



Matthew's Gospel

- Primary message: **Kingdom** announcement
- Geared primarily toward a Jewish audience
- 5 main teaching sections (Torah – 5, “New Moses”)
- 7 times, “This was to fulfill...” — Completion in Hebrew thought

Parables of Jesus

Gk. **Parabole** (παραβολή): to set alongside, a juxtaposition

- 23 in Matthew (11 unique to his account)

“Jesus did not use parables to explain everything to people’s satisfaction, but rather to call into question people’s previous understandings. In other words, the parables are trying to upset people’s existing ideas as well as provide them with new ones.”

- Robert Farrah Capon, *Kingdom, Grace & Judgement* (2002)

“We must bear in mind that as a form of counter-order wisdom, Jesus’ parables are intended to be unsettling, disturbing, sometimes even ominous and shocking. They are not told to reinforce the status quo like so many traditional proverbs were. Rather they alert people to the new and disturbing thing God is doing in their midst, which involves reversal of expectations, values, social standing, roles in society.”

- Ben Witherington, *Matthew* (2006)

Application/Notes

Matthew 13:24-43

²⁴ Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵ But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶ When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared. ²⁷ “The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’ ²⁸ “ ‘An enemy did this,’ he replied. “The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ ²⁹ “ ‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰ Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’”

³¹ He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. ³² Though it is the smallest of all seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds come and perch in its branches.” ³³ He told them still another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into about sixty pounds of flour until it worked all through the dough.” ³⁴ Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. ³⁵ So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world.”

³⁶ Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.” ³⁷ He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man. ³⁸ The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, ³⁹ and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. ⁴⁰ “As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹ The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil. ⁴² They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³ Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. **Whoever has ears, let them hear.**