

**A Study of the Parables of our Lord; Session # 2 – “A Parable Reveals & Conceals”,
presented by Pastor Paul Rendall, on February 27th, 2022,
in the Adult Sunday School Class.**

I want to read for you, once again, Matthew Chapter 13, verses 1-23. And we will attempt to better understand the things that Jesus is saying here.

Matthew 13: 1-23 –

- (1) “On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea.
- (2) And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.
- (3) Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow. (4) And as he sowed, some seed fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.
- (5) Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth.
- (6) But 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 sprang up and choked them.
- (8) But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.
- (9) He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"
- (10) And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"
- (11) He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.
- (12) For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.
- (13) Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.
- (14) And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: 'HEARING YOU WILL HEAR AND SHALL NOT UNDERSTAND, AND SEEING YOU WILL SEE AND NOT PERCEIVE;
- (15) FOR THE HEARTS OF THIS PEOPLE HAVE GROWN DULL. THEIR EARS ARE HARD OF HEARING, AND THEIR EYES THEY HAVE CLOSED, LEST THEY SHOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES AND HEAR WITH THEIR EARS, LEST THEY SHOULD UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEARTS AND TURN, SO THAT I SHOULD HEAL THEM.'
- (16) But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear;
- (17) for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.
- (18) "Therefore hear the parable of the sower:
- (19) When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.
- (20) But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy;
- (21) yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.
- (22) Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.
- (23) But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.”

Last week I began our study by asking a couple of questions.

Question 1. What is a parable anyway? Well, A parable is, very simply, an earthly story with a heavenly or spiritual meaning. It was Jesus using earthly observational truths, truths that would be easily understood by anyone, to give instruction concerning spiritual truths and realities which would be more difficult to understand if He had not put them side by side. This is what the word παραβολή in the Greek means – To place side by side, and to compare.

To build upon this definition – As we consider the parables of our Lord, we can say that a parable is an earthly story with a spiritual meaning that better explains the truth of man’s need of a New Heart and Divine grace. On a greater level, some of Christ’s parables also better explain the advance of Christ’s kingdom amidst much opposition from Satan and wicked men.

Question 2. Why did Jesus use parables in His teaching?

(The reasons are given to us in the parable itself)

1st – So that people might be saved.

2nd – So that people might understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God better.

(verses 8-11)

3rd – So that the truth of man’s absolute need of Divine grace would be established. (verse 12)

“For whoever has, (that is, the grace of spiritual understanding through the New Birth) to him more (more grace and understanding related to Divine Truth) will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has (common grace, and a natural understanding related to Divine Truth) will be taken away from him.” In other words – They will lose whatever ability they thought that they had, to correctly apprehend the truth of the Scriptures and to apply them to their life.

4th – So that those who were rejecting Christ and their need of Divine grace would be judicially blinded. (verses 13-15)

“Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.” “And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: “Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive; for the hearts of this people have grown dull.” “Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I should heal them.” This is the Lord judicially blinding them for their sin of not receiving God’s word to them in the Scriptures, as the Holy Spirit strove with them to open their eyes to it, and as Christ and His apostles spoke it to anyone who would hear in Israel.

As we go through this study, we will also come to understand that the parables which were spoken by the Lord Jesus were intended both to reveal and to conceal the truth, depending on who was hearing them. For those of the Jews who were really hearing these parables, they were understanding them because they had faith in Christ. And this was because they had good ground in their hearts; that is, that Divine grace had gone before them, given them something vitally important. The Holy Spirit caused them to be born again, and He made their heart good ground. Having a heart which is good ground shows a work of Divine grace has commenced, and it will result in salvation.

When it came to the Jews of Jesus’ day, those who were rejecting Him as their Messiah, He spoke to them in parables so that seeing physically they would not see spiritually, and hearing physically, what He was saying, they would not hear, nor would they understand it. His speaking to them in parables, in their case, was a judgment placed upon them because their hearts had grown dull, their ears had grown hard of hearing, and their eyes they had closed, lest they should understand and be healed spiritually. Because of their rejection of Christ and the purpose for which He had come, to bring salvation to all men by His gospel being preached to them, since they rejected that purpose, then God brought upon them this judicial blindness.

5th – So that we might greatly rejoice in the God’s having given to us grace, and spiritual understanding. (verses 16 and 17)

Jesus says here – “But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; for assuredly, I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.” Let me ask in closing, do you realize, dear Christian just how privileged you are to have grace to be able to understand the parables? People who believed in God in Old Testament times had looked to see their Messiah, and he didn’t come in their day. The apostles and disciples of the Lord in the days of Jesus’ earthly ministry did hear Him and see Him.

A picture is worth a thousand words. Seeing Jesus and hearing Him in Person was a great spiritual privilege. Your being able to understand the word pictures in this parable, and your understanding that it pertains to your having been personally given grace, eyes to see and ears to hear, this is worth more than everything else which you could attain to by your own industry in terms of earthly wisdom and learning. Blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear is a very great statement. Let us greatly rejoice in all that God has given us. He has given us truth in parables that will show the greatness of the gift of grace which we have found in Christ. Let us rejoice in the Lord always that we have heard these things and received grace.