

Parable of Wheat & Tares

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- [0 : 00] Let us worship God, we shall sing to his praise from Psalm 24.
Psalm 24 from the beginning. Psalm 24 from the beginning.
Psalm 24 from the beginning.
Let us sing these verses 1 to 6 of Psalm 24. The earth belongs unto the Lord and all that it contains.
The earth belongs unto the Lord and all that it contains.
- [1 : 46] The world that is inhabited and all that there remains.
For the foundations thereof beyond the sea declare.
And he hath it established upon the cross to stay.
Who is the man that shall not send him to the head of God?
For who is in his holy place? Who is the man that is? Who is the man that is?
- [2 : 59] Whose hands are clean, whose heart is pure, Who hath done to vanity?
Who hath not lifted up his soul, nor is born to seek holy.
He from the eternal shall receive the blessing in the blood.
The righteousness of the Lord and all that it contains. The righteousness of the Lord and all that it contains. The righteousness of the Lord and all that it contains. The righteousness of the Lord and all that it contains.
■■■■■ starter juices and virgin clemage magical aconability GalRA■ arguing with the Lord and all that it contains. This is a generation of shelter in the midst of every one that it contains.
- [4 : 19] Let us join together in prayer. Let us pray.
Let us pray.
Let us pray.
Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.
Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.
- [6 : 00] Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.
Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.
Let us pray. Let us pray. That is a living word because it speaks to us of one who claimed and declared himself to be the word of life, the way, the truth and the life.
We give thanks that you have given to us the opportunity to meet as we do at this time, even though our lot is different to what we might have envisaged leading up to this time.

We may have never imagined such a scenario as presents itself to us at the present. We may never have imagined that it would be of such long-lasting endurance, with no possibility of the present of things coming to a successful conclusion, no matter how hopeful we might be.

[7 : 27] If you have not implanted that hope in our hearts, it is an unworthy hope. It is a futile hope.

And there are many who present such to us in this world, who think that by dint of power, by the gathering together of resources as is humanly possible, such resources as is at their disposal that they may, by reason of that accumulation, triumph over something that has so far had the mastery of us.

So we come to you today, aware of our own weakness, aware of our own sense of impotence in the face of realities that are beyond us.

But most of all, we give thanks that we can come and acknowledge that there is a God before us who has triumphed over a greater foe than any that has ever manifested itself in this world.

That there is a God who has made provision for us in the extremity into which sin has brought us. We declared at the very outset that the day that sin entered into the experience of mankind would be the day that death would also enter into the experience of mankind.

[9 : 04] And so it has turned out to be. In the various forms it came into the lives of our first parents. We know that they entered into the experience of spiritual death.

How extraordinary that might have seemed to them, even to be aware of the potential that existed for that to happen.

And in reality when it did, it might have been so overpowering to them. That they who had once lived in the orbit of God's glory were denied access to it, driven out from the presence of God, prevented from ever entering into that presence as they were.

We give thanks that the gospel of your grace speaks of the redemption of such sinners to yourself. And that the great power that was executed in delivering from sin is seen in the person of Jesus Christ, who is God and who is man and who came to experience death, who is the Prince of Life.

The one who entered into the power of the grave for a time willingly and not because he had to be subject to it other than his will decreed.

[10 : 38] We pray that you would bless us today in his name and remind us of the vast resources that you have at your disposal to deliver this people that we are from the greatest of iniquities.

And even though our situation at present might appear to many to be desperate, may we learn the importance of looking beyond ourselves to a God who is all-powerful.

We pray that you would bless us this day and that you would remember all that we entrust to your care and keeping loved ones near and dear to us in our homes, in our extended families, out of neighbourhoods.

We pray for them. We pray especially for those who do not pray for themselves. We pray for encouragement to be given to those who do pray and who are yet waiting for an answer.

They look to the heavens and it is as brass before them. They look at the earth as iron beneath their feet. And they say the God of heaven has turned from us and he is never to turn to us again.

[11 : 53] It may well be that their prayer is that of the psalmist, the same one who said that in his circumstances that the God who is God would never look upon them again.

And we acknowledge that this is how it is for many to contemplate the awful reality of their own insufficiency.

But may the truth grasp them and may lay hold of them and may they have the confession of another that God is their portion.

In the earth whom I desire besides thee there is none. Our heart and our flesh may faint and fail but God does fail us never. For of my heart God is the strength and portion forever.

We give thanks for the words that encourage your people in all the dire straits that mark them out in this world. So bless the needy we pray.

[13 : 02] Remember those who are sick, those who are suffering, those who are grieving, those who are being tended to by others in their weakness.

We commit them to your care in hospitals, care homes, hospices. Throughout the land we remember them. Those who have none to care for them. Those who are isolated and alone.

Those who are confined to their homes and fearful of the day and even more afraid of the night. We pray Lord that you would remember them in misery. Remember the preaching of the word so that it may touch hearts and minds and that they may yield to this God.

That he may be their God. By the power that is yours may you touch lives and turn from sin to yourself. We remember the preaching of the gospel.

We pray for all you have sent out with it. Throughout the world we pray that you would encourage them to persevere in their labor. Remembering the needs that are spiritual even more than they would remember the needs that are temperate.

[14 : 12] Remember the nations of the earth we pray. Those who govern us within these nations. Pray for our own government. We pray for the prime minister.

We pray for the prime minister. We pray for the first minister. We pray for the parliaments that execute sovereignty in the name of our Queen. Bless the family that is royal.

Remember them that they may learn to look to one who is greater than they. One who is sovereign in a way that they can never be.

We remember them all to you. Praying that you would remember our nation with all its needs. We pray for the congregations of our land.

Remember especially those that are without a pastor at this time. We pray that in this pandemic that they would still resolve to have one amongst them who would remember them in prayer and preach the gospel to them.

[15 : 11] And even through means that are different to what they were used to. So go before us now as we turn to your word. Bless it we pray.

And enable us to continue with one another around your word. Mindful of the presence of others with us in this act of worship. Forgiving every sin in Jesus name.

Amen. We are going to read from the scriptures of the New Testament. The Gospel of Matthew. And chapter 13.

And we can read from verse 24. Read from verse 24. Another parable put Jesus forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man, which sowed good seed in his field.

But while men slept, his enemy came, and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also.

[16 : 25] 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 the tares?

He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servant said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go, and gather them up? But he said, Nay, lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them.

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 unto my barn. Another parable put ye forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a grain of mustard seed, which a man too can sow 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, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in branches thereof. Another parable spake ye unto them, The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and heard in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

[17 : 49] All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables, and without a parable spake ye not unto them, 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. Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house, and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

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 burnt 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.

[19 : 10] 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.

And so on. May the Lord add his blessing to a reading of this word, and to his name be the praise. We're going to look at this parable that we have read, the parable of the wheat and the tares, as it is called by some.

In chapter 13 of this gospel, we are given eight parables, some say only seven, but four parables are told by Jesus as he sat in a boat to a crowd of people that were following him.

And the others were told later, after he had sent the crowds away. And it is then that he explains the parable to the disciples, and gives the teaching in the parable exclusively to them.

I would like us to consider this parable and the very solemn message it conveys. First of all, I would like us to note the fact that Jesus chose to teach using this particular mode of communication.

[20 : 41] Secondly, we can consider what Jesus means by the kingdom of heaven. Thirdly, the details of the parable. Firstly, the application that he gives to it.

Jesus often taught using parables. At the beginning of the chapter, we are told that Jesus spoke many things to them in parables.

In verse 10, the disciples ask him, why do you speak in parables? In verse 34, we read, all these things spoke Jesus unto the multitude in parables, and without a parable spoke he not unto them.

We are then told that it was in order 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.

That quotation itself seems less than helpful as all it does is tell us that what Jesus is doing is what was prophesied about him rather than explain to us what he intends by way of the parable.

[21 : 59] We know, however, that Jesus taught several types of parables and despite there being these different teaching elements, the reason for him using them is the same.

The explanation given by him in verse 11 and 12 may not satisfy everybody. He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

For whosoever hath to him shall be given and he shall have more abundantly, but whosoever hath not from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

These parables, says Jesus, in effect, are going to confuse those who are not his disciples, undermining what they thought they already knew and will add to the understanding of those who are his disciples.

These are the words of Charles Price. He goes on, It is important to note that any lack of understanding was not due to the teacher, but the hearer. Jesus was not teasing them with deliberate confusion, but pointing out that the confusion was a symptom of something fundamentally at fault with the hearer.

[23 : 36] Jesus, at times, wants to encourage the Lord's people. He wants them to know that they are his by showing them how they can tell that they are his.

And that is important for the Christian. Some people imagine that the default position of the Christian is one of certainty, while it is possible, it is not always so.

Perhaps you have heard the little ditty, 'Tis a point I long to know, oft it gives me anxious thought, do I love the Lord or no, am I his or am I not?

But Jesus also wants to discourage people from believing that they are what they are not. Hypocrisy is an evil which he frequently exposes.

He does not want anyone to be mistaken as far as their eternal destiny is concerned. And perhaps one final thing on this first point, although there are several parables capable of standing alone, they are also interlinked, even though they have a focus designed for two audiences.

[24 : 53] The second thing we have would like us to say a word on is what does Jesus mean by the kingdom of heaven? It would be surprising if the first time you heard this phrase, kingdom of heaven, if you did not immediately think of heaven as in glory, the place prepared for the people of God where Christ is now, where his people are going to be.

But there is another use for it that has to do with this word. Jesus directly, he directs his hearers to the Old Testament and lays claim to being the fulfilment of covenant promises.

John the Baptist preached the need for repentance because the kingdom of God was at hand. Jesus himself takes up his theme.

He describes his ministry as the fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy and follows that with the words repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

In a small book on the Gospel of Matthew, David Jackman and William Philip speaking about the ultimate end of the Gospel they write this Gospel is designed to bring both Jew and Gentile into the fulfilment of the Messianic kingdom and to stress its continuity with and completion of all its Old Testament precedence in that kingly rule.

[26 : 34] While the announcement of the arrival of the king is there before us there is also the beginning of out and out conflict.

This is seen at the outset in the reaction of Herod to the birth of the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. Someone has it from our perspective in Jesus God's kingdom has invaded the realm of Satan even though we are also taught that the kingdom has not yet come in power that conflict is at the heart of what this parable teaches.

It is now to turn to the parable proper. Jesus we are told as we were told in Jesus Jesus story earthly stories with heavenly meanings I think the description was a common one.

the kingdom of heaven is likened to. If we read the first part where it describes to us what it is like verses 24 to 26 it seems self explanatory another parable put he forth unto them saying the kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field but while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way but when the blade was sprung up and brought forth fruit then appeared the tares also.

if you have a modern version the modern version often rather than the word tear which we have here which isn't a common word in our modern usage it replaces it with the word weed ESV for example uses weeds now there is an emphasis on the deliberate action to sow weeds but it does not really explain to us how grievous it is in some of our Bibles in the margin it says probably the tares or the weeds are darnil which is a wheat like wheat it has an uncanny resemblance to wheat in its first growth until the grain grows some say that its resemblance is so close that it is called by some false wheat it can also poison if it is consumed so there is a subtle nuance there if we just simply think of it as if weeds are growing very often although weeds are a nuisance they are not understood to be dangerous

[30 : 04] I remember in my own youth one of my most hated activities especially in the summer months which is when this happened when I would want to go for a swim to the shore with my friends we had to carry out her crafting duties which were many one of these duties took up an extraordinary amount of time as we saw it we had to there was a field of turnips that my father used to sow because he had cows and he would very carefully sow the seed of the turnips but then at some point once the seed sprouted our job was to weed between the rows of turnips and one thing I remember was that the weed that most often grew in the amongst the turnip plants was a weed that was uncannily like the turnip itself you could barely tell them apart and it was so much so that very often because we did this job in a hurry we weeded the turnip as well as the weeds but this story of

Jesus tells about a very deliberate act on the part of an enemy he sows a seed amongst the seeds that is very like what is sown before that but it's not just a like it is something that has the potential for harm if it's consumed now it may be that that itself is an extra understanding of what is there but the parable wants us to understand that it's the deliberate attempt of an enemy and it also describes the truth that there is a time for plucking out the tares if you do it too soon you will disturb the growth of the wheat you will root up the proper wheat along with the stranger that is amongst them what the enemy has sown but he wants the advice that he gives is to allow them both to grow together until the harvest and then you can reap you will be able to tell them apart you will be able to recognize what is wheat and what is not wheat and some scholars say that the difference between the two is that the wheat has clearly got seed that is recognizable as a fruit of genuine wheat whereas the other does not

Jesus the master storyteller presents a very vivid picture a picture that perhaps those who heard him tell it would stood up the motions against this most vicious act to plant amongst what was a true and a proper field of wheat thought it was useless but the time will come when these hostile weeds can be removed and dealt with that's a story it's a very simple illustration but then comes the application and we're privileged that Jesus has given us this application otherwise we might have as we often do been left with all kinds of erroneous ideas he gives the interpretation to the disciples as a response to the request and as with many of the parables many lose themselves trying to sort out the minutia of the detail

Jesus identifies the sower as the son of man and that is one of his own favourite self designations if you count how many times it is used in the New Testament not just in the synoptic gospels where you have the same story perhaps repeated but individual times that Jesus uses this designation the son of man as over fifty times and it is applied by himself to himself almost exclusively in the Old Testament we associate it with the apocryphal vision of Daniel who sees the prospect of a terrible war being waged on earth between the saints of God and the powers of evil so it's not without reason that Jesus chooses this self designation at this point the son of man sows but the enemy sows tears the field in which the seed is sown is the world the good seed are the children of the kingdom and the tears are the children of the wicked one many interpret the words of the text you would say understandably as an image of the church of

Christ which contains good and bad and we cannot dispute that not everyone who attends the church is a born again Christian not every name that is on a membership role not every minister or office bearer even though they may outwardly conform them it may be that they are not truly in a saving relationship with Christ and you must agree with that because it is a fact of life Jesus himself says wherefore by your fruits you shall know them not everyone that says to me Lord Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven I do not think in the case of the parable it would be wrong to include the church in our thinking here but it is necessary to understand that the world is where the kingdom of God is to be found it is not the world nor can we say it is excluding the work of

[37 : 24] God spirit by limiting it to the church namely the physical entity the church let me put it like this not everyone who is saved by the Lord Jesus Christ belongs to a church or a congregation by profession of faith where they are able they should do so but there are members of the body of Christ who are saved by grace but were never afforded the privilege that many have enjoyed one one writer has said the kingdom has come but the present order is not disrupted the sons of the kingdom and the sons of the evil one grow together in the world until the harvest

Paul the apostle wants the believer to put on the whole armor of God why because he reminds them of this we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities against power against rulers of the darkness of this world against spiritual wickedness in high places when Jesus says the wheat and the tares grow side by side you need to have a good eye to tell them apart yes of course some things are obviously wrong or evil but the enemy is practiced and skillful he is a master craftsman at his own evil purposes John Murray writes the arch foe of the kingdom of God is not the visible powers arrayed against it for behind these visible agents and manifestations of evil is the ingenuity craft and malicious design instigation and relentless activity of the devil and his ministers teeth and teeth

Jesus says they may grow side by side but they are still the tares and the wheat in some cases we may not tell them apart but we are assured that there is one that can Jesus points out the awful reality of the judgment day a harvest a separation of wheat and tares it's a powerful image that reminds us of a truth that this world often forgets the field may contain both they may be alike in some general aspects or not at all but Jesus says judgment will result at the end of the world these are the words of the Lord Jesus he knew the scripture and he knows the will of his heavenly father who has committed all things into his care and when we look at these words again and when we when we draw back from them because of what they are saying they are saying more than we want them to say we want

Jesus to say yes there will be a division that's fair enough one will go one way and the other will go another he goes further than that the son of man shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of it 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 he is describing the outcome of his own judgment it may not be possible for any to judge at this time those who are in the world many say of Christians that they are people who are no better than some that they know in the world and outwardly that may be true unfortunately there might be many things about the Christian that you would not expect to be said about them but

Jesus says the time will come that what makes them Christian is the relationship to himself preeminently and the reality of that relationship and all their sins for all their faults for all their shortcomings for which they must seek mercy and for which they must repent the day will come when Jesus will say your actions were the actions of one of my own you are those to whom I will say come ye blessed of my father to inherit that kingdom that is prepared for you here he says then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their father the advice he gives is this who hath ears to hear let him hear Jesus tells this parable this story this easily understood story easy to understand by

[43 : 03] God's people less so for those who are not if you don't understand what he is saying well you need to go to him to ask of him that he gives you that understanding that you may know for yourself what this kingdom of God is all about who this Christ is and what he has promised to do when he will come to the day of his harvest may bless to us these few thoughts let us pray gracious God we give thanks for the fact that Jesus often spoke that the lessons that he taught that they may at times have been difficult to understand but for those that are his they present the reality of the truth as spoken by the one who is truth hear our prayers we ask go before us blessing your word to all who would be under it this day now may grace mercy and peace from

God the Father the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you all now and always Amen