

The Secrets of the Kingdom

Matthew 13:10-17



Introduction

Connection to chs. 11-12 - responses to Jesus

How should the disciples think about what is happening?

Seeing that we will spend the next several weeks in this chapter, today I will be spending time on the nature of parables

First, let's get an outline of ch.13 as a literary unit



Ch.13 Structure

Prelude: The Sower and Soils
Question: Why Parables? <<<
Interpretation: The Sower and Soils

Parables: The Kingdom of Heaven (x7)

- #1 - The Wheat and the Weeds
- #2 - From Seed to a Tree
- #3 - The Leaven in the Flour

————— [1: How the Kingdom will advance]

Interlude: Prophecy Fulfilled

Interpretation: The Wheat and Weeds

- #4 - The Treasure in the Field
- #5 - The Merchant and the Pearl
- #6 - The Net and the Fish
- #7 - The Scribe and His Treasure

————— [2: What the Kingdom is worth]

————— [3: How the Kingdom will conclude]

————— [Application: Kingdom discipleship]

Postlude: The Response to Jesus and His Parables



Concerning Parables

The Bible uses various methods that are *concrete* (i.e. material/world-ish) symbols to convey *abstract* truths

Abstract - God is omnipotent

Simili - God is like a fortress

Note: strictly speaking, the types that follows are not factual, but convey truth through "fiction"

Metaphor - God is a fortress

Parable (Gk. parabolay) = along side + cast/throw

Time, progress, drama, conflict, action

There was a man...broken law of the King...when his enemy pursued Him...fled to the King...the enemy could not...

Note: not always airtight categories



Concerning Parables

Parables are verbal *revelations of truth* using **realism** in story telling

This in contrast to **visions** which ordinarily have a **fantastical** element

Note: not only is "the truth" embedded within it inspired, but also the form

God **delights** in both the **truth** and the **forms** in which they come

We are not to attempt to just "strip away" the husk of poetic forms to uncover the bare seeds of truth so we can merely organize them - we too are to **delight** in them

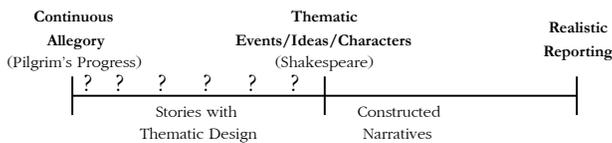
Ecclesiastes 11:9-12



Concerning Parables

One of the most important questions in interpreting parables is in regards to how much of it is intended by the story teller to be corresponding to a truth

Parables, like other forms of *poetic* speech, are to be viewed on a continuum or range of "likeness"



The Principle of Giving/Taking (12)

For to the one who has,
more will be given,
and he will have an abundance,
but from the one who has not,
even what he has will be taken away.



The Reason for Parables (13)

This is why I speak to them in parables,
because seeing they do not see,
and hearing they do not hear,
nor do they understand.



The Fulfillment of Prophecy (14-15)

Indeed, in their case the prophecy of Isaiah (6:9-10) is fulfilled that says:

You will indeed hear but never understand,
and you will indeed see but never perceive.

For this people's heart has grown dull,
and with their ears they can barely hear,
and their eyes they have closed,
lest they should see with their eyes
and hear with their ears
and understand with their heart
and turn, and I would heal them.



The Blessing of Disciples (16-17)

But blessed are your eyes, for they see,
and your ears, for they hear.
For truly, I say to you,
many prophets and righteous people
longed to see what you see, and did not see it,
and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.
Hear then...



What is the single key to this blessedness, this Kingdom fruitfulness, this understanding of the secrets of the Kingdom of heaven?

Receiving Jesus as King of the Kingdom

One can have a thorough “knowledge” of the meaning of the parables but it will be fruitless without faith in Jesus

Hebrews 4:2 For good news (pl.) came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened.