my friend, to enable people to embrace truth

and be able to come forth in a second remnant in, my friend, this seventh period of time.

Now, notice our text portrays, not only is this a "net," but Matthew 13:47 says, ". . . a net, that was **CAST INTO THE SEA**, and **GATHERED** of every kind. . . ." Now, what does this convey to us? That this message of this era is a universal message. When one has had an opportunity to see truth, been exposed to truth, embraced longer embrace it or hold it, God does not continue to strive with those people indefinitely. He, my friend, gives what Revelation 2:21 calls, a ". . . space to repent. . . ." And if that does not occur, He does as Revelation 2:5 declares, ". . . [He] will remove thy candlestick out of his place. . . ."

The Apostle Paul said to the Jews, in Acts 13:46, ". . . It was necessary that the word of God should first have spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." My friend, to those who once have had light and understanding and come to a place where they will no longer walk in it, it is a very, very **DANGEROUS** position. John 12:35, to which we alluded a moment ago, says, "Walk while ye have the light, lest darkness come upon you. . . ." And Matthew 6:23 says, "If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" The sad fact is that the Lord worked with the Movement, and gave them the ". . . space to repent. . . ." that Revelation 2:21 speaks of. But as Revelation 16:9 says, ". . . they repented not to give him glory."

So, God reached down again and got a ministry that would cast the net as Matthew 13:47 declares. He was not going to just wrangle with those who did not want to continue to walk in light. But, thank God, many of those who were sheep, in what became The Movement, accepted the call of the seventh seal ministry. But, those who did not, they did not wrangle with or try to revive The Movement. They came out as Revelation 18:4 dictated, when it said, ". . . Come out of her, my people. . . ."

And their message was to all. My friend, just as the morning-time message was, and as 1 Corinthians 6:9-11 tells us very clearly: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not

inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards,, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such **WERE** [past tense] some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." So, here we see, my friend, they went out to the highways, and the byways. They went out to the hedges. They went forth, just as fishermen, ready to fish for the souls of all mankind

However, the message was a complete Gospel. It was a message of Salvation from sin. It was a message of holiness of life. It was a message of separation from sectarianism. So, here we see He did not wrangle. But, my friend, they went out and cast their "net." And they brought forth deep truths and God gave them "a draught."

So, here we find in Matthew 13:47, it says, the ". . . net, that was cast **INTO THE SEA.** . . ." The ministry had a universal message of truth. How do we know this? Matthew 13:47 says, it ". . . was cast into the **SEA.** . . ." Now, what is the "sea" symbolic of? What does it represent? Isaiah 57:20 says, "But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest. . . ." This sea portrays people, wicked people. But people nonetheless. A sea is just a mass of water, a density of water. And Revelation 17:15 says, ". . . The waters which thou sawest . . . are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." This message, of the seventh period of time, is a message for ALL people. It is a universal message. There is something in the message of this age for everyone. It is for everyone. It is for saints, and it is for sinners. It is for sectarians. My friend, to the sinner, it speaks of justification and salvation. To the saints, it encourages them on into the life of holiness. And it speaks of unity. And it speaks of the sin of division and sectarianism.

Just as Bro. Goodnight, and the Apostles, my friend, of old, we do not spend our time jangling with those who will not take truth. But, thank God, there is something for everyone that is honest hearted. Matthew 13:47 says, they ". . .

gathered of every kind. . . ." My friend, Jesus said, He taught us very plainly, "Go ye into all the world" (Mark 16:15), "and teach all nations" (Matthew 18:10). So, this Gospel, my friend, is for all. We do not spend time jangling and wrangling with those who will not take truth. The Apostle Paul said, in 1 Timothy 1:6, ". . . From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling." Or, The Amplified Bible, says in 1 Timothy 1:6, ". . . vain arguments and discussions and purposeless talk."

But, we turn and appeal to those who are honest, to those who desire truth. To those who, Jesus said in Matthew 5:6, ". . . which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. . . ." The Gospel message is according to Revelation 22:17, for ". . . whosoever will. . ." he declares. The New Testament message is that "God . . . now commandeth all men every where to repent. . . ." Those were the words penned in Acts 17:30.

This net is all inclusive. The Gospel goes forth and draws all. In Titus 2:11, the Apostle Paul penned and said, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. . . ." In this evening of time, God in His faithfulness, is once again having a clear, complete, concise, universal Gospel heralded to all men. So, that as Romans 1:20 declares, ". . . so that they are without excuse. . . ."

This Gospel is the net that is ". . . cast into the sea, [of life] and gathered of **EVERY KIND**" (Matthew 13:47). All mankind comes in contact with the Gospel. And it is not just, my friend, a Gospel of salvation, but rather, it is a complete Gospel:

- A Gospel of salvation.
- A Gospel of holiness,
- A Gospel of unity.

My friend, it is a Gospel that is complete and entire. And so, my friend, He tells us very plainly here, that it drew and brought in and ". . . gathered of every kind" (Matthew 13:47). I say the message that we have in this seventh period of time is a universal message, a complete and total message to "all men every where."

You may wish that you, my friend, had not come in contact with the Gospel, you may try to postpone considering it, or



you may reject it. But you are drawn as by a net and all mankind must come face to face with it. And what determines what kind you are, whether good or bad, is how you respond to it.

This is how the seventh period message began. It began with brethren that were faithful. Taking, my friend, the truths that God had revealed to them and declaring them in such a way that it acted as a net. And it went forth, my friend, and had an effect on all mankind. This is how the seventh period message began. And this is how it is yet today.

And, by the help of God, in Part Two we will look a little further into this "net." And look at it a little more closely.

But, in closing I ask you, "How do you respond to the Gospel truth? And where will your response place you? Would you be considered one of the good, or one of the bad? My friend, your response to the Gospel is what categorizes you in one position or the other. What is your response as you hear Gospel truth? Even though it may have been foreign to what you heard previously; although it may be something different from what your teachings or upbringings, my friend, presented unto you. When the Spirit of God witnesses to your heart that it is indeed Divine truth, what is your response? That is what will place you in the category of the good or bad.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE PARABLE OF THE NET - PART TWO

*Matthew 13:47 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.*

Before us, again, we have the passage of Scripture commonly referred to as, "The Parable of the Net." This parable is the seventh and final parable housed here in Matthew, Chapter 13.

These seven parables were employed by Christ as vehicles to take us, sequentially, down through the seven periods that comprise this Christian Dispensation.

Since this parable, the parable of the net, is the seventh and final parable, it corresponds with the seventh and final period of this Gospel Day—the period of time from AD 1930 on to the consummation of time.

And, by the help of God, we want to look a little further into this parable and the truths that it conveys to us. . . ."

This parable commences here, in Matthew, with the employment of the word, "again." He said in Matthew 13:47, "**AGAIN**, the kingdom of heaven is like. . . ." The employment of this phrase or this term "again," is teaching us that we are seeing a restoration of truth that had been enjoyed in previous eras, but, lost sight of.

Next, He proceeds to say, in Matthew 13:47, ". . . **THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN**. . . ." And, here, He is portraying that the topic and burden of these parables, is concerning The Kingdom of Heaven, or The Kingdom of God, or The Church of God, as

these terms are all used in an interchangeable and synonymous sense.

He goes on and declares in Matthew 13:47, ". . . the kingdom of heaven is like. . . ." Which in the original Greek, this word "like" means, "at the same place or time." So, He is revealing what was taking place, and what The Church was facing, at this period of time. It portrays the predominant condition of the era that is under consideration.

Now, notice, what He reveals as the predominant or prevailing condition of this seventh period of time. Notice the figure that He takes to represent this era. Herein Matthew 13:47, He says, that ". . . the kingdom of heaven is like unto a NET. . . ." We considered this some in our last lesson. But, I feel that it bears a little closer examination as it reveals a great deal of truth to us.

Now, let us examine this. Jesus said, here in Matthew 13:47, "a net." Now, we must ask some questions that loom to mind. What did Jesus actually have in mind? What does this 'net' represent? Why did He employ this particular figure?" Well, let us begin to look at it, and look at the actual words Jesus employed. By examining the actual words Jesus employed, it will begin to give us an insight to the truths that He desired to convey to us. The Greek word, for our English word "net" here in Matthew 13:47, is sagene, which is the dragnet, or the "seine" net or trawl. The "seine net" was a great square net with cords at each corner. And was weighted, so that at rest, it hung as it were upright in the water. When the boat began to move, the net was drawn into the shape of a great cone. And into the cone all kinds of fish were drawn when swept.

Now, several truths are represented here in this description of what Matthew 13:47 denotes as, "a net." Let us begin to consider these truths. First, the mention of a net presupposes a boat. A dragnet, without something to drag it, would be useless. A trawl without a trawler would be totally inoperable. So, my friend, the mention here, in Matthew 13:47, of "a net," presupposes that there was a boat to utilize it.

In the Gospel of Luke 5:1-5, the words here are penned, "And it came to pass, that, as the people pressed upon him to

hear the word of God, he stood by the lake of Gennesaret, And saw two ships standing by the lake: but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing their nets. And he entered into one of the ships, which was Simon's and prayed him that he would thrust out a little from the land. And he sat down and taught the people out of the ship. Now when he had left speaking, he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets for a draught. And Simon answering said unto him, Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at THY WORD I will let down the net."

Here, my friend, we need to notice several very particular items about this passage of Scripture text. Notice, here, that in Luke 5:3, it declares, "And he entered into ONE of the ships. . . ." And Luke 5:4 says, ". . . he said unto Simon, Launch out into the deep. . . ." Now, how? How could this be accomplished? With, the ship, or with the boat, it was a very necessary element and essential ingredient, my friend, before the net could ever be utilized. So, here he was told in Luke 5:4, ". . . Launch out into the deep, [With the ship, or the boat, if you please. Then what? Verse 4 declares,] and let **DOWN** your nets. . . ." Until there was first a ship or boat, and a launching out, my friend, of the ship, they could not have let down the nets. There must first of all have been a loosing of the ship, or the boat, and a launching out of that ship or they could not have let down the net. So, the ship was a necessary and vital element. In the Gospel of John 21:8, it reads, "And the other disciples came in a little ship. . . dragging the net with fishes." So, the ship was a very necessary and essential ingredient for the net to be able to function as designed and intended.

Now, the ship stands as a symbol. Here in the Gospel of Luke 5:1, Christ is just commencing His public ministry. At this juncture He has not yet called any of the Apostles. Luke 5:1 says, "And it came to pass, that, as the people **PRESSED UPON HIM** to hear the word of God. . . ."

And, here in Luke 5:3, it says, "And he entered into one of the ships. . . ." Now, think with me. Here Christ enters into, what the Scriptures so clearly speak of, as "one of the ships." And Luke 5:4 says, "And he sat down and taught the

people out of the ship." So, from this ship, where the presence of Christ was, the Word went forth to the masses.

In Acts 26:31, ". . . Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, Except these abide in the ship, **YE CANNOT BE SAVED.**" What is the picture? The ship represents **THE CHURCH.** The Church is where the presence of Christ is. The Church is where the Word goes forth. The Church is where those who are saved abode. The Church is where people are taught the Word of God. So, the ship is a portrayal of The Church.

Someone may ask, "Are you certain that is what it represents?" Well, how did Christ refer to the Apostles, to the ministry? In the Gospel of Matthew 4:19 it says, "And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you **FISHERS** of men." The ministry is referred to as fishers.

It is also evident that the "fish" are men or mankind. How do we know that? Because, my friend, what was used to catch fish? In Matthew 4:18, it says, ". . . casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers." So, my friend, it was a net that was used to catch fish.

And since the fish we are speaking is man, then what actually is the net? The net is a portrayal of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, or of the Word of God.

Let us, again, consider the definition of this "net." And it gives us a clear insight to what it actually does represent. Here we find, my friend, that the definition concerning this net, tells us it was a "seine net." And it was a great square net.

Now, where do we see "square" spoken of in the Scriptures? And in what context? In Revelation, when John was on the Isle of Patmos, and he was receiving a vision here, we are told very explicitly what this vision was. In Revelation 21:9, he was told, ". . . Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. . . ." And Revelation 21:10, he tells us, he was, carried ". . . away in the spirit, [And he saw a,] . . . great city." And Revelation 21:16, it says, "And the city lieth foursquare. . . ." Just as the "seine net" was—it was a square net. And here when we see a vision of this city, or of The Church, and it says that it "lieth foursquare."

Now, what kept it square? Revelation 21:15 tells us, it was ". . . a golden reed. . . ." Now, what was this reed? In Revelation 11:1, John tells us, he received ". . . a reed like unto a rod. . . ."

What does this "rod" depict? In Micah 6:9, Micah penned, "The Lord's voice crieth unto the **CITY**. . . ." This is the same city which is a figurative representation of The Church. Because in Hebrews 12:22-23, the Apostle Paul penned this Epistle and declared, "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God. . . [And what are these things symbolic of? Verse 23,] To the general assembly and **THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST BORN**. . . ." So, these different items that he employed represented different facets or attributes of the one and selfsame entity in the Hebrew letter and spoke of it in Hebrews 12:22, as ". . . the city of the living God, spoken of in Hebrews 12:22, as ". . . the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. . . ." This is the same thing that John saw in Revelation, Chapter 21.

Now it tells us back in Micah 6:9, "The Lord's **VOICE** crieth unto the city, [And it tells us here,] . . . hear ye the **ROD**. . . ." Now, what is the "rod?" It is the Lord's voice or the Word of God. And this is the "reed like unto a rod" (Revelation 11:1). Or that measuring reed, my friend, that measured the city. The "Golden reed (Revelation 21:15) that enabled the city to truly be "foursquare" (Revelation 21:16. It was only square because the "reed" kept it square. Because the Gospel in its entirety, in its fullness was preached. And because of that, the people MEASURING to those precious truths, kept the city square, if you please.

Now, we find here, my friend, that this net is a portrayal of the Word of God. We know this in several manners. Because of the "seine net" being a great square. And this "reed like unto a rod" (Revelation 11:1) that the people of God in the city was to hear and measure to, kept it square, is a portrayal of the Word.

Look a little further in the definition of the "net." It says it was "weighted." And Jesus spoke in Matthew 23:23, of ". . . the weightier matters . . . [such as,] judgment, mercy and faith. . . ." Now, where are these weightier matters

found? Where are they espoused? Romans 10:17 says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Also, the definition of the "net" tells us that it hung upright. And in Psalm 19:7 it declares, "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. . . ." And Psalm 19:13 says, "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; [How? By the law of the Lord, the Word. And he says,] . . . then shall I be upright. . . ."

What is the lesson before us? Christ in His first advent, came and entered into a ship. His presence was there. His ministry was there. And from there His word went forth to the masses. And many souls were secured for salvation and truth.

Now, in this day, the seventh period of time, in which we live, we recognize the truth, that in His first advent, Christ came and instituted the Church. His presence is there, and His ministry is there. From there His Word goes forth to the masses. His "net," the Gospel, is cast forth, and it is cast forth, in such a way, to where the Gospel--the ministry--and the fishermen, my friend, fish for men.

Prophetically, does this reveal a truth to us? Certainly so! The brethren who took hold of truth at the beginning of this seventh period of time, those brethren who came out of the apostatized Anderson Movement, were coming back to the light of the morning. As the song writer, D. O. Teasley, declares in Back to the Blessed Old Bible, in verse 1:

Back from the land of confusion,  
Passing the wrecks and the creeds;  
Back to the light of the morning,  
Jesus our Captain leads.

These brethren were coming back to the Biblical operation of The Church.

My friend, the employment and the usage of a "ship" and of a net and portraying "fisherman" and "fish," it is telling us, in very clear tones, that these brethren here, at the commencement of the seventh period of time, recognized God's ordained manner of operation for The Church. And, they were not fettered by traditions, not fettered by sectarian bonds, not fettered by man made organizations. But, they understood the Biblical operation of The Church.

And so, they were going back to the light of the morning in the operation of The Church. And, how, my friend, God ordained that that be that "Ship" that sailed on the sea of time. The Old Ship of Zion, if you please. And how my friend, it cast forth the Gospel to all mankind. And they made themselves to be "fishers," and look for the souls of men, if you please.

These brethren were returning to the Biblical operation of The Church. And they were preaching a complete Gospel. The reason these brethren were effective was that they preached the full, complete, and entire, unadulterated Gospel truth.

Remember that this net is exclusive. Our text in Luke 13:47 says, ". . . A net. . ." in the singular. There is only one true Gospel. Oh, I know over our land today, there are many things going forth and being called the Gospel. However, there is only one true Gospel.

And Matthew refers to it in an exclusive sense. And it is referred to here, in Matthew 4:23, as ". . . **THE GOSPEL** of **THE KINGDOM**. . . ." The Apostle Paul was so adamant about it that he penned in the Galatian Epistle. In Galatians 1:8-9, he told the churches, or congregations there in the province of Galatia: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other **GOSPEL** unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other Gospel unto you than ye have received, let him be accursed. In both verses he said, "Let him be accursed."

Now, since there is only **ONE NET**, there is only **ONE SHIP**. In Luke 5:3 it declares, "And he entered into **ONE OF THE SHIPS**. . . ." There is only **ONE PLACE** where His presence is, and that is in **THE TRUE CHURCH**. My friend, The True Church is a singular item. It, my friend, is not the masses of religious confusion that covers our landscape. But it is exclusive and singular. In Matthew 16:18, Jesus said, ". . . I will build **MY CHURCH**. . ." in the singular. So, there is only **ONE** Church and **ONE** Gospel. This is just as Mathew 4:23 declares, ". . . **THE** gospel [singular] of **THE** kingdom. . ." [singular].



What made this Gospel, this ministry so effective? In our text in Matthew 13:48 it says, ". . . Which, when it was full. . . ."

Now, recall that the net had four corners. It was a square "net." The square news portrays the message they preached. Is preached. The 7th seal ministry has the truth of all the previous ages combined. They had:

the truth on justification or salvation, the truth on holiness of life, and the truth of unity. The fact that working this net together come of having several that had to work together on this net depicts unity amongst the brethren. The truth of the complete message of the Revelation. This is the element that this age has that the others have not had.

In Isaiah 30:26, here the prophet declares, "...the light of the sun shall be **SEVENFOLD**, as the light of the **SEVEN DAYS**..." This age, the very day and time in which we are living, is privileged to understand the Biblical operation of the church. And recognize that there is **ONE CHURCH** and **ONE GOSPEL**. We can enjoy, my friend, the light and truth of the previous eras of time without having to embrace their false, human, sectarian ideas. That they added to the truth that God gave them.

In addition we are privileged to live in a day of **BRIGHT REVELATION**. Revelation 10:7, speaking of the same. Declares, "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the ministry of God should be finished..." We live in a brilliant day of Biblical and Spiritual Revelation, a time of Revelation that has sent forth many precious truths. In this era, we see what occurred and is occurring, and we will see some of the revelation that this time period enjoys.

These brethren had powerful messages. And as we study, we will begin to see how powerful these messages were in reality.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE PARABLE OF THE NET - PART THREE

*Matthew 13:47 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.*

Here before us, again, we see recorded "The Parable of the Net." This parable is the seventh and final parable of a series of seven incorporated in Matthew, Chapter 13.

Through the vehicle of these parables, Jesus has been taking us, in sequence, through the events that have occurred throughout this Gospel Day, or Christian Dispensation.

Being that this is the seventh and final parable, it coincides with the seventh and final period of the gospel day. Or at that time period which commenced in approximately A.D. 1930, and goes through the consummation of time.

Our lesson begins with the term here in Matthew 13:47, "**AGAIN...**," which teaches us that this era was one, of restoration of truth, which had been previously enjoyed.

The thought here in Matthew 13:47, of being "...cast into the sea, and **GATHERED OF EVERY KIND...**," depicts the universality of this Gospel message, of this particular time period. The employment here, in Matthew 13:47, of "...a **NET...**," portrays the Gospel message that they were entrusted with.

Now, we want to look a little more into the ministry of this seventh period of time. And we will find some very clear distinctions held forth in this text.

We found here in Matthew 13:47, where He talked about how he "... cast [the] net into the **SEA...** " my friend, the "sea" was representative of people. But, notice, this ministry cast

forth the "net," to as Acts 17:30 describes, " ... all men every where..." or, in the language of our text in Matthew 13:47, "...gathered of **EVERY KIND...**" The Gospel message is ordained to go forth and to captivate the hearts of all mankind.

The great commission was, and still is, in the Gospel of Matthew 28:19, where Jesus spoke these words right prior to his ascension, "Go ye therefore, and teach **ALL** nations." or, Mark's account in Mark 16:15 declares, " Go ye into **ALL** the world, and preach the gospel to **EVERY CREATURE.**" God ordained that "every creature" come in contact with the net or with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But the true ministry of this present age is different from the ministry of sectarianism. Notice in Matthew 13:48 it declares here, "Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Here we see a clear distinction between the performance of the sectarian ministry and the work and faithfulness of the true ministry.

In the realms of false religion, all that is necessary is that one comes in contact with a supposed gospel. They can continue to stay in the same environment, live the same way, continue to have the same associations, and not need to sever their association with those who are evil. In the sectarian world, the net never gets lifted up.

When we see the net here in Matthew 13:48, being "...drew to shore..." in order for that to be accomplished, that net must be lifted up from the dark. Lifted up from the deep. And brought into a position where it comes in contact with light, so that you can clearly see what the net contains.

But, my friend, the net remaining in the depth, the net remaining in the deep, the net remaining in the dark, is a picture of how sectarianism operates the gospel, or what they call a gospel. My friend, in their realms of false religion, they believe all that is necessary is that one comes in contact with some supposed gospel. That all they need to do is come in contact with the "net."

The lowered net, the net staying and just simply being drug along perpetually, in the deep, without ever having been brought to shore, or drew, or lifted up, portrays a picture of

a false ministry and sectarianism. And how they practice in the very day and time in which you and I are living.

When these "fish" were in the lowered net, they continued to stay in the same environment. They continued to live the same way. Oh, a little stricture may have been placed on them, but they continued to live in the same environment. They lived the same way and continued with the same associations. And there was no need to sever associations.

I say, in the sectarian world, the net never gets lifted up. It never gets brought up to the light. It stays in the water and makes no attempt to examine the catch, with no effort made to attempt any separation. False religion will say that there is no need to separate from sin—there is no need to embrace holiness. That it is not necessary to break with the world, or to come out of the realms of what the Bible calls "Spiritual Babylon."

However, notice the ministry of our text is not sectarian in its operation. It is not content to just have the "fish" come in contact with the "net." It is not content to just simply have a large quantity in the net and say, "My, what a big catch we have. My, how many people we have." A true ministry, my friend, does not operate in a sectarian manner.

Let us examine this verse more closely. Here in Matthew 13:48 it says, ". . . Which when it was **FULL**. . . ." Now, what does this word "full" actually mean? The Greek word here is the word pleroo and it means, "Be complete, end, fully preached." Now, what does that teach us? It teaches us that in this seventh period, my friend, of the Gospel day, that this seventh period message, this end-time message, is one that is a complete message. It is complete, it is the end-time message, and the truth is fully preached. That is the very definition of this word pleroo, "Be complete, end, or fully preach." And so, this seventh period message, this end-time message that we have, is a complete message. And truth is fully preached.

And part of the complete Gospel is the Biblical doctrine of separation. This separation is portrayed in Matthew 13:48 when it says, ". . . Which, when it was full, [or complete, or at the end, and fully preached] they **DREW TO SHORE**. . . ."

Therefore, in this time of the evening, in this seventh period of time, the Biblical doctrine of separation is preached and practiced by a true ministry.

Someone may say, "I thought the message of the sixth period of time was full or complete." Their message was full or complete in the sense of the restoration of the major truths concerning justification, holiness, and unity. These messages, my friend, were vitally needful for the successful restoration of a victorious and visible Church. But, the ENTIRE mystery was not finished until this seventh period of time in which we are privileged to live.

In Isaiah 30:26, here the prophet speaks and pens, ". . . the light of the sun shall be **SEVENFOLD**. . . ." The only way, my friend, that the light of seven days could be enjoyed, is to be in the seventh period of the Gospel Day. And so, that light, that truth, was reserved for this particular period of the Christian Dispensation. Here, the prophet declares in Isaiah 30:26, ". . . the light of the sun shall be SEVENFOLD, as the light of **SEVEN** days, **IN THE DAY**. . . ." That "in the day," he is speaking of is this seventh period of the Gospel Day.

In Revelation 10:7, John got a vision here, and penned, and said, "But in the days [in the plural, letting us know that this was an era or period of time, not the trump of the last day] of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished. . . ." Or The AMPLIFIED BIBLE actually says, Revelation 10:7, ". . . (accomplished or completed). . . ."

Their understanding was not entire in the sixth period of time.

This "day," in this seventh period of time is, indeed, an age of understanding—the age of fullness, of full Biblical understanding.

Look at the Wise Man's words in Proverbs 4:18, where he penned, "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Or, THE GREEK-ENGLISH SEPTUAGINT, that was used at the time of Christ's first advent, says, ". . . until the day be FULLY come. . . ." This is talking about the completion, the

fullness of the Gospel Day. And it is teaching us, my friend, that light would continue to get brighter and brighter until the fullness of time, when this seventh period of time would come.

Bro. W. S. Goodnight said, in the preface to his book, THE REVELATION WITH GOSPEL AND PROPHECY, recognized this and he penned these words, "The truth we have endeavored to set forth in this book is in no way intended to cast any reflection, of what we have had in former teachings, on the Revelation. We appreciate the truth we have already learned, from those among us who have labored faithfully and courageously, in an effort to get the truth to The Church, in the past sixth-seal age. And in our study now, no Spiritual truth is being disregarded. However we do endeavor, by the help of the Lord, to bring more light and understanding to The Church at this time, with the opening of the seventh seal, and the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The Biblical place of The Church, as we received it through D. S. Warner, and other commentators of the Revelation, bringing in the sixth seal age, still stands as truth. However at this time, the Revelation is opening up to us a more spiritual understanding. Certain things that were impossible to understand in their fullness, in the sixth-seal age, are now coming to light, and clearing up." So, the brethren, my friend, that labored at the commencement of this time period, recognized and acknowledged that their operation was unique and distinct from other time periods. And, so it is here in our Scripture text.

Now, let us look at it and examine it more closely. Look again, at our lesson text here, in Matthew 13:48, where it says, ". . . they drew to shore . . ." This ministry did not leave the net in the deep. They brought it up to the light. They lifted it up, and they brought it up out of darkness. They changed the position that the people once held.

Isaiah 62:6 says, "I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem. . . ." And Isaiah 62:10 says part of their responsibility is to, ". . . lift up a standard for the people." And too many times when the word "standard" is employed, people's thinking turns to the very narrow view, or to a very narrow consideration of the word. But, the word

"standard" is a broad word. And, my friend, it is talking about the standard that is held forth by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

I want you to see, dear heart, that here the prophet teaches us, that when there are true watchmen upon the wall, that there will be a standard lifted up—that there will be the truth lifted and elevated. And, my friend, a message going forth, for people to embrace, that will lift them from their former environment and their former associates.

I repeat, it is a sectarian gospel, or ". . . another gospel. . ." as Galatians 1:6 declares. That allows the net to stay lowered and never raised. It is a supposed gospel that goes forth to every kind, and yet never makes any attempt to separate. That only wants to boast of their quantity, regardless of their quality. I say, that is sectarian, and is a misuse of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The full or complete Gospel will have a ministry that will lift up a standard as Isaiah 62:10 declared.

The true Gospel has some requirements attached to it.

And, in this time when the complete truth is being heralded, the message of separation is being preached as well.

False religion, and most every religious commentator, would have us believe that the good and the bad must dwell together until Christ's second advent. Dear heart, I say it in love, but that is a sectarian thought. That is not a Scriptural teaching. Our text clearly shows a separation taking place. And the second advent is not mentioned or referred to anywhere in this Scriptural passage.

The true Gospel does as Matthew 13:47 speaks and says, ". . . **GATHERED** of every kind. . . ." The word here for "gathered" in the Greek is sunago, which means, "take in." And the Gospel is, indeed, designed in order to "take in" all. In 2 Peter 3:9, Peter declares, that God is ". . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." However, it is not enough to be merely drawn in by the "net." The Gospel, my friend, the true Gospel has some standards, some requirements that you must meet in order to be a good "fish" that can be put into the vessel and kept.

Well, what are these requirements? Well, when we begin to consider this "net," and what it was comprised of, recall that there were four weights to the net. So, the first portion of the weights, the first portion of the weights on the net, my friend, shows us the first requirement, and that is real salvation. The very first prerequisite is that you must be saved. That real salvation separates you from sin. In Romans 6:1, the Apostle poses a question, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? [Then he replies.] God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" And then in Romans 6:14, Paul speaks and says, "For sin shall not have dominion over you. . . ."

You see, all at some point in life, come in contact with the Gospel. Some are even so moved that they initially are gathered in. But, then, sad to say, many refuse to really separate from sin. And the true ministry, who are faithful to your soul, and will do as Isaiah 59:19 says, and ". . . lift up a standard. . . ," and get the people to really see what walking in the light requires. And the very first necessity that they will see the very first prerequisite is that they must be saved and separated from sin.

In Romans 6:17-18 Paul pens: "But God be thanked, that ye WERE [past tense] the servants of sin, but ye have **OBEYED** from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness." Here he tells us, in Romans 6:18, of ". . . being made **FREE** from sin." Some may ask, "Is that a possibility in this time world? Paul, here in Romans 1:17 said, "But God be thanked, that ye were [past tense] the servants of sin. . . ." And in Romans 6:18 he says, "Being then made free from sin. . . ."

How did that occur? Romans 6:17 says, ". . . but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was **DELIVERED** you." When the Gospel is delivered in its purity, in its fullness, and in an unadulterated manner, my friend, if you obey it and embrace it from the heart, it will bring a change of life. THE AMPLIFIED BIBLE says In Romans 6:17, ". . . you have become obedient with all your heart to the **STANDARD**



of teaching in which you were instructed and to which you are committed."

What else will this Gospel do in the way of separation? Remember, we are getting a view of the seventh period of time. And the truths that they and we have yet today. In Romans 6:19, in the latter portion of the verse he says, ". . . even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness." After introducing us to the separation, my friend, from righteousness unto holiness. What was the Apostle actually saying? Now, that you are right, live holy. The second weight on the net is holiness.

My friend, what will holiness separate one from? James 1:27 says, "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, [And then one very essential ingredient to purity and holiness he tells us is,] . . . to keep himself unspotted from the world." So, the second element here, the second weight on the net is holiness—or separation from the world and worldliness.

This is why too many people who start out seemingly good, end up bad and are cast away. They will not walk in the light that they need in order to put off worldliness and love of this world. Titus 2:12 says, ". . . Teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. . . ."

What is the next truth?"

Note, that these truths are merely, my friend, the picking up of truths that have been revealed in previous ages and then let down on.

The next separation is the separation from false religion, from Babylon. In 2 Corinthians 6:17, speaking of false religious systems, my friend, it says, "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate. . . ." With the apostasy, at the close of the sixth period of time, this light on separation from spiritual Babylon, began to be lost sight of. And many, today, who once seemed good, once seemed a good catch, are now part of the bad that are cast away. Because they have a sympathetic spirit with Babylon and refuse to separate.

Fourth, these brethren had an understanding of the Revelation message. That dealt, not only with the spirit that produced and motivated false religion. And they had a reason and understanding of how the spirits, as Revelation 16:14 says, ". . . which go forth unto . . . the whole world. . . ." And these brethren had truth and understanding that exposed the spirits, my friend, that people have. And that causes them to act in a wrong manner. So, it caused a separation from spirits.

So, my friend, we can see here that the doctrine of separation is a very vital doctrine that is preached and practiced, by the ministry, in this seventh period of time.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE PARABLE OF THE NET - PART FOUR

*Matthew 13:47 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.*

In this passage of Scripture text, we again have " The Parable of the Net." This parable is the seventh and final parable, in this series of the seven prophetic parables of Christ, housed here in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13.

These parables were used by Christ as vehicles to take us through the seven distinct time periods that comprise the Gospel Day.

Since this is the seventh and final parable, it represents the seventh and final period of this Christian Dispensation. Or, the very day and time in which we are living.

This time period commenced in A.D. 1930 when Bro. Walter S. Goodnight began preaching, what has come to be known as, "The Seventh Seal Message." This time period takes us through the consummation of time.

Now, the question arises, as we begin to examine this text further, how did Christ portray this day? What predominant characteristics did He use to symbolize this time period? He initially likens it in Matthew 13:47, "... unto a **NET**..." We found that this reveals that these brethren, in the seventh period of time, got back to the **BIBLICAL MODE** of operation for the Church.

However, it goes deeper than that. There is a predominant theme that runs through the entirety of this parable. Think for a moment, when we see here in Matthew 13:47 "...a net..."

What does a net do? Matthew 13:47 declares that it "...gathered OF every kind..." Notice it says, OF every kind; not all were gathered. And not all responded to the call of the Gospel. Certainly, all are brought in contact. But, not all are gathered. The text here clearly says in Matthew 13:47, that it "...gathered OF every kind..." Teaching us that some were gathered, and others, sad to say, were not.

What is this lesson? The lesson, my friend, is very pointed. That the Gospel brings a separation among men. In Matthew 13:48, of our text, Jesus tells us, "... they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Again a very predominant picture of separation. In Matthew 13:49, again we see recorded, "... the angels shall come forth, and **SEVER** the wicked from among the just." Here, again, a very graphic description of separation. This word Matthew 13:49, renders as "sever," WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY tells us, means "to separate, make or become distinct, divide, or to part."

Many today have a false concept of Jesus and of His Gospel. The common belief is that Jesus came to always bring people together. That He came to unify. And that unity should **ALWAYS** be the goal **REGARDLESS** of the price expended to achieve it. But, dear heart, this is ecumenical thinking. Not sound Biblical teaching or doctrine. Consider the words that Jesus spoke in the Gospel of Matthew 10:33 - 36, He declared, "But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven. Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household."

Here in Matthew 10:34, Jesus explicitly declares, "... I came not to send peace, but a sword." What sword is it that He sent that causes separation of families, friends, and loved ones? What type of sword would accomplish such a work as this? In Hebrews 4:12, the divine penman here declares, " For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword..." So, we find that the **SWORD** is the word of

God. And in Ephesians 6:17 the Apostle Paul pens, "... the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God..."

That which brings separation of men, is the Word of God. Or, as Jesus said, in John 17:17, "... thy **WORD** is truth." So, it is truth that causes a separation. It is truth that separates men. It is truth that comes right down and brings separation between family members and loved ones.

We live in an age that when people see separation take place they immediately think something is wrong. That something must have been done wrong. Or, something was handled wrong for a separation to occur. But, no, my friend, when you look at the Word of God, and look at the sound teachings of God's Eternal Word. It generally means that truth is working right and proper. Look at the words in John 6:60 where it says, "**MANY** therefore of **HIS DISCIPLES**, when they had heard this, said, This is an hard saying; who can hear it?" And John 6:66 says, "From that time **MANY** of **HIS DISCIPLES** went back, and walked no more with him." And John 6:67 says, "Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?"

What is the lesson? When they heard truth, when they heard true Bible conditions, it caused a separation. Here we have the very Master and Lord Himself, Jesus Christ, uttering forth truths, my friend, that when they fell upon the ears of mankind, who did not want to move and measure to its dictates, they caused a separation to take place. And it says **MANY** of his disciples went back. Not, just a few. But, at this juncture, **MANY** forsook the very Christ of glory, because of the rigorous requirements of Gospel truth. It says, they walked **NO MORE** with him. There is, my friend, no record, and no occasion where these people ever came back into the fold.

So, the lesson is, when they hear Bible conditions, many times, it causes a separation. And certainly, this was not a novel occasion. In the Gospel of Matthew 15:12 it declares, "Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?" Friend, offense is a common effect where the true Gospel is heralded forth. In Matthew 13:57 it says, "And they were offended in him." The Gospel can be offensive.

Why does the Gospel fall upon many ears as an offensive sound? Because, it regards no man's station. Makes no concessions. Takes no prisoners. My friend, it honors no man's age, wealth, or social status. And when it is heralded forth and falls upon the ear, it strips every man of all that he has but his own soul and the condition of it. And it allows him to stand naked, as he is in the sight of an all seeing, sin avenging God.

In our lesson text, it declares here, in Matthew 13:48. "... they **DREW [IT] TO SHORE**, [speaking of the net] and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." What made the distinction here? When they had the net full and was pulling it along, they thought that it was all good. What made the difference, the distinction? **LIGHT!** When they did as Matthew 13:48 declares, "... drew [it] to shore...", it was brought up out of the dark and out of the deep and brought up to the light.

What does this portray to us? That, my friend, many come in contact with the Gospel, many are even drawn in by it. They seem to be truly a good catch. But, my friend, when light comes they do not accept it. They do not walk in it. This portrays to us that you can start out right and end up wrong.

This very day and time we are speaking of, this age started with a great catch initially. But, as the age progressed, a separation became necessary. Why? Because those who seemed to be a good catch, those who initially embraced the message of truth, as time progressed, as light, my friend, grew brighter and the strictures of the Gospel became more apparent, they did not stay true to the message. And, because of this, my friend, there was a separation that took place.

We find here our age is operating as the New Testament morning-time church. How were they in their initial operation? In Revelation 2:2, Christ addressing the Ephesian congregation says, "... thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars..." They practiced separation. In the book of Acts 5:3, the Apostle "...Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost...?" And Acts 5:5 says "And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost..." Clearly a portrait,

my friend, of the ultimate in separation. And in 1 Timothy 1:19-20, the Apostle Paul spoke here, and penned in very clear tones, "Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: Of whom is Hymenæus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." Here we see, my friend, he said, in 1 Timothy 1:20, "...whom I have delivered unto Satan..." A very expressed separation, my friend, and exposure of those that were separated because of their response to the Gospel.

This spirit working in our age is to try to have unity and harmony at any price. The cry over our land today is "lay down differences, lay down doctrinal feelings, and just get along." But that is not the prescription for Bible based unity.

In James 3:17, here the Lord's brother penned and said "But the wisdom that is from above is FIRST PURE, then peaceable..." Purity must never be sacrificed to achieve peace. My friend, peace at any price is not a Biblical peace. Purity must never be sacrificed to achieve peace. Many desire to sacrifice Biblical purity on the altar of personal and ecumenical expedience. But, my friend, this is foreign to the teaching and the tone of God's Eternal Word.

Our lesson text declares here, in Matthew 13:48, that He "...gathered the **GOOD** into **VESSELS**..." Notice, the word vessels here is in the plural. Now, what are these vessels? What do they represent? Well, in 1 Thessalonians 4:4, we find these words penned, "... That every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honour..." Or, the Amplified Bible makes it a little clearer. It renders 1 Thessalonians 4:4 as, "That each one of you should know how to possess (control, manage) his own body in consecration (purity, separated from things profane) and honor..."

By this passage we are beginning to gain an insight as to why the "bad" in Matthew 13:48, were considered so. Because, my friend, as the Gospel went forth and was heralded in a clear manner. And as they gained understanding of the requirements of the Gospel upon their lives, they did not want it to take control and manage and incorporate those things into their lives. To make their body, their flesh to come into

line to the teachings of God's Eternal Word. When, my friend, the dictates of purity and separation from things profane, began to lay forth the requirements, many draw back and refuse to continue to walk in light. And as such they become the "bad" and must be separated from the Body of Christ.

In 2 Timothy 2:21 it says, "...he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and **PREPARED** unto every good work." This is what our text is speaking of, when it says here in Matthew 13:48, that they "...gathered the good **INTO** vessels..." When the Gospel message, the truth, is properly regarded, when the "fish" is exposed to the light, it will get **INTO** vessels. It will get into their bodies, into their lives. They will be meet for the Master's use. Whatever He desires they will do. Wherever He leads they will follow. They will be as Revelation 14:4 declares, "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth."

The Apostle Paul said in 2 Timothy 2:21, that they were "...prepared unto every good work." Regardless of what is asked or required, those that are truly the good, the just, they are prepared to walk in it. This, my friend, is the distinction. Jesus said in the Gospel of John 8:31, "... If ye **CONTINUE** in my word, **THEN** are ye my disciples indeed..."

In our lesson we see a clear distinction between what Matthew 13:48 denotes as the **GOOD** and the **BAD**. And that distinction is based on what they were, and how they regarded the truth when they were faced with the light. The good, Paul said, were "sanctified" (2 Timothy 2:21). In other words, they progressed in truth and in the Word. And when new understanding came they gladly embraced it and walked in it. The "bad" however stopped. They did not accept it. And they did not continue.

Now, how was this particularly relevant to our time period? Remember the brethren of this age are restoring the message on the Church to its proper position that it had slipped from in the sixth period of time. This age, the seventh, is returning to the Biblical operation of the Church. But, oh why, my friend, why the thought of separation? Because, over the years, many initially embraced the message. They embraced the truths concerning the Church. They testified



that they saw the standard. They saw the evils of Sectarianism. But, because they did not keep their experience fresh, they did not continue to do as 1 John 1:7 says, "... walk in the light, as **HE** is in the light..." They did not continue in the Word or in the truth.

This age, my friend, the very day and time in which we are living, started out with a large catch. Many seemed to embrace this seventh seal message. It seemed as though many would take the truth that was set forth concerning the Church as a separate distinct body of believers, separate from sin, separate from Sectarianism. But, the further that it went, the more light and understanding that came, the more that they separated from truth.

They, my friend, continued to say that they were the evening-time church. But, sad to say, many over the land refused to continue to take the evening time light and the evening time message. And, because of that they separate themselves from the true Church. And this is exactly what we see a picture of in our lesson text.

When this occurred they were no longer as, the Apostle Paul said, "...prepared unto every good work" (1 Timothy 2:21). Another **SPIRIT** then entered in. One that would not submit to pastoral authority. One that wanted to operate the Church in a sectarian way rather than in a Biblical manner. One that no longer saw a need to be a separate and a distinct people. One that no longer needed to be separated from Sectarianism. One that no longer saw a need to hold a Bible standard. One that no longer saw a need for theocratic rule. These, my friend, were the moves of the enemy as he encroached upon the people and caused them to move away from the truth that they had once accepted. And the truth that they had once embraced.

And, as the true Church continued to hold to these Biblical principles, needless to say, ultimately a separation took place. As our text says in Matthew 13:48, "...but cast the bad away."

This is why you see supposed congregations of the Church springing up in localities where there is already a true Church of God. Why? Why is this occurring? Jude 19 says, "These

be they who separate themselves, [why?] sensual, having not the Spirit." So, we should never be surprised or shocked when this occurred. God is merely refining and purifying the Church as He declared in Malachi 3:3.

So, My friend, we need to understand that one predominant characteristic of our day is **SEPARATION**. And we should not think it any strange thing when this occurs. Because Jesus let us know that it would occur. And that it was in accordance with His plan. Because, He is merely refining and purifying the Church. And making Her stand in a more separate exclusive position so that men can see Her in Her radiant glory in this evening of time.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE PARABLE OF THE NET - PART FIVE

Matthew 13:47 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.

Before us, again we have that portion of Jesus' teaching that is commonly referred to as "The Parable of the Net." We have been studying the truths contained in this parable for the last few broadcasts. We would like to examine this parable a little further, by the help of God.

This parable is the seventh and final parable, in a series of seven, contained in Chapter 13 of Matthew's Gospel. Through the vehicle of these parables, Jesus takes us in sequence down throughout the Gospel Day, and reveals what conditions the Church faced and what occurred in each of these time periods.

This parable, the parable of the net, being the seventh and final of these parables, represents the seventh and final period of this Christian dispensation. This parable portrays the very day and age in which we live today.

We have seen that Jesus began this lesson with the term, here in Matthew 13:47, "Again. . . ." Letting us know that as the Wise Man declared in Ecclesiastes 1:9, ". . . there is no new thing under the sun." Teaching us that we are seeing a restoration of truths, in this period of time, that was enjoyed in the previous eras.

He goes on to say here in our lesson text Matthew 13:47, "Again, **THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN** is like. . . ." This phrase, "the kingdom of heaven," my friend, is an interchangeable term. Hebrews 12:23, 28 conveys the truth to us that the Church and the Kingdom are the one and self same entity. So,

when Jesus says here in Matthew 13:47, ". . . the kingdom of heaven. . . ." He could just as well have said, "The Kingdom of God or the Church of God," and not be doing any disservice to the meaning or the rendering, as they are interchangeable and synonymous terms.

When our text goes on to say in Matthew 13:47, ". . . is like. . . ." the Greek root word here for "like" is the word HOMOU which means, "at the same place or time." This lets us know, what Christ is portraying through the vehicle of the parable, is the prevalent condition, my friend, of the time under consideration. Letting us know that it is what the Church faced at that period of time, or what the predominant condition was of that era.

In this particular lesson, He likens our day in Matthew 13:47, ". . . unto a net. . . ." This imagery relates several truths to us, many of which we have already studied. It conveys that we are back to the morning time **OPERATION** of the Church. Or, being as Jesus said in the Gospel of Matthew 4:19, ". . . fishers of men." With a universal message to as Acts 17:30 declares, ". . . all men every where. . . ."

But, also a message that causes a separation to take place. When the true Gospel message in its fullness is heralded, separation is the natural by-product. We live in a day and time when many think that separation is a strange thing. That when separation occurs that something has gone wrong. But, my friend, as we look in the Scriptures we find that separation is a natural by-product. It is a predominant theme throughout this parable—the doctrine of separation.

We want to examine this separation a little further. We want to determine by the Bible, how this separation occurs. What instrument does God use to cause this separation? When does it take place? Why does it occur? In Matthew 13:48 it says, they ". . . sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away."

Now, how does this separation occur? What does God use to cause this separation? Our lesson text gives us an insight. Let us examine this. Matthew 13:49 begins and says, "So shall it be at the end of the world. . . ." Now, immediately upon reading this, men's minds run right off with thoughts of

literalism. And they assume that He is speaking of the second advent of Christ. This passage in reality, if we rightly divide the Word of truth, has no reference what-so-ever to the literal second advent of Christ. This phrase here in Matthew 13:49, ". . . the end of the world. . . ." is commonly viewed in a very narrow sense. But the Scriptures, my friend, do not employ this phrase, in such a narrow sense, as commonly occupies the minds of men.

Now, what actually is what Matthew 13:49 denotes as, ". . . the end of the world?" Well, the Apostle Paul in his writings in 1 Corinthians 10:11 declared, ". . . they are written for our [Speaking of the Old Testament occurrences in the preceding verses. And here the Apostle Paul places himself right in this group, right in the time he wrote this Epistle, in A.D. 54 - 57.] admonition, upon whom the ends of the world ARE [present tense] come." Now, here we need to understand that when we consider this thought of the "ends of the world," in reality, he is speaking of a final age. And the question we must ask is, "When did this final age commence?" For in reality that is what this phrase actually means, "the final age." The Amplified Bible renders this passage here in 1 Corinthians 10:11 in this manner, ". . . in whose days the ages have reached their climax (their consummation and concluding period)."

Now when did this final age commence? In Hebrews 9:26 here, my friend, this sacred writer declares, ". . . but **NOW** [present tense] once in the end of the world [Now, when did it commence? Read on.] hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." This occurred, as we all know, when Christ offered himself a sacrifice on Calvary's tree in A.D. 33. So, biblically, this phrase in our text, in Matthew 13:49, ". . . the end of the world. . . ." refers to the final age of time that commenced with Christ's crucifixion and the inception of the Gospel Day.

So, all of these occurrences that our text speaks of, that preachers and religious advocates say will happen at some point in the future, at the Second Coming of Christ, in reality, they are taking place in the very day and time in which you and I are living. Sad to say, the enemy of souls

uses religion, and religious teachers and advocates, to obscure truth. So that many will not see what the Lord is actually doing in this very day and time, and avail themselves of the benefits of the Gospel, that God would desire that they be able to enjoy in the here and the now.

We must recall that Jesus first introduced us to the thought of the end of the world in "The Parable of the Tares." This was when apostasy was working and under full sway. And the morning time church was vanishing from public view. Jesus, speaking in a prophetic tone, gave us an encouraging message that conditions would not always be so. That it would not always be the case, that the Church would be out of public view. That, my friend, the state of things would not always be as they were in this period of time that "The Parable of the Tares" represented.

He taught in Matthew 13:30, "Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of the 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." Again we see a message of separation, and in Matthew 13:39 He lets us know, ". . . the **HARVEST** is the end of the world. . . ." More particularly, my friend, this evening time of the Gospel Day.

How do we know that? Because, Matthew 13:43 says, "Then [when?] shall the righteous shine forth as the **SUN** in the kingdom of their Father. . . ." When is the kingdom shining forth as the sun or as the light of the full morning? In, my friend, in this very evening of time and more particularly, in this seventh and final period of the Gospel Day.

For the Prophet Isaiah declared in Isaiah 30:26, "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound." Here in Isaiah 30:26 he says, "Moreover the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun. . . ." What does that teach us? That the truths, the types, the shadows, and the prophecies are as clear to us, as the New Testament Scriptures are.

Then he goes on in Isaiah 30:26 and says, ". . . and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold. . . ." That we have the benefit in this seventh period of time of all the light and understanding and truths of the previous periods of time together. And Isaiah 30:26 says, ". . . as the light of seven days, **IN THE DAY**. . . ." My friend, letting us know that this particular, singular day that he speaks of is this seventh period of time when we have the light. Not only the light of our day but of all the previous days as well. So, my friend, this is when the sun shall be sevenfold. This is when, my friend, that the kingdom shall be able to shine forth and the righteous shall shine forth "AS THE SUN." This shining forth "as the sun" is a reality in our day, in this seventh period of time.

Now, what is this "sun?" In the Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 17, here we have recorded the account of the Transfiguration. It teaches us here in Matthew 17:1, "And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, And was transfigured before them: and his face did **SHINE AS THE SUN**, and his raiment was white as the light." So, here we have a very clear expression of who it was that shone as the sun. It was Jesus Christ.

When the Revelator got a picture of Christ on the Isle of Patmos, in Revelation 1:16 it says, "And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: [His Word] and his **COUNTENANCE** was as the **SUN** shineth in his strength." So, this **SUN** is a portrait of Jesus Christ. In Matthew 17:2 it says, ". . . and his face did shine **AS THE SUN**. . . ." The exact same phrase is employed in Matthew 13:43 where it says, "Then shall the righteous shine forth **AS THE SUN**. . . ." In Malachi 4:2 it styles Him as, ". . . the **SUN** of righteousness. . . ."

So, when these saints as Matthew 13:43 declares, ". . . shine forth as the sun. . . .," they are doing as the Apostle Paul admonished in Galatians 3:27 when he said, they ". . . have put on Christ."

But, let us examine this closer. How does this occur? In Matthew 13:49 it says, "So shall it be at the end of the world: [Or the Gospel Day. More particularly, Matthew 13:30,

' . . . the time of harvest. . . .' The evening time. It goes on and says], the angels shall come forth, and **SEVER** the wicked from among the just." What does this mean? The King James Version, here renders it the word, "**SEVER.**" Other renderings say, "**SEPARATE.**" Webster's New World Dictionary defines "sever" as, "to separate, or to make or become distinct, divide, to part." What does this convey to us? That in the morning time, when the true Church came on the scene, she was depicted by John in Revelation 12:1, as ". . . a woman clothed with the **SUN.** . . ." My friend, when you saw the morning time church, you saw Jesus Christ. They, my friend, **REFLECTED** Him and show Him forth in their living, and in their operation. So, when the morning time church came on the scene, she was portrayed as "a woman clothed with the **SUN**" (Revelation 12:1). I repeat, when you saw the morning time church, you saw Jesus.

In Acts 4:13 it says, "Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they **MARVELLED**; and they took knowledge of them, **THAT THEY HAD BEEN WITH JESUS.**" The morning-time church, my friend, was in the image of Christ. They shined forth His light, and shined forth His brilliance and radiance, by incorporating Christ into their lives and their living. Into all that they did and into their manner and mode of operation. The morning-time church was a separate, distinct, visible, body of believers that emulated Christ.

In this final period of time, Christ is restoring His bride, His Church to that position of pristine glory and beauty. And to do that He must do as Matthew 13:49 says, He must "sever." He must "sever" from her anything, and anyone, that clouds or dilutes her light from shining forth.

Now, how does He do this? In Matthew 13:49 it says, ". . . the **ANGELS** shall come forth, and SEVER. . . ." Now what are the "angels?" Well, again we must not allow our minds to run off and have a preconceived notion. We need to understand that He is not speaking here in this text, of celestial beings. The word in the original Greek, is the word AGGELOS, which means, "a messenger, or messengers, or ministers." Portraying in symbolic terms, a ministry. In Revelation 22:8-9 John said: "



. . I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel [aggelos; messenger, or ministry] which shewed these things. [verse 9 will show us that this was not a celestial being] Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: **WORSHIP GOD.**" So, here we see it was not a celestial being. In Galatians 4:13-14 the Apostle Paul said: "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an **ANGEL** of God, even as Christ Jesus." He said in verse 13, "I preached the **GOSPEL** unto you." And in verse 14 he said, " You received me as an **ANGEL** [An aggelos; a messenger or a minister of Christ] So, we see in Matthew 13:49, in our lesson text, when He speaks of the "**ANGELS**" in reality, **IT IS THE MINISTRY.** So, our text is actually saying, in Matthew 13:49, "The ministry shall come forth and separate (or make distinct by separation) the people."

In this age of lawlessness, where Jesus said in Matthew 24:12, "And because iniquity [which merely means, lawlessness or rebellion to constituted authority] shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold." And I know it is difficult for many today to accept the truth, that God uses human instrumentality to accomplish His work. And, part of the work that He uses the ministry to accomplish is to bring separation about.

You see, many feel today that what Matthew 13:48 calls the "good" and the "bad" should always be together. And will always be together until Jesus comes. But, friend, that is not so. That will not stand up under scrutiny. That will not pass the sound examination of God's Eternal Word. In Revelation, Chapter 21, when here he is speaking about the City of God and is talking about the Lamb's wife, the bride, which represents the Church. In Revelation 21:27 it says, "And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Here, my friend, he is speaking of the Church. Because Revelation 21:23, it talks about being, ". . . the city. . . ." And

Revelation 21:9 talks about, ". . . the bride, the Lamb's wife."

We need to see, my friend, that in this very day and time, God has a ministry in place, that He has ordained, that would bring a separation about. In this seventh and final period of time, He is doing as Malachi 3:3 declares, "And he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. . . ." He is working through a God called ministry to do as Matthew 13:41 declares, ". . . gather out of his kingdom all things that offend. . . ." Now, why is this so vital? Now, why is it so important that this take place? So, that as Matthew 13:43 declares, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun. . . ." He is trying to remove all, my friend, that will obscure or dilute the light of the Church. Or, that would keep the Church from shining forth in her pristine glory.

In this evening of time, my friend, He has and is going to have a Church, that is as Matthew 5:14 says, "A city that is set on an hill [that] cannot be hid." A city that is "the light of the world" (Matthew 5:14). And all that will not measure to that light, or any that would cloud that light from shining forth, He will remove it. He will take it out of the midst.

So, my friend, we again need to understand that separation is a very vital portion of God's eternal plan. It is part of His plan to enable the Church to be restored back to her pristine glory.

Next time, we will study what instrument He uses, to accomplish this, in the very day and time in which you and I live.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE PARABLE OF THE NET - PART SIX

*Matthew 13:47 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.*

In this passage of Scripture text, we see the seventh and final parable in this series of the seven prophetic parables of Christ. Jesus in His infinite wisdom chose to utilize parables in order to as Matthew 11:25 declares, hide ". . . these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." Those "babes" He was speaking of are those who have experienced a "new birth." A spiritual birth. That have actually been ". . . born again. . . ." (John 3:3).

Through the avenue of these seven parables, Jesus takes us down through, in prophetic sequence the predominate conditions, my friend, that occurred in the seven distinct time periods that comprise this Christian Dispensation. Our lesson text, "The Parable of the Net," being the seventh and final parable, corresponds with the seventh and final period of the Gospel Day, or the very day and time in which we live. This period commenced in approximately A.D. 1930, when Bro. Walter S. Goodnight devised a chart of the Revelation, which he used to preach and to reveal the truths of the symbolic representations in the book of Revelation. And began to declare what came to be known as "The Seventh Seal Message."

This word "seal" to some becomes confusing, but if you will recall in the book of Revelation there was a book that was ". . . sealed with seven seals" (Revelation 5:1). And "no

man was found worthy" to loose the seals of this book and so, my friend John said he started to weep (Revelation 5:4).

But, my friend, he found that one stepped up and said, ". . . Weep not: Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to. . . loose the seals thereof" (Revelation 5:5). That Lion of the tribe of Juda, is Jesus Christ.

The "seal" that He "loosed" is a picture of the Spirit of God. In Ephesians 1:13 it says, "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were **SEALED** with that holy Spirit of promise." So, the "seal" is the Holy Spirit. In Ephesians 4:30 he says, "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are **SEALED**. . ." So, my friend, the "seal" that kept the book sealed, was the Spirit of God.

When Christ came on the stage of action and, my friend, brought understanding to the hearts of mankind, He loosed the Spirit of God. And through the seven distinct time periods that comprise the Gospel Day, He my friend, has allowed the Spirit to loose understanding and bring truth to the hearts of men. So, when we speak of loosing a seal, we speak of the loosing of understanding by the Spirit of God on a portion of the Word of God, as given by Jesus Christ.

So, when we speak of this Seventh Seal message, we are speaking of a time when that seventh and final seal has been loosed. And that now we are privileged to have understanding revealed to us, on the Word, by the Spirit, of the entirety of the Word of God. Since this is the seventh and final seal or trumpet being sounded forth, this period is concluded by the consummation of time.

As we survey our lesson text, there is a dual theme or vein of truth that runs through this Scripture passage. That dual theme is the theme of "gathering" and "severing." In Matthew 13:47 it speaks my friend of this "net" and says, ". . . gathered of every kind. . . ." and Matthew 13:48 declares they, ". . . gathered the good into vessels. . . ." In Matthew 13:30 where we were first introduced to these truths Jesus said, ". . . but gather the wheat into my barn."

Also, we see a portrait of separation in Matthew 13:49 it says, ". . . sever the wicked from among the just. . . ." Matthew 13:48 says, ". . . cast the bad away." And in Matthew 13:41, ". . . gather out of his kingdom all things that offend. . . ." So, we find that this age is to have a clear delineation between the True Church and false religion. Many commentators and religious advocates would lead us to believe that all must dwell together and cannot be separated until Jesus comes.

However, this is totally foreign to the teaching of the Scriptures. The prophet Malachi caught a vision of our day and he penned in Malachi 3:18, "Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not." While the masses say, "That you cannot know, that you cannot judge, that you cannot separate, that no one can know, that only eternity will reveal," while the masses herald such cries as that, the Scripture say, EXPLICITLY, that we can know. "**THEN** shall ye return, and **DISCERN** between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not" (Malachi 3:18). The Scriptures here are very plain and teach us that we can know.

Now, how can we discern between the righteous and the wicked? And discern between him that serves God and him that serves Him not? What is the criteria? How do we discern? On what basis? In I Corinthians, Chapter 2, the Apostle Paul addresses this. In I Corinthians 2:14 he declares, "**NATURAL MAN** receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: [The Amplified Bible makes it a little clearer. I Corinthians 2:14 says, '. . . does not accept or welcome or admit into his heart the gifts and teachings and revelations of the Spirit of God. . . .' Now, hold that thought and he goes on to say,]. . . neither can he know them, because they are **SPIRITUALLY** discerned." Here he tells us that we can discern who is righteous and who, my friend, are the wicked. Who it is that serves God and who it is that serves Him not. How? By observing what they discern. We can discern what they are, by observing what they discern. My friend, those who are natural or the Amplified Bible says, ". . . does not accept or welcome

or admit. . . the teachings and revelations of the Spirit of God. . . ."

Now, where does the teachings and revelations that the Spirit of God brings, come from? Jesus tells us in the Gospel of John 16:13, ". . . he [the Holy Spirit] shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak. . . ." In John 16:15 Jesus says, ". . . he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." So, where does He get these "teachings and revelations" that the Amplified Bible speaks of? He gets them from Christ, from the Word of God.

So, as Malachi 3:18 says, we can ". . . discern between the righteous and the wicked, him that serveth God and him that serveth him not," by observing their compliance or noncompliance with the truths of God's Eternal Word.

You see, our text holds before us that the Church in the evening time, is going to be restored to the radiance and pristine glory of the morning and yea, even exceed the morning time brilliance. It will not be a conglomerate of people in various states and conditions spiritually. Men would make you to feel that there are many positions that man can occupy and still be acceptable to Jesus Christ. But, my friend, the only position that can be occupied that can truly be held and be accepted with Christ, is full compliance and obedience to His Word."

I say, many would make you believe that it will be a conglomerate of people in various states of spirituality. But, my friend, in this closing day of time, He is preparing us for the forth-coming judgment. In Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 25, Jesus taught us that on that climactic day, all of mankind will stand in one of two positions. They will be either "sheep" or "goats," and be on His right hand or on His left (Matthew 25:33). Men in religion has supposedly devised a multiplicity of positions that man can occupy, but Jesus in His faithfulness, in this final period of time is preparing us for the judgment shock.

Matthew 25:33 declares, "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." There will only be two positions. There will only be two categories of people. Matthew 25:34 says, "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. . . ." But, my friend, Matthew 25:41 says, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire. . . ."

Christ in His faithfulness is preparing us for that judgment day that looms on the horizon. On that day, there shall only be two positions and all of mankind shall occupy one or the other. This is why, in our text, speaking of our day, the final period of human history He brings us down to what Matthew 13:48 denotes as the "good" or "bad," the "wicked" or the "just."

We must recognize that there is only one criteria that determines what position we occupy. Jesus clearly taught us, in the Gospel of John 12:48, "He that rejecteth me, [how? He tells us] and receiveth not my words. . . ." Teaching us, my friend, that we do not have a bit more of Christ than we do his Word. Many profess that they are Christ's. Many profess that they belong to Jesus Christ, that they love him, that they are serving Him. But they will not take His Word. I say, NOT SO, dear heart! Jesus said in John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments." The only ones who have Jesus Christ are those who obey His Eternal Word. You have not got a bit more of Jesus Christ than what you have, of the Word of His, that you obey. Many profess that they are Christ's, but they will not take His word. I say, **NOT** SO! When you reject any portion of God's Word you, my friend, are rejecting Jesus Christ. The passage goes on to say here in John 12:48, "He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the **WORD** that I have spoken, the **SAME** shall judge him in the last day."

The **WORD** is the criteria for judgment. It will be the criteria for judgment on that day. And it is the **WORD** that separates and exposes who stands where in this very day and time in which we are living. We are living in a era of preliminary judgment."

The Scripture says, "And as it was in the days of Noe. . . ." (Luke 17:26). How was it in the days of Noah? Before God brought final judgment on those people. He, my friend, had a

preliminary judgment, Noah preached and was ". . . a preacher of righteousness. . ." (2 Peter 2:5) the Scripture declares. And he preached and warned the people of wrath to come. My friend, he preached and laid forth judgment on the people that they might have time and opportunity. It was a time of preliminary judgment before the deluge came. Jesus said in Luke 17:26, "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man." We are in a time of preliminary judgment where He is sounding forth His truth. Heralding it plain and clear, that men may flee from the wrath to come and gain a real experience of salvation, and ". . . walk in the light, as he is in the light. . . ." (1 John 1:7).

I want you to see, the **WORD** is the criteria for judgment and it is the **WORD** that separates and exposes who is standing where.

In this text that we are studying here, it says here in Matthew 13:49, "So shall it **BE** at the **END OF THE WORLD. . . .**" Someone may ask, "Is that what this text teaches?" Let us examine it. Matthew 13:49 says, "So shall it be at the end of the world: [A phrase which means, in this final age of time, this Christian Dispensation. More particularly, what Matthew 13:30 called the 'harvest,' or when, as Matthew 13:43 says, the Sun 'shines' in its full strength. Which according to Isaiah 30:26, is this seventh period of time. The very day and time in which we are living. Now what does He say will occur?] the angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just. . . ."

This word that the King James Version renders "angels" in the Greek is AGGELOS and it means, "messengers or ministers." Now notice, the text says in Matthew 13:49, ". . . the **ANGELS** [the ministry] shall come forth, and **SEVER. . . .**" The ministry does this severing or separation.

But the question is, how? What instrument do they use? How does the ministry accomplish this? Look at Matthew 13:50 it says, ". . . And shall CAST them into the **FURNACE** of fire. . . ." Now, what is this "furnace of fire"?

Again, do not let your mind run off to the Advent or my friend, to confuse this with ". . . the lake of fire" that



Revelation 20:15 speaks of. Biblically what is this "furnace of fire," Matthew 13:50 speaks of? Well, let us break it down and see. In Isaiah 31:9 it says, ". . . whose fire is in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem." Let us begin to consider. What is in Jerusalem? Isaiah 2:3 says, ". . . for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the **WORD** of the Lord from Jerusalem." The "Word of the Lord." What was in the fiery furnace with the Hebrew Boys? In Daniel 3:25 it says, ". . . the Son of God." Jesus, the Word of God.

Now what is this fire? In Jeremiah 23:29 it says, "Is not my **WORD** like as a fire?" Again, a picture of the Word of God. What is the lesson before us? Here we see, my friend, what a true ministry uses to do as Matthew 13:49 declares, ". . . sever the wicked from among the just. . . ." In Matthew 13:50, Jesus says they used ". . . the furnace of fire. . . ." What is it? The Word of God.

Are we certain of this? Look at the results and the reaction of these that are wicked. Matthew 13:50 says, ". . . there shall be **WAILING** and **GNASHING OF TEETH**." Where else do we see this in the Scriptures? In Acts 7:54 at the preaching of Stephen before the Sanhedrin, it says, "When they heard these things, [What? The Word of God. Read the prior verses starting with Verse 2 through Verse 53. He took them right down through the Old Testament account and gave them the Word of God.] they were cut to the heart, and they **GNASHED** on him with their teeth." One rendering says, "they ground their teeth at him in rage." What did this portray here and in our lesson? It was their reaction to the straight, plain, preaching of the Word of God.

It was as Matthew 13:50 says, a ". . . furnace of fire. . . ." It puts heat on those whose lives are not straight. Those who will not measure to the light and truth, yet want to profess. In Malachi 4:1 the Prophet said, "For, behold, the day cometh, [speaking of the Gospel Day] that shall BURN as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up. . . ." Straight truth burns up people who want to profess, but not take the full truth.

But, who are the "wicked" that our text talks about here in Matthew 13:49? Well, the Psalmist gives us a good understanding of that. In Psalm 50:16-17 he says: "But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee." What is the lesson here? It is those who profess, but will not take instruction. They will not take God's Word. They have the Word. They understand the Word. They have had opportunity. Instruction came their way. But, when the instruction came, or the Word came, they cast it behind them and continued to profess. That is the wicked. And, my friend, when those people tried to go right on and profess, the Word of God calls them wicked and separates them.

My friend, who are the "just" Matthew 13:49 speaks of? In Proverbs 4:18 the Wise Man declares, "But the path of the JUST is as the shining light, that shineth more and more. . . ." It is a people who take light and walk in it, and continue to walk in it.

Now, notice our text says in Matthew 13:49, ". . . the angels [the ministry] shall come forth, and sever the wicked from **AMONG**. . . ." Where are they? Right among the just. In this evening of time, He, my friend, is doing as He spoke in Matthew 13:41 where He declared,

". . . gather out of **HIS** kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. . . ." First of all it says here, He will "gather out all things." He first of all tries to get the "things" out of people's lives. But if they will not let go of those "things," He will gather "them" and take them out. Why? Because He will have HIS CHURCH to shine as the morning. He will not allow His Church to operate as nominal religion does.

He has and will have a clear distinction between the True Church, and what calls itself "the church." What makes the distinction? What makes the distinction is what they are doing with the Word. How they regard the Word. What their attitude is towards the Word. What their attitude is toward truth.

It is that "furnace of fire," and the reason it is so heated is because they will not accept it. They will not walk in it and because of that it burns them up. Because they are

stubble. Wood, hay, and stubble are burnt by the fire (1 Corinthians 3:12-13).

But those "things" that are truly precious, those ones who are truly pure, and truly real, will only be refined and shine in a brighter and brighter way. Well, I trust we can see it. Next time we will go a little farther.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE PARABLE OF THE NET - PART SEVEN

*Matthew 13:47 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.*

Before us in this Biblical text we see recorded "The Parable of the Net." For several broadcasts, we have been considering this particular parable. We have spent considerable time examining this lesson because it so Biblically describes the conditions and realities of this very day and age.

Many honest hearts grope in the darkness of religious confusion, not understanding why things are as they are. And knowing that there is more, that there are truths, but not knowing where to find them. The Psalmist David cried in Psalm 119:130, "The entrance of thy words giveth light; [Then he tells us what light is.] it giveth understanding unto the simple."

Our burden, our desire, as we examine these prophetic parables of Christ, is that as the Word goes forth, that as the Word is expounded in a clear manner, that precious hearts may gain light and understanding and know what God would have them to do.

As we look again at this parable, we find that it is the seventh and final parable in this series. And as such it corresponds to the seventh and final period of the Gospel Day.

We find that our lesson text has a dual vein of truth running through it. It speaks of "gathering" and also of "severing."

We have looked at what Matthew 13:49 renders as ". . . sever the wicked from among the just."

The converse side of this, my friend, "severing" is "gathering." Though many would look at our day and merely see the **NEGATIVE** aspects, there are very **POSITIVE** aspects as well. According to Hebrews 4:12 it says, "For the word of God IS [as a]. . . TWOedged sword.." The Gospel has always had a positive impact and a negative impact. A positive aspect and a negative aspect.

What determines this? What determines whether it is a positive or negative aspect or influence? Well, what determines this is the attitude and the acceptance or rejection by the recipient of the Word. Jesus said in the Gospel of Matthew 12:30, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." Again a positive and a negative effect. What makes the distinction as to whether one is "with" or "against?" Whether they are gathering or scattering? In the Gospel of John 8:47, Jesus told us very clearly what makes the distinction, "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." So, the Gospel can have a positive or negative effect and it is wholly based upon man's reaction to it. If man receives it in the proper manner it can have a very positive effect, a positive influence on his life. And have, my friend, a very positive eternal reward. But one who does not accept the Gospel and refuses its claims upon their lives and responds negatively to the calls of Christ and of the Holy Spirit, my friend, they will spend time here in a Christless life. They will be devoid of peace and joy and the attributes that God would desire to shed in their heart and life. And then in the end, a negative Christless eternity in the pits of a damning hell! So, my friend, the Gospel can have a positive or a negative effect based on man's reaction to it.

Look at what Jesus said when He heralded forth the Great Commission. In the Gospel of Mark 16:15-16, "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth [Believeth what? The Gospel] and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not [Believeth not what? The Gospel] shall be damned." So, my

friend, it is the criteria that determines whether the outcome is good or bad, positive or negative. It is based on man's response and reaction to the Word of God.

The Apostle Paul recognized this truth when he penned those words in 2 Corinthians 2:15-17 he said, "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: To the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. [What made the distinction? He goes on and says,] For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God. . . ." What made the distinction was the Word of God and men's response to it.

The beauty of our lesson text is that not only does it give us a revelation into the negative aspect, those who are severed. But it also lets us know, my friend, that there are a people who will properly respond to the message of truth when they hear it. And they can be gathered. Our lesson declares in Matthew 13:48 that He, ". . . **GATHERED** the good. . . ."

We want to examine this "gathering" as there is depth of truth portrayed here in this thought of a "gathering." We were first introduced to this thought of gathering in "The Parable of the Tares." In Matthew 13:30 here Jesus said very clearly, "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."

Here Jesus says, "let both." What was He addressing? What was He speaking of? Both "wheat" and "tares." That was the object of His discussion. He said, let them "grow together" and they did through the dark and cloudy day. The "wheat" and the "tares" were together. There was no distinction. There was no clear separation. There was not a clear, visible, Body of Christ in that era.

Matthew 13:30 says, "Let them grow together until the harvest: [or, the evening of time] 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." Now, several truths are portrayed in this verse.

First, we must establish the prophetic time frame that Jesus is speaking of. Jesus said it was not for this day here in this parable of the tares. That it was not for this age, my friend, from A.D. 270 to A.D. 530. That period was a time when an apostasy was taking place. Matthew 13:25 says, ". . . men slept. . . ." Their spiritual senses were dulled and apostasy was under full sway. And, my friend, for a time Matthew 13:30 says both were going to "grow together." A picture of the dark and cloudy day.

However, He went on to say in Matthew 13:30, ". . . in the time of harvest. . . ." a separation would occur. Now, when was this to be? In Revelation 14:15, my friend, the Revelator pens and says, ". . . Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time IS come [present tense] for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe." Now, my friend, when is this?

Now recall this book of Revelation is in symbolic language. Revelation 1:1 tells us it was, ". . . signified. . . ." which means revealed by signs or in symbolic expressions.

It says in Revelation 14:15, ". . . the harvest of the **EARTH**. . . ." Now, what does it mean here in the Revelation when he said that, "the harvest of the earth is ripe?" When He said, "the harvest of the earth" what does the "earth" represent? Well, we read in Revelation 13:11, where it talks about ". . . another beast coming up out of the **EARTH**. . . ." This earth, my friend, is the same term that was used in Revelation 14:15, and this "beast" that came up out of the "earth" was the religious system of Protestantism. So, my friend, this "harvest of the earth" that Revelation Chapter 14 speaks of, when he talks about harvesting the "earth," was a harvesting of the Saints out of Protestantism. It is the same, my friend, as the clarion call of Revelation 18:4 where he said, ". . . Come out of her, my people. . . ." So, since this harvesting was of the "earth" or Protestantism, then the time period must be subsequent to the Protestant Era. Or, in other words, be this evening time of the Gospel Day.

This "reaping" that our lesson text speaks of and the Revelation as well, commenced with the sixth seal ministry using the sickle. A sharp threshing instrument. And that is just exactly what the Lord wants today, is a sharp pointed

message, not something dull. Not something that is not to the point. Not something that does not distinguish and separate. He wants something sharp. My friend, Isaiah 41:15 declares, "Behold, I will make thee a new sharp threshing instrument having teeth. . . ." God wants a Gospel, my friend, sounded forth that has some teeth. A Gospel that will do some biting, that will separate and take apart the good from the evil. He wants something that is sharp and pointed.

So, we find that this reaping commenced with the sixth seal brethren. But it is not completed until our day. How do we know this? Because Matthew 13:43 says, "Then [When? When this work is fully accomplished.] shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom. . . ." Now, notice "in the kingdom" not in heaven, but here and now while time still stands. It says they, "shall shine forth as the sun" (Matthew 13:43). This has fulfillment right in our day. When Isaiah 30:26 says, ". . . the light of the sun shall be sevenfold. . . ." So, the ultimate fulfillment of Matthew 13:30, my friend, this gathering here of the "tares" and the gathering of the "wheat" into the barn is a picture that is taking place right in our day.

Now, let us examine it closely, it portrays several truths to us. Here in Matthew 13:30 He said, ". . . I will say to the reapers, [And in Matthew 13:39 He tells us '. . . the reapers are the angels. . .' or AGGELOS, meaning the messengers or the ministry. Notice now He says,] Gather ye together first the tares. . . ." Think with me. In the "field" and Matthew 13:38 tells us, "The field is the world. . . ." In the world, in the dark and cloudy day, each "tare" occupied its own place. Catholicism had its separate place. Lutheranism had its separate place. Wesleyanism had its separate place. Each sectarian body has had its own separate place, in the field, to stand.

But in this final period of time when the true ministry preaches the pure Gospel they will all gather together. In other words they will all join ranks, lock arms, and work together to oppose the truth and the True Church. Revelation 16:16 speaking of paganism, papalism, and Protestantism, symbolized as ". . . three unclean spirits like frogs. . ."



(Revelation 16:13), it tells us here, "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." Notice it said, "**GATHERED THEM TOGETHER**" There, my friend, was an amalgamation here.

When John received a vision of the "eighth beast" (Revelation 17:11) which, my friend, is the force that we face, and will be facing in this very period of time in which we are living. He said he received a vision of the "eighth beast" and he lets us know that that which we are facing in this day, he was told in Revelation 17:11, ". . . he is the eighth, and is of the seven. . . ." Again, an amalgamation, a picture of the "tares" of all ages coming together to oppose truth.

But notice our text says in Matthew 13:30, ". . . **BIND** them in bundles. . . ." Even though they are in bundles, have joined forces, and have come together, a ministry, **A TRUE MINISTRY**, still has the power to **BIND** them. Jesus said to the ministry in the Gospel of Matthew 16:19, "And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou [who? the ministry] shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. . . ."

Now notice the beautiful and glorious part of the message. Though as Matthew 7:13 declares, ". . . broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. . . ." Though, my friend, he tells us that **MANY** go the broad way. Though many choose the wrong path of life, and the wrong path for their never dying soul. Though as the Lord spoke in Deuteronomy 7:7 when he said, "The Lord **DID NOT** set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were **MORE IN NUMBER** than any people; for ye were the **FEWEST** of all people. . . ." Though, my friend, many choose the broad way, though the masses go the way of the flesh. Though we are the **FEWEST** of all people, our lesson reveals that there are still those who properly responded to the message. They properly responded to the call of the Gospel. For it says here in Matthew 13:30, ". . . but gather the wheat into my barn." This reveals to us that there are still honest hearts who desire truth, **UNADULTERATED TRUTH**, who will still gather at the sound and the revelation of His Word.

This word in the King James Version that the English renders as "gather" in the Greek is **SUNAGO** and it means "to collect." In other words, in this period of time God is collecting His Saints. Not only, my friend, are His ministry "fishers" and working to "fish" men, but also Jeremiah, Chapter 16 tells us that they are hunters as well. In Jeremiah 16:16 it says, "Behold, I will send for many fishers, saith the Lord, and they shall fish them; and after will I send for many hunters, and they shall hunt them from every mountain, and from every hill, and out of the holes of the rocks." This period, the seventh, began with fishing but after the fishing God said, "will I send for many hunters. . ." (Jeremiah 16:16). These my friend are ministers that take the Word of God and go forth to those who are hiding behind false teachings and false doctrines. Many are honest and they do not even know that they are doing this, that they are hiding behind these falsities until the truth comes and hunts and seeks them out. Our message is as Revelation 18:4 declares, ". . . Come out of HERE, MY people. . . ."

Now, what will responding to the call of the Gospel in our day make you? Our lesson text says here in Matthew 13:30, ". . . gather the WHEAT. . . ." It will make you wheat. Now, my friend, when we begin to think about wheat, what do you do with wheat? Does it keep its individual status and identity? NO! Wheats intended purpose is to be utilized to make bread and my friend, so it is with man. Man out here alone in the field, in the world, is not fulfilling God's intended purpose. But God wants to make you "wheat" so that you can, my friend, fulfill the purpose that God chose man to fulfill. What do you do with wheat? Does it keep its individual status and identity? No! Wheat is made into bread and Luke 22:19 says, "And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them saying, This is my body. . . ." So, individual wheat grains came together. They sacrificed their individual status and they make bread, which Christ said, ". . . is my body. . ." (Luke 22:19) and in Colossians 1:18 it says, ". . . the body, [is] the church. . . ."

So, the gathering of the "wheat" in Matthew 13:30 is the gathering of a people in this day and time who will respond to

the message in a positive manner, and come together to make up the visible Body of Christ, the Church. These are those who will separate from sin, separate from the world, separate from this Babel of religious confusion and let the "reapers" (the ministry) preach the Word. They embrace the Word and let it do a work that sets them apart as a separate, distinct people right in this very day and time.

Now notice where He brings them, here in Matthew 13:30 He says, ". . . gather the wheat into **MY BARN.**" Or in Matthew 3:12 it is rendered ". . . gather his wheat into the garner. . . ." The same Greek word is used in both verses. The word here for "barn" or for "garner" is the Greek word **APOTHEKE** which is the Greek word from which our English word **APOTHECARY** comes from. Now what is an apothecary? An apothecary is a place of storage, a place of safety from the elements. A place safe from what is without. It is a clean, antiseptic place and one from which medication is dispensed for healing of the ill.

And that is just what the Church is in this world. It is a place of safety. It is a shelter from what is without. It is a clean healthy place that has the CURE for the ills of the world, and the ills of false religion. The Church has the "pill" that the world needs. The "Gos-pill" and the Church is the dispensary from which the Gospel in its purity and, my friend, in its fullness goes forth.

I say, "Thank God for the wheat." A people who takes and lives the truth and lets it work not only in their own lives, but desires to be an apothecary to the world. To help the ills of the world. To help those who are sick in sin, dead in trespasses and sin. The Church has the medication that can bring healing. Also, those who are my friend caught up with the sin of division. Those who are out in sectarian realms. Those who are in false Church of God congregations. Thank God, there is a true ministry that has a message. That has a medication, has a "pill" that can heal all ills and that is the "Gos-pill." The Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Well, I trust that we can see it dear heart. Not only is there a severance, but thanks be to God there is a gathering. And there is a people who will still respond. A people that still desire the truth in the inward parts. That still love

the truth and still want to be a people that will obey God.  
And do what God will have them to do. And be His apothecary in  
this time world.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE PARABLE OF THE NET - PART EIGHT

*Matthew 13:47 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.*

Here we have before us the seventh and final parable, in this prophetic series of parables, recorded in Chapter 13 of Matthew's Gospel account. Through the vehicle of these seven parables, Jesus takes us down through the seven distinct time periods that comprise this Gospel day, or Christian Dispensation. And through these parables, He reveals the predominant conditions that the Church faced in each of these periods of time. In this seventh and final parable, He reveals many truths concerning this seventh and final period of time in which you and I are living today.

As we view our lesson text, we see that Jesus said here in Matthew 13:47, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net. . . ." One of the predominant things that a net does is separate. Some are closed in and conversely after it is drawn, others are shut out. So, a predominant earmark of our era, is the doctrine of separation. Our text is replete with illustrations of separation taking place. In Matthew 13:48 it speaks of the "good" and the "bad." In Matthew 13:49 it speaks of the "wicked" and the "just." And when Jesus introduced us to my friend, the separation in "The Parable of the Tares" in Matthew 13:30, He spoke of the "tares" and the "wheat."

Not only do we see a separation and a definite distinction, but we see revealed to us that as we move closer

and closer to the consummation of time, that in reality, there is and will only be two camps.

Men have as the Wise Man said in Ecclesiastes 7:29, ". . . sought out many inventions." Or the actual Hebrew word for "inventions" is rendered subterfuges. Many have sought out inventions or subterfuges or devices. And have devised many supposed ways and religious devices to please God and secure heaven as their home. Men would say that there are multitudes of positions in which men may stand and numerous religious persuasions from which man may choose.

But my friend, in the beginning of this Gospel Day, this was not so. In the commencement of this Christian Dispensation, Jesus took the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the scribes, and the lawyers, as well as sinners, publicans and harlots and said in Matthew 12:30, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad." My friend, bringing all mankind down to two positions. I say, my friend, He made it very crystal clear that there was not a multiplicity of positions that men may occupy. He, my friend, reduced all mankind to either for or against, gathering or scattering.

And in this seventh period of time, we are seeing, my friend, the message of the Gospel Truth, getting right back to the light of the morning. And part of the light of that morning time was that there was only two positions that man could occupy. And in this evening time there is only two camps that men may be in.

Today, my friend, very deceptive spirits are working and many, sad to say, view almost any religious system as Christian. But the Apostle John said in his Epistle, in I John 4:1, he declared, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try [or the Greek says 'test'] the spirits [in the plural] whether they are of God: [Now why did He admonish us to do that? Read the remainder of the verse.] because **MANY** false prophets are gone out into the world." Now, notice here, He began the verse with "spirits," in the plural. But, He ended the verse with "prophets," in the plural. Letting us know that spirits do not just float around and inhabit the atmosphere, but spirits work

through human instrumentality. They work through people. They work through mankind.

And, so my friend, everyone that says that they are of Christ, everyone that professes that they are Christian, are not necessarily so. And this is why John, in his age, penned those words, ". . . believe not every spirit. . ." (1 John 4:1). We do not have to be gullible enough to just merely take people at their face value or at their profession. But he tells us to put them to the test, or to ". . . try the spirits. . ." (1 John 4:1).

Now, how do we "try the spirits?" How can we determine if they are right? What is the basis to test them by? By what criteria can we determine as 1 John 4:1 says, ". . . whether they are of God. . .?" Jesus tells us in John's Gospel, Chapter 8, He gives us a measurement here. In John 8:47 He said, "He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God." So, how do we try the spirits? By the Word. The Word is what proves the distinction. My friend, it is the Word, and men's reaction and response to it that brings the separation.

Men in their refusal to accept what the Apostle Paul called in Acts 20:27, as ". . . all the counsel of God," have devised teachings and stances that are produced by their false religious spirits. All false religious spirits have a common source of origin. Just as the Sadducees and Pharisees, who were bitter sectarian opponents, yet they joined together to fight Christ. So, shall all brands of false religions do today. The Dragon, the Beast, my friend, and the Image, which is nothing more than Paganism, Papalism, and Protestantism, has joined ranks to fight the truth of God's Eternal Word in this very day and time in which you and I are living.

Just as in our context, there are two gatherings taking place. My friend, our lesson text tells us that here was ". . . gathered of every kind. . ." (Matthew 13:47). There were two kinds gathered. The "good" and the "bad." And Matthew 13:30 also portrays this it declares, ". . . Gather ye together first the tares. . . ." Letting us know that the various tares and all the systems of the tares, has a gathering and are joining together. Also, He said there in Matthew 13:30, ". .

. gather the wheat into my barn." The True Church has a gathering as well.

Now, let us examine these two gatherings a little more closely, as they are a major event of our day. In the Revelation, the Revelation, my friend, expands upon this truth. In Revelation, Chapter 19 we see portrayed two gatherings and two suppers. And, my friend, the stark reality is that all of mankind are being gathered to one "supper" or the other. There are no other positions for man to occupy as we come down to this closing out of time.

Now, as we view this passage of Scripture text in the Revelation, we must remember the nature of the Revelation language. In Revelation 1:1 it tells us that it is ". . . signified. . . ." which means "revealed by signs," and WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY defines a sign as a "symbol" or symbolic. So, the nature of the Revelation is that its language has a symbolic nature.

Now, what is the time setting for Revelation, Chapter 19? Revelation 19:1 says, "And **AFTER** these things. . . ." Letting us know, my friend, that something had already occurred, and what occurred gives us an indication of the time setting. It says in Revelation 19:1, "And after these things. . . ." What things was he referring to? In Revelation 17:1 it declares, "And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials. . . ." So, what occurred in Revelation, Chapter 19 was revealed in the time subsequent to when the "vial angels" poured out their vials. In Revelation, Chapter 16 it talks here about the "vial angels" pouring out their "vials." And it tells us that the very first "vial angel" poured his "vial," in part ". . . upon them which worshipped his image" (Revelation 16:2). Now, we found in prior studies that the "image" was Protestantism. So, the "vial angels" were in a period subsequent to the era of Protestantism. Which means they were an Evening Time Ministry. So, the time setting of this text is the Evening Time of this Gospel Day.

Now, what is the picture portrayed in this text? Here in Revelation 19:6-9 the penman declares: "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying,



Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."

Now, here John speaks of the Church. In Revelation 19:7 he, my friend, denotes Her as ". . . his wife. . . ." And Revelation 21:9 styles Her as ". . . the bride, the Lamb's wife." This wife, or this bride, my friend, is the one the Apostle Paul referred to in his writings. In 2 Corinthians 11:2 he calls Her, ". . . a chaste virgin. . . ." So, my friend, this bride, the Lamb's wife, this chaste virgin if you please, is the Church.

Someone may ask, "Is that who the Apostle Paul was addressing?" If you will read 2 Corinthians 11:2 he says, "For I am jealous over **YOU**. . . ." Now, let us notice who he addresses here. 2 Corinthians 11:2, "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused YOU to one husband, that I may present YOU as a chaste virgin to Christ." Now, who is the YOU that he was addressing in this Epistle or in this letter? In 2 Corinthians 1:1 as he commences this Epistle it says, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, unto THE CHURCH OF GOD. . . ." So, the YOU that he was addressing was the Church of God. And he called Her a "chaste virgin," or my friend, a "Bride," or the Revelation calls Her "the bride, the Lamb's wife" (Revelation 21:9). A reference in symbolic expression to the Church and Her purity.

Now, notice here in Revelation, Chapter 19 that there is a gathering that is taking place here. In Revelation 19:9 there is a gathering or calling it says, ". . . Blessed are they which are called [And they are called or gathered to what? What gathers them? And what are they gathering themselves to?] unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Now, while many look for this to be a supposed event in the future, this is something that the True Church is enjoying today.

But, what is this supper? What is it that, my friend, His people are gathered to? What is it that has gathered us? What distinguishes, my friend, the True Church from Spiritual Babylon? Well, look in Revelation 19:9 it says, "And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." Well, what is it? What calls us? What are we partaking of that holds us to this position and enables us to enjoy this "marriage supper?" My friend, Revelation 19:9 says, ". . . These are the true sayings of God." What is the supper? What is he speaking of here? What does it consist of? It consists of **"THE TRUE SAYINGS OF GOD."** The Word of God. This is the supper to which those who have an honest and a good heart, those whom Jesus originally built the Church on in the Morning Time, are called. They are embracing it here in this Evening Time. They are embracing, my friend, the true sayings of God's Eternal Word. This is what distinguishes the True Church.

The True Church takes ALL of the Word. They "eat" it and it becomes a part of them. The Scripture talks about ". . . Christ our passover. . ." (I Corinthians 5:7). And, my friend, when back in Exodus they partook of that literal Passover, He told them to eat the lamb and eat all of it (Exodus 12:4-11). My friend, that lamb being a type of Christ who is the Word (John 1:1). And that we are to take all of Him and eat it every bit. My friend, I want you to see that what the true people of God partake of is the Word of God, ALL of the Word of God. The whole counsel of God (Acts 20:27), if you please.

Is this what the Revelation is saying? Is this what the Scriptures teach? In Job 23:12 the Patriarch heralded, ". . . I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food. . . ." The Prophet Jeremiah declared in Jeremiah 15:16, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart. . . ." The Psalmist David penned in Psalm 119:103, "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth."

The True Church gathers to where the "supper" is prepared. To where the complete message of truth is preached. And where a people will take and ingest it, digest it, and live it out.

In this fullness of time, my friend, He desires that we take the full truth.

And there are also those who will not take this truth, sad to say. There is another gathering, there is another "supper." In Revelation 19:17-18 it says, "And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great." Now, let us examine this closely. Notice what the bill-of-fare is here. Notice the first item that he mentions in Revelation 19:18, "That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men. . . ." Notice that what they eat predominately is of man. That which is produced by man. My friend, it is not as Revelation 19:9 speaks of when it talks about the saints eating, ". . . the true sayings of God." That is not the diet here. That is not what is being served. That is not what is being fed. My friend, what is being served here is flesh. It is of man, it is of human origin. These people here do not care what God's Word says, but rather what their organization teaches. Or what some man said. Or how they feel. What is it that man feeds you? In Hosea 10:13 it says, "Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men."

I want you to see, my friend, who makes up this gathering. It is those who do not want to take the truths of God's Eternal Word. Who makes up this gathering? Here in Revelation 19:20 it says, "the beast," papalism; "the false prophet," Protestantism; then it introduces us to a new group, "them that worship his image." This was not the "image." They are not part of Protestantism, but it is false "church of God-ism." Or that which is like and imitates Sectarianism in their practices and their operation. In this final period of time, dear heart, all of false religion will amalgamate.

Someone may ask, "Why is that?" The reason is twofold. One Revelation 19:17 says, ". . . Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God. . . ." Letting us know that God prepared this. But why? Someone may ask, "How can that be?" II Thessalonians 2:10-12 declares how, ". . . because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; That they might all be damned who believed not the truth. . . ." Secondly, because according to Revelation 16:14, ". . . they are the spirits of devils, [that is]. . . to gather them. . . ."

In this closing out of time there are only two camps. When time ends all the pure, the just, the "wheat" will be in the barn. The True Church eating as Revelation 19:9 declares, ". . . the true sayings of God." All the "bad," the chaff, those who want man's thoughts, man's ideas, man's operation, and man's way of handling matters, my friend, will be in Spiritual Babylon. Jeremiah 51:2 says God, ". . . will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land. . . ." The fanners (the ministry) will preach a Revelation 18:4 message of, ". . . Come out of her, my people. . . ." And Revelation 18:23 says, ". . . the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee. . . ."

All the saints will be gathered out of Babylon and be gathered to the True Church. Psalm 87:7 declares, ". . . all my springs are in thee." Haggai 2:9 prophesied of this Evening Time and said, "the glory of this latter house shall be **GREATER** than the former. . . ."

Revelation 19:19-20 shows us that all the powers of false religion are amalgamated against truth. Revelation, Chapter 17 introduces us to a "beast" called the "eighth," and lets us know that it is merely an amalgamation of the previous systems that have worked against truth. But in the end Revelation 19:20 says, ". . . These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." In the end, my friend, in the light of eternity there is only one victorious people, the people of God. Those who take and live His truth. The question is dear heart, which camp are you being gathered into.



## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE PARABLE OF THE NET - PART NINE

*Matthew 13:47 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.*

In this passage of Scripture text, we again see before us "The Parable of the Net." We have been studying the truths incorporated in this parable. And by the help of God, we want to conclude our study of this final parable, of these seven prophetic parables of Christ. These parables housed in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13, being seven in number, corresponds to the seven distinct time periods that comprise this Christian Dispensation.

This particular parable, "The Parable of the Net," being the seventh, represents the final and seventh period of this Gospel Day. This period began in A.D. 1930 and goes through to the consummation of time.

It has been the burden of this study to show why things are as they are. Why is there such confusion and variation in the religious realms? How have things occurred? And why and what has given rise to the many religious systems that my friend, are across our landscape? The many systems, denoted by various men's names, why have they arisen? How did they come to be? We have attempted to answer these questions, by the Bible. These questions my friend, that loom to men's minds. We have attempted to answer these by God's Eternal Word.

And as we approach the conclusion of the Gospel Day, questions loom to mind. Such as: what lies ahead? Will conditions always be as we see them now? Prophetically, what

is on the horizon for the True Church? Will there be revival prior to the end? These are very valid questions which entertain the minds of many. And certainly we will not be able to do such vast questions as these justice, in the time and space that we have. But, let us examine the Scriptures and try to gain at least an overview of what they teach regarding these very crucial and vital matters.

In our lesson text, we see that this period of time has a crystal clear message. A message that makes a very explicit distinction between what Matthew 13:48 denotes, as the "good" and the "bad." Or what Matthew 13:49 describes, as the "wicked" and the "just." This is a day of time those, my friend, who do not truly move, are not failing to move because of ignorance, but many times because of rejection. And so we find that this is a day my friend, when men clearly will know what their position is.

Yes! Many are deceived. But, prior to their deception, He was as He is portrayed to our age in the seventh letter in the Revelation, in Revelation 3:14, ". . . the faithful and true witness . . ." And though my friend, as He reveals to us in Matthew 25:33, speaking of the judgment scene, "And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." Though He reveals that this shall occur, this is not His desire. This is not His will. II Peter 3:9 tells us, He is ". . . not willing that ANY should perish, but that all should come to repentance." And the Apostle Paul penned in I Timothy 2:4 that He, ". . . will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." His desire is to see all mankind saved and Spiritual Babylon emptied of all the saints. And in conjunction with this desire, He is not going my friend, to have time reel into eternity without a final effort to awaken all of mankind.

Now, what do the Scriptures teach concerning this matter? In Revelation 16:13 it tells us here in very clear language, it says "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet." We see here these are unclean spirits and they are the spirits that motivate all of false religion. And we see that it tells us here in

Revelation 16:14, "For they are the spirits of devils, [it says]. . . which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, TO **GATHER**. . . ." So we find that these spirits are working in a gathering sense.

After this gathering, we see in Revelation 17:14, "These shall make war with the Lamb. . . ." And Revelation 19:19 says, they are ". . . gathered together to make war against him . . . ." Revelation 20:8 says, ". . . to gather them together to battle. . . ." The enemy, in this end portion of the evening of time, is amalgamating all of his forces, to put a push on to defeat Christ and the Church.

But Matthew 16:18 declares, ". . . I will build my church; [Jesus speaking] and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Just my friend, as when Satan supposed that he had triumphed at the Crucifixion and death of Christ, only to see Him arise and triumph three days later. So it will be with the Church.

In Revelation 20:9 it says, "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and **FIRE** came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."

Now, remember we are dealing in a symbolic book. Now, what is this fire? In Jeremiah 23:29, the writer here pens, "Is not my word like as a fire?" And my friend, it tells us here in Revelation 20:9, that ". . . fire came down. . . ." Now this fire here is a dual symbol. It is a symbol of the Word. But, it is a picture of the Word and a fresh divine empowering by the Holy Spirit, my friend, to where a revival broke forth and vindicated the Church.

And on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:3 it tells us, "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire. . . ." When these cloven tongues appeared on the scene, and the Holy Spirit moved in, in a fresh manner. These brethren had a clear understanding of Scriptures that previously had been obscure and unknown to them. But on that day, the Apostle Peter stood and said, here in the book of Acts 2:16, "But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel. . . ." And by a clear, fresh message from the Word, anointed by the Holy Ghost, a revival broke forth. And those who were lost, even



religious lost people, my friend, cried out in Acts 2:37, ". . . Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

So here we see my friend, a picture that when the enemy thinks that through his forces of Paganism, Papalism and Protestantism, that he has the camp of the saints surrounded, as it were. My friend, when he thinks that the Church is in a dismal condition and defeated, God will send a fresh anointing of His Holy Spirit. And they will take the Word of God, my friend, and they will take that Word that is "like as a fire" and "like a hammer" as Jeremiah 23:29 declared, ". . . that breaketh the rocks in pieces." And they will come forth with the Word of God, and will see hard hearts broken under the sound of the Gospel.

So, we need to see that it worked in the morning, and in the evening we will see a fresh visitation of it.

Now, stop and consider. What is the largest spiritual detriment to mankind? What hinders man from seeing salvation and the Scriptures clear? It is none other than false religion. So, we need to stop and consider. What predominate move is going to be made in these closing days of time? What will be a major portion of this revival? In Revelation 16:17-21, he gives us a lesson, and he said, "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found. And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great."

Now, let us begin to consider this. And immediately, men's minds run off again with thoughts of literalism, but my friend, we must remember we are dealing with a symbolic book. Revelation 1:1 says, it was ". . . signified. . . ." Or

revealed by signs and WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY tells us the word sign means, "a symbol." So, we are dealing in symbolic expressions.

Here in this passage, Revelation 16:17-21 we see the seventh and final "vial." And my friend, there is nothing to succeed this vial. This is the seventh and final vial. And there is nothing to succeed or follow this but the end of time. So my friend, this reveals what is to occur immediately preceding the end.

Now, let us examine it closely. In Revelation 16:17 it says, "And the seventh angel [Or the actual Greek word is AGGELOS and it means, 'a messenger or a minister.' It portrays a ministry.] poured out his vial [or the Greek says 'bowl'] into the air. . . ." Now, why? What does this symbolic expression of "air" teach us? What does it represent? In Ephesians 2:2 the Apostle Paul said, "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the **AIR**, [now, what is it?] the **SPIRIT** that now worketh in the children of disobedience. . . ." The "air" represents the spirit. The disobedient, rebellious spirit that produced the organizations. And the religious moves that work against the truth and against Christ and His Church.

Now, notice what occurs. Here in Revelation 16:18 it declares, ". . .there was a great earthquake. . . ." Now, what did it do? Revelation 16:19 says, "And the great city [and Revelation 18:10 will tell you, that is '. . .Babylon. . . .'] was divided into **THREE PARTS**. . . ." What is the lesson here? Some of the greatest confusion comes from those who are not a part of the True Church. Those who will not stand for the message of the True Church. Yet deceive the masses and confuse honest hearts by saying that they are not a part of Spiritual Babylon. They say that they are not a part of Protestantism or Catholicism. That say that they are not sectarian. But my friend, here in this text, it tells us, here in Revelation 16:18 that this great earthquake reveals that Babylon consists of **THREE PARTS**: Paganism, Papalism, and Protestantism. And that all of false religion, regardless of what it calls itself, has the SPIRIT of one of these systems, working in

their midst. There are many today, sad to say, over the land that even calls themselves "Church of God," but in spirit and in practice my friend, they are sectish. They are part of the systems my friend, that are part of Spiritual Babylon. They are one of the "three parts." This earthquake reveals that Babylon did not consist of a multiplicity of parts. But my friend, in reality, only three parts as Revelation 16:18 says: Paganism, Papalism, and Protestantism. So, Babylon consists of three parts and that is all regardless of what they call themselves. My friend, that is all that exists and they are motivated by the spirit of what produced one of these systems.

Now, what produced here, what verse 18 calls, this "great earthquake?" Revelation 16:18 says, "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings. . . ." And my friend, if you go back to the Exodus account to where we are first introduced to this, when God first met with the people of Israel, there in the Exodus. In Exodus 19:16 it says, ". . . there were thunders and lightnings. . . ." And in Exodus 19:19 it says ". . . and God answered him by a voice." So, what caused the earth to shake? What caused the earthquake? It was the Voice of God or the Word of God that causes this earthquake.

When an earthquake occurs my friend, things will move. Things will be rearranged. We need to understand that things shall not always be as we see them now. Think about an earthquake. It rearranges things. It is upsetting. It changes the appearance of the landscape. What was once dominating and towering many times is reduced to rubble. A structure may appear solid. It may appear strong, but my friend, it will not withstand the shaking. And my friend, it crumbles to the earthly position of what it truly is.

And then, that which seemed to be obscure. That which was not clearly seen. Once my friend, all the towering, looming giants have fallen and have been revealed for what they are. Then my friend, the Church can shine out resplendent and be in clear view. Where my friend, the people can see Her as She truly is, restored to Her pristine glory. In Hebrews 12:27-28 the Apostle Paul pens there and says, ". . . Yet once more, signifieth [Which again he is dealing with signs or dealing in symbolic type of expressions. And he says,] the removing of

those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, [or man made] that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. [And he declares,] Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace. . . ."

My friend, the True Church, the true people of God, is **BUILT** upon the Word of God. It does not shake nor move them. They are prepared to take the whole counsel of God. The Apostle Paul said in Acts 20:24, ". . . none of these things move me. . . ." The Word does not shake the Church. It only shakes loose that which might hinder them. The True Church is as the man in Matthew 7:24 who ". . . built his house upon a rock."

But false religion is as he that is spoken of in Matthew 7:26, ". . . which built his house upon the sand. . . ." And Matthew 7:27 tells us, ". . . and great was the fall of it." And Revelation 18:2 says, ". . . Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen. . . ."

The Word of God shall sound forth and cause all to awaken one final time. In Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 25, Jesus gives us a lesson here, the Parable of the Ten Virgins. And certainly He deals with many truths in this particular passage.

But in Matthew 25:6 it declares, "And at midnight there was a cry made, [Many will say that "midnight" is the end of time, but my friend, NO! It was the time when the cry **WAS MADE**. It was a time when the message was.] Behold, the bridegroom cometh. . . ." Future tense. He had not yet arrived on the scene. It was the last hour call.

And it goes on to say here in Matthew 25:6, "And at midnight there was a cry made. . . ." Now, the cry was a message that was preached. In the Gospel of Matthew 3:1 it says, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching. . . ." And Matthew 3:3, "For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one **CRYING** in the wilderness. . . ." This "cry" is a picture of preaching. It is a picture of a ministry with a message.

Now, what did it do? In Matthew 25:7 it says, "Then all those virgins arose. . . ." Here we see portrayed a universal awaking. Certainly not all took proper advantage of it, but

all had opportunity. All my friend, heard the call of the Gospel. All had understanding. All had ample opportunity to respond.

And those which were wise did respond properly. Those who are honest, God will be faithful to and they will hear the call to salvation. And a call to come out of false religion of every form. Their lamp will be trimmed, and the light will burn brilliantly. The "virgins" will be seen in their beautiful "wedding garments." The pristine glory of the Church will be restored and yea, then even exceeded. In Haggai 2:9 the prophet declared, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former. . . ."

Then when Babylon has been clearly shown as she is, every saint emptied out of her, and every honest heart saved. When the Church is standing alone in the beauty of holiness and when as Revelation 17:14 says, ". . . the Lamb shall overcome them. . . ." When the Church stands in the position that God ordained my friend, that She occupy as the Bride. Christ, ready for His Beloved to come, will do as Matthew 25:10 says, ". . . the door was **SHUT**." She shall be a **VICTORIOUS, GLORIOUS CHURCH**, with my friend, Her foes defeated and all will see Her as the conquering Bride of the **KING OF KINGS** and the **LORD OF LORDS**. In Revelation 17:14 it declares, "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful." So my friend, here we clearly see that the picture of what lies ahead is glorious. One that should comfort and encourage every saint of God.

So dear heart, be of good cheer. Because my friend, Jesus is, in His faithfulness going to send forth a midnight cry. He will have a ministry that will preach a message that will cause an awaking. And my friend, the Church will rise and be restored to Her pristine glory and every honest heart will find their way in. And then my friend, ". . . the door shall be shut" (Matthew 25:10). So, be of good cheer.

And dear heart, I say if you are not part of this conquering, beautiful Bride, thanks be to God, in this day and time that opportunity still tarries. You can be if you will meet Bible conditions.



## CHAPTER NINE

### THE DELIVERING UP OF THE KINGDOM (THE CONCLUSION OF THE PARABLES)

***Matthew 13:53 And it came to pass, that when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence.***

In looking into this passage of Scripture text we see, as Matthew recorded that Jesus had finished these parables. And by the help of God, we want to conclude our series of studies on these seven prophetic parables of Christ. And we want to conclude with the thought of the "Delivering up of the Kingdom."

For several months we have been studying these prophetic parables of Christ, which are recorded in Matthew's Gospel, Chapter 13. Through the vehicles of these parables, Jesus has taken us from the inception of the Gospel Day, as Matthew 13:6 says, ". . .when the sun was up. . ." to when as Matthew 13:48, "... when it was full..." or complete.

Through the employment of these parables, Christ portrayed the predominant conditions working in each of the seven distinct time periods, which comprise this Christian Dispensation.

We want to do a very quick synopsis of what we learned through these seven parables.

He revealed the morning glory where in Matthew 13:6 it says, ". . . when the sun was up. . . ." portraying a new day dawning. A day when A Glorious Church was instituted. When, as Revelation 12:1 declared, "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun . . . ." (The Parable of the Sower.)

He portrayed the morning time apostasy, in The Parable of the Tares. When he spoke, in Matthew 13:25 of, ". . . while men slept. . . ."

He prophesied of the outgrowth of that apostasy, being the rise of Papalism. Just as my friend, Matthew 13:31, speaks of ". . . a grain of mustard seed . . . ." That which starts small and minute, and with a minute beginning, but became as

Matthew 13:32 declares, ". . . the greatest among herbs . . . ." (The Parable of the mustard seed.)

He foretold of the Sixteenth Century Reformation and there being as Matthew 13:33 expresses, ". . . three measures of meal . . . ." or bread, the Living Bread, which is Christ. And salvation through Christ being preached as a public message once again. But, then the reformation became corrupt and there was as Matthew 13:33 declares, ". . . leaven . . ." being injected into the meal. Depicting the rise of the religious system of Protestantism. (The Parable of the Leaven.)

Then we see, in Matthew 13:44, a ". . . treasure hid in a field. . . ." the "field" in this particular instance being the Word of God. Here we see portrayed the Wesleyan Era who had that precious truth, or that "treasure" of understanding of holiness of heart and of life. (The Parable of the Treasure.)

Then Christ chose to portray the message of the Church, the unity of the body of believers, through the Parable of the Pearl. In Matthew 13:46, he speaks of ". . . one pearl of great price . . . ." and that "great price" being my friend, the supreme sacrifice and shedding of Christ's blood. And the forfeiting of His life to purchase the Church of God, as Acts 20:28 declares.

Then He progresses on to our day and reveals that He is preparing mankind for the final judgment, where there will be final separation. And that in order to prepare men and be faithful to every soul, we are in a time of preliminary judgment. We are in a time of separation now. Matthew 13:49 says, "So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels [or, the ministry] shall come forth and sever [or, separate] the wicked from among the just . . . ." (The Parable of the Net.)

So, through these parables Christ has given us a keen insight, to the Gospel Day, and to the specific events which transpired through the course of this day. And that which brings us to where we are today.

Now in today's text, the Sacred Penman said here in Matthew 13:53, "And it came to pass. . . ." Now, I realize that this verse has a localized and literal aspect to it. But, I want to view it in the light of our study as a concluding



passage to these seven prophetic parables of Christ. Here it says in Matthew 13:53, "And it came to pass. . . ." Here we see this series completed with these words, as if to say, "all that I have said, all that I have prophesied, it came to pass." And my friend, the prophet Jeremiah declared in Jeremiah 28:9, ". . . when the word of the prophet shall come to pass, then shall the prophet be known, that the Lord hath truly sent him." Therefore my friend, the fact that these seven prophetic parables of Christ has been fulfilled and is being fulfilled, to the most minute detail, validates the claim of the Apostle Peter when he preached in Acts, Chapter 3. As the Apostle Peter preached there in Acts 3:22 he declared, "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, [and here he is quoting the Old Testament, Deuteronomy 18:15,18] A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you." And he plainly declared that this Prophet was His son Jesus. He declared that, in Acts 3:26. So, the accuracy of these parables validates Christ as that Prophet that Moses spoke of, and foretold of in his writings.

Now let us look a little further into our Scripture text. Here in Matthew 13:53 it says, ". . . when Jesus had finished these parables, he departed thence." Again, certainly there is a literal application here, but let us consider its spiritual implication in viewing our study. It says, ". . . when Jesus had finished these parables. . ." (Matthew 13:53). When these parables are finished, in reality, when the history and time that they represent is finished, then time is finished. Time will be no more. These parables take us through the final dispensation of time or of human history. The Christian Dispensation, and when they are complete and finished my friend, the time that they speak of here and their fulfillment occurs, the fulfillment of time shall be complete and finished as well.

Now when time is full or finished what is going to occur? What lies ahead out here when time reels into eternity? What is actually going to occur? Well, Matthew 13:53 our text says, ". . . he departed. . . ."

And in Matthew 13:2 it says, at the commencement of these parables, ". . . he went into a ship, and SAT . . . ." and Hebrews 10:12 tells us, ". . . after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, [He] **SAT** down on the right hand of God . . . ."

But here in our text, in Matthew 13:53, ". . . he departed. . . ." Now when He commenced these parables, He **SAT**. Now it tells us He **DEPARTED**, teaching us He rose from His seat and departed. When time is finished, He shall rise from His seat, the seat of mercy and shall depart from heaven. And I Thessalonians 4:16 says, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout . . . ."

I might pause and mention that here is a teaching that is contrary to what many in the realms of religion, especially those who are of the pre-millennium persuasion teach. We read in I Thessalonians 4:16, "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a **SHOUT** . . . ." Not quietly! Not privately! Not as a thief in the night! Not to supposedly steal the Bride away! NO! He does not steal! The Ten Commandments were very expressive! "Thou shalt not steal" (Exodus 20:15). He does not steal! And had no need to steal.

Acts 20:28 tells us, ". . . the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." He paid the purchase price and He bought Her. The Corinthian Letter said, "For ye are bought with a price . . ." (I Corinthians 6:20). He bought and purchased the Church of God!

Now, what will occur when He descends? I Thessalonians 4:16 declares, ". . . the dead in Christ shall rise first . . . ." Many misconstrue this verse and think that it means that the wicked will not be resurrected at the same time. But we must recognize that he was penning to a community of Christians. He was writing a congregation of the Church in Thessalonica. He was penning to those who were in Christ. So, he was merely dealing with those who were in Christ and what would occur. He said in I Thessalonians 4:16, ". . . the dead in Christ shall rise first . . . .", he was using that in comparison or in conjunction with I Thessalonians 4:17, ". . . we which are alive . . . ." He was merely putting in

sequence, concerning those that were dead that they would rise before those who were alive would rise.

He was not saying that there were separate comings of Christ or multiple advents. He was not speaking that there were separate and distinct resurrections, but he was dealing with the dead as opposed to we which are alive.

This does not mean that the wicked are not resurrected at this time. Because Acts 24:15 says, ". . . that there shall be A [singular] resurrection [again, singular] of the dead, both of the just and unjust." A general resurrection of **ALL** the dead.

What is the picture? Christ will leave His seat, the throne of David. The Apostle Peter told us in Acts 2:30, the seat of mercy and He will descend "with a shout" as 1 Thessalonians 4:16 tells us and the dead shall rise, all rise and be reunited with their souls.

1 Thessalonians 4:17 then goes on with the narrative and there says, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air . . . ."

Several truths are portrayed here. One is that the Scripture teaches us that Christ will never again set foot upon this earth.

Many are looking for Him to come back to this time world and set up some supposed golden age. Some supposed millennial reign here on earth, but notice the Scriptures closely. It says I Thessalonians 4:17, ". . . meet the Lord in the air . . . ." My friend, He will never again set foot upon this earth. We shall be "caught up" the passage says, "to meet the Lord in the air."

Also, as those who have passed on their graves yields up their bodies as their departed spirits are reunited. In Revelation 20:13, it declares, ". . . death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them . . . ." So, what we see transpiring is we see Christ and He, rises off the seat. He departs from heaven and He comes and descends, and as He descends, as He comes forth we find that the graves yield up their bodies. And Hell and Paradise, the place of departed spirits, yields up the spirits of man, and the spirits and the

bodies are reunited. Then we which are alive are caught up. Each of us are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. And my friend, as they are reunited and as we are caught up, I Corinthians 15: 52-53 says, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: [which is the voice of Christ, according to I Thessalonians 4:16] for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

Then as we are all changed and caught up to meet the Lord in the air, according to I Thessalonians 4:17, all are ushered into eternity. As II Peter 3:10 tells us, ". . . the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." As time is no more all are ushered into the eternal realm. Where we shall all stand before, ". . . the judgment seat of Christ . . ." as Romans 14:10 portrays to us.

This is when the lost shall hear, according to Matthew 25:41 those fateful words, ". . . Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels . . . ."

And the saints shall hear those beautiful words of Matthew 25:34, ". . . Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world . . . ."

Here my friend, is a glimpse of what is going to occur when Jesus departs that throne of David, that seat of mercy, over at the right hand of God the Father. When He rises from that seat and splits the clouds, His voice will go forth as a shout. As ". . . the voice of the archangel and [as] . . . the trump of God . . ." (I Thessalonians 4:16). All of these are just expressions denoting the facets and attributes of the very voice of Christ. And when that occurs, they that are dead shall rise, the bodies shall come forth out of the graves, as it were and be reunited with the spirits. And we which are alive, at the same time my friend, that they are changed from corruptible to incorruptible, as they come out of the graves and are reunited, we which are alive shall be changed. Then we

will be caught up and we will appear before the judgment seat of Christ. And then the saints will be dispatched and so will the sinner, if you please.

Now, let us look a little closer at what takes place concerning the Church or the Kingdom. In I Corinthians 15:24 the Apostle Paul pens, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have **DELIVERED** up [not set up, but **DELIVERED** up] the kingdom to God, even the Father; when [Now, when? When does this occur?] he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

In other words, as Revelation 17:14 declares, "These [The antecedent of these is the eighth beast, an amalgamation of all the forces of evil. All the religious systems coming together with supposed truth. Revelation 17:11 tells us '. . . he is the eighth and is of the seven . . . .'] shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them. . . ." Or as the Apostle Paul said, ". . . when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power" (1 Corinthians 15:24).

That phraseology, when he speaks there of; all rule, and all authority, and all power, he was speaking here of evil systems. In Ephesians 6:12 it says, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, [there is the word **POWERS**] against the rulers [there is the word **RULE**] of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." He was talking about Spiritual wickedness, that which occurs in the Spiritual realm. Speaking of the spirits, that promote the systems that are contrary to God and that have worked against Christ and the Church.

Here it says in 1 Corinthians 15:24, ". . . when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power." When all is conquered, or as 1 Corinthians 15:25 says, ". . . he hath put all enemies under his feet." Corinthians 15:28 says, "And when all things shall be subdued unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

So, what is the lesson here? My friend, when final victory is won, Christ will do as 1 Corinthians 15:24 declares, He will ". . . deliver up the kingdom to God. . . ." He will deliver it up to God because it is the Kingdom of God. It is the Church of God and He was merely working and being in God's

stead. And so, when final victory is won, Christ will deliver up the Kingdom to God and He shall as 1 Corinthians 15:28 says, ". . . be subject unto him . . . ."

And all of the Kingdom of God, the Church of God, shall forever be with their God and the Kingdom of God shall never face a foe again. I Corinthians 15:28 says, ". . . that God may be all in all." and through the ceaseless ages of eternity, the Church shall worship, glorify, and praise God without distraction, without trial, without opposition. The Church will go into an eternal realm with their victory sealed. No more trials, no more tests, no more temptation but my friend, they will forever be able to give God the glory. God will be all in all. They will not be confronted my friend with sin. They will not be confronted with sectarianism. They will not be confronted with Satan. They will not be confronted my friend, with the beast, with the image, with the mark, with the number, or any of the other things that vies for man's allegiance.

Thank God, they were called, they were chosen, and they were faithful. And because they were called and chosen and faithful and followed ". . . the Lamb whithersoever he goeth" (Revelation 14:4), rather than following man. Because they ate the true sayings of God, rather than ". . . the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men. . . ." Because of that, they will be entered in. He will say "Come." He will say "Come." and He will tell them to "enter ye in, into The Blessed Kingdom" . . . that was prepared for you from the foundation of the World . . . ." (Matthew 25:34).

The Kingdom of God, the Church of God will go from victory in this time world, right into the eternal realm with victory through the ceaseless ages of eternity. And they will be able to worship, glorify, and praise God without distraction. **WHAT A DAY THAT WILL BE!**

Dear heart, if you are not a part of this throng, not a part of this victorious body. I implore of you in Jesus' stead, that you make your calling and election sure. That you come out of the realms of Spiritual Babylon and come up hither where, my friend, you can be a part of that Glorious Church

that is without "spot or wrinkle" (Ephesians 5:27). That one that Jesus is going to deliver up to the Father on that day.