

Sunday January 17th 2016
Without a Parable
Part Fifteen

1). Mt 13:51 *Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." 52 Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."*

a). At the conclusion of the 7 parables in Matthew Chapter 13 Jesus asks His disciples the question, 'have you understood all these things?' To which they give a positive response, 'Yes, Lord'.

b). So let's review for a moment what He has revealed to them in these parables that they say they have understood - Mt 13:11 *He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven,*

Mt 13:35 that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world."

c). The disciples then had understood things that had been kept secret from the foundation of the world – and these things are described by the Lord as 'the mysteries of the Kingdom of the heavens'.

d). We will realize though that this is not a simple case of comprehension, 'Did you understand the words?' but a question concerning understanding the spiritual truth of God's prophetic revelation contained in the parables - 1Co 2:13 *These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.*

e). An understanding of spiritual truth such as this can only come about through the work of the Holy Spirit as that truth is brought forth from above just as we have seen in Peter's experience at Caesarea Philippi –
Mt 16:16 *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.*

f). And it is the same experience through the work of the Holy Spirit that the Lord describes to Nicodemus in - Joh 3:3 *Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is brought forth from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God."*

g). And this is exactly what is to be understood in Christ's often repeated statement – Mt 13:9 *"He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"*

2). We also see this same thing with respect to the disciples on the Emmaus road on the day of the Lord's resurrection - Lu 24:30 *Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. 31 Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight.*

It was the One from above, God the Son, who opened their eyes to understand the scriptures by firstly giving them the key to understanding –
Lu 24:27 *And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

a). And so that this will be very clear for us all the Lord repeats this for the rest of the disciples later that same day - Lu 24:44 *Then He said to them, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me." 45 And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.*

b). We can see then that the disciples can respond positively to the Lord's question about understanding because of that which had been brought forth from above, an experience that was conditioned upon their receiving

and believing the One who is the way, the truth and the life – the disciples' faith being in sharp contrast to the Jews of that time who rejected and reviled the Lord.

3). In our opening scripture this morning the Lord makes a statement to His disciples based upon their answer of, 'Yes, Lord' - *"Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."*

The word 'scribe' here does not refer to that group of Jews we know as 'the Scribes', the ones often seen in conjunction with the Pharisees – the word simply means 'a disciple'. In other words we are looking at any disciple of the Lord, any Christian, but specifically those in the 4th group of the parable of the sower, those who hear the word of the kingdom and understand it.

a). As we look at this verse we can see that it is describing a process. Those who would understand 'all these things', those who will receive and understand the spiritual truth contained in the Word of the Kingdom, will, through their understanding, possess a key that will enable them to continually unlock more and more of the scriptures.

b). We should note that the disciples who heard the Matthew 13 parables 'understood', but then their understanding is opened still further on the day of the Lord's resurrection as He showed them how to comprehend the scriptures – this is then a progressive revelation.

c). As a result of this understanding the Christian is now able to bring out of his treasure, the scriptures, things new and old.

d). And here we find fulfillment of that which the Lord had said in – Mt 13:12 *"For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance;*

There is great encouragement for us in this.

4). Now, we can identify this process in our own personal experience. We are here today and understanding the scriptures today firstly as a consequence of what is written in - Re 3:20 *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."*

a). We have, at some point in our past, heard His voice and we have opened the door and let Him in and now we are dining with Him and He with us as we feast on the Word of the Kingdom.

b). And it doesn't matter where in the process to spiritual maturity we find ourselves the word of the kingdom is the key that unlocks the scriptures that we may continue in our growth to maturity and be steadfast in the faith as we move from faith to faith.

c). And the scriptures are continually unlocked for us as a work of the Holy Spirit from above in fulfillment of that which we have seen many times in Joh 16:13 *"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. 14 "He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. 15 "All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.*

d). And according to the scriptures it is in Christ that we find all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, all that is contained in the word of the kingdom - Col 2:1 ¶ *For I want you to know what a great conflict I have for you and those in Laodicea, and for as many as have not seen my face in the flesh, 2 that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, and attaining to all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the knowledge of the mystery of God, both of the Father and of Christ, 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*

e). Let's just remember what the scripture says about wisdom in – Pr 4:7 *Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding. 8 Exalt her, and she will promote you; She will bring you honor, when you embrace her. 9 She will place on your head an ornament of grace; A crown of glory she will deliver to you."*

f). And so how would we draw from this treasure of wisdom and knowledge? Through prayerful study of the scriptures in the way that God has shown us to do within the context of the word of the kingdom thereby allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us into all truth - Lu 11:9 *"So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 10 "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. 11 "If a son asks for bread from any father among you,*

will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? 12 "Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? 13 "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"

g). Perhaps with all this in mind we can have a greater appreciation for Paul's prayer for the Ephesians in - Eph 1:17 *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,*

h). And the cry of his own heart in - Php 3:8 *Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ 9 ¶ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, 11 if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead.*

i). And then along with this let's also remember the admonishment of - Eph 5:18 *And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,*

And - Col 3:16 *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom,*

'The word of Christ', the word concerning the Christ is the word of the kingdom.

5). And let us not forget that it is the word concerning the Christ, the word of the kingdom that is the rock upon which the Lord is building His 'Church' – Mt 16:18 *"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19 "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.....*

a). Not only have we been given the keys to understanding the scriptures now, through the word of the kingdom, but also in that Day, if we have been found faithful, we will be given the keys of the Kingdom of the heavens, in the sense of ownership – in that Day, for the faithful, the Kingdom of the heavens will be theirs as a joint heir with Christ - 2Pe 1:10 *Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble; 11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. 12 ¶ For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth.*

6). In the midst of our excitement at seeing the scriptures open before our eyes let us remember that in the race of faith there will be both winners and losers and that winning is not an accumulation of knowledge for its own sake, but a lifestyle of continual faithful obedience that comes out of that knowledge. Many who have come to understand Kingdom truth will nevertheless be denied a position with Christ because of their subsequent poor choices - Ga 5:7 *You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? 8 This persuasion does not come from Him who calls you. 9 A little leaven leavens the whole lump.*

Heb 4:11 ¶ *Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience.*

Re 2:4 *"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*

7). It would be good to call to mind that which we see in James –
Jas 2:20 *But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? 23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And he was called the friend of God. 24 You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.*

a). Let's remember that the word translated 'faith' and 'believe' are the same word in the Greek language and mean the same thing and, according to James, we need to do more than just believe what God has said about the coming Kingdom age. What we have believed, the faith we have, must be converted into action, that which the scriptures call, 'works'. It was Abraham acting upon his faith, what he had believed, concerning God's promise with respect to Isaac that made his faith perfect, literally brought it to completion. And it is through our faith being brought to completion that we will receive the salvation of our soul and thereby be given our inheritance as a joint heir with Christ, that we would be one of the 'just' [justified] seen in the parable of the dragnet - 1Pe 1:3 ¶ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 ¶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.*

b). This is why it is so important that we follow that recorded in – Jas 1:21 *Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. 22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. 23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.*

c). And follow that seen in - 1Pe 1:13 ¶ *Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; 14 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; 15 but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, 16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy." 17 And if you call on the Father, who without partiality judges*

according to each one's work, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay here in fear;

d). Not forgetting or ignoring the warning given to us in - Heb 10:26 *For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? 30 For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." 31 It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*

We should take this warning in the Book of Hebrews seriously because it would not be there if it were not a possibility for us even now.

e). The Lord through His grace and mercy has provided us with an incredible key to unlock the scriptures. Our understanding of the word of the Kingdom, at whatever stage it is, enables us to study and bring out of the enormous treasure of His word things that we already know, things that the word of the Kingdom confirms for us and also allows us to see things and understand things that we have never understood before. Every one of us has experienced bringing out something new from the treasure of His word.

f). This is always very exciting and an experience that goes beyond our wildest expectations. But the Lord opens the scriptures from above not just for our intellectual gratification, but also to call us to repentance, to obedience, to life change so that we should not miss the great and precious promises He has given to us.

g). Faithful obedience should never be seen as a burden, but as a privilege because it has taken the death of God to make it possible.

10). Throughout this process the Lord calls us and draws us just like the oldest servant in Genesis Chapter 24 – displaying his master's goods and making known the inheritance to Rebekah - 1Co 2:9 *But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." 10 But God has revealed them*

to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

a). He calls us and draws us like an ardent lover wooing His bride –
Song 4:7 *You are all fair, my love, And there is no spot in you. 8 ¶ Come with me from Lebanon, my spouse, With me from Lebanon. Look from the top of Amana, From the top of Senir and Hermon, From the lions' dens, From the mountains of the leopards. 9 You have ravished my heart, My sister, my spouse;*

The Lord demonstrating the enormity of the love He has for us through His sacrifice.

And He encourages us on to success - Heb 12:1 ¶ *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

8). But also remember that God is righteous and just in all His dealings with us and He is without partiality - Ro 11:22 *Therefore consider the goodness and severity of God: on those who fell, severity; but toward you, goodness, if you continue in His goodness. Otherwise you also will be cut off.*

a). For anyone who would reject what He has made possible would be to reject God Himself, just as Israel's religious leaders did at the Lord's first advent and there would be no choice but for that person to experience that seen through the account of Lot – Divine justice would demand it.

b). Our love for Him must of necessity go beyond words - Joh 14:21 *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.*

9). As we have seen continually throughout the scriptures the choice is one of obedience or disobedience, faithfulness or unfaithfulness – this is the choice we always face - Ro 12:2 *And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.*

a). The perfect will of God is that we should become a joint heir with His Son in the Millennial Kingdom and He has given us the word of the kingdom to that end. The transformation of our mind, literally the metamorphosis, is an experiential proof of His will that we can identify now and will yet future be brought to completion so that we may ascend Christ's throne with Him in that coming Day.

b). Not conforming ourselves to this world, not following the pattern of this age is always an action of our own free will and the transforming of our mind, the metamorphosis, is a work of the Holy Spirit brought forth from above - Again - Jas 1:21 *Therefore lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word, [the word of the kingdom] which is able to save your souls.*

And these 2 are interconnected.

d). This implanted word, the word of the Kingdom, brought forth from above, is the central message of the NT and the primary focus of God's revelation to us and has been throughout, the subject of the Matthew 13 parables.

e). And we have seen through the parable of the Sower, the wheat and the tares, the mustard seed and the leaven the extraordinary lengths to which the enemy of our soul will go to in order to prevent this word from producing fruit – especially in those who hear it and understand it. And we are not exempt from his efforts.

f). And so as we come to the end of our study of these parables there remains just one question to ask of us all – 'Have you understood all these things?'