

Sunday November 15th 2015
Without a Parable
Part Eight

1). Mt 13:33 *Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened." 34 All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, 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."*

a). The parable of the leaven is the fourth and last parable the Lord gives before going back into the house and as such it brings to a close the dispensational history of the Church at the resurrection/rapture, a history that began with the parable of the sower. What is to follow in the remaining 3 parables, which are given back inside the house, will take us to events beyond the Judgment Seat of Christ leading into the Millennial Kingdom.

b). And we had seen last week how the parable of the leaven in one short verse describes 2000 years of church history as it relates to the word of the kingdom – If we might review for a moment we will remember that the parables we have looked at deal with a time beyond Israel having been set aside for their national rejection of the King and His Kingdom and deal with a people other than Israel, who at the time the Lord gives these parables, do not exist.

c). We do of course know who these ‘other people’ are through the symbolism of the Lord sitting by the sea, a fact confirmed for us in – Ac 15:14 *"Simon has declared how God at the first visited the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name.*

d). But as we know in order for the Gentiles to become a part of the one new man in Christ, so as to be able to hear the word of the kingdom and then produce fruit, the Lord firstly had to die on the cross so that a way could be made to reconcile those dead in their trespasses and sins to a Holy God – Col 1:21 *And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled 22 in the body of His flesh through death, to*

present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight-- 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard,

And secondly, in order for the second half of v22 – 23 to be possible our Lord had to rise from the dead and ascend into heaven to be at His Father's right hand.

e). And so, incredibly, in the giving of these parables the Lord confirms the absolute certainty and necessity of His death and resurrection –

Ge 4:8 ¶ Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

Mr 8:31 And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

And then in the substance of the parables themselves is the absolute veracity of that which He prophesied would follow His death and resurrection.

f). The Lord told His disciples - *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.*

g). The Holy Spirit 'came' of course on the day of Pentecost following the Lord's resurrection and ascension and He came to undertake a particular work amongst the eternally saved, those who from this time forward would be a part of the one new man in Christ, the 'Church'. And we have seen many times how this ministry of the Holy Spirit is pictured through the work of Abraham's oldest servant seeking a bride for Abraham's son, Isaac, from amongst Abraham's family – *Ge 24:53 Then the servant brought out jewelry of silver, jewelry of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rebekah.*

h). Perhaps we have not made this connection before, but that which we have just seen in Genesis 24 and John 16 is summed up succinctly for us by the

Lord in in the statement - Mt 13:19 *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom,*

The word of the kingdom is that which the Holy Spirit speaks as He takes what is the Lord's and declares it to us, pictured through Abraham's oldest servant giving precious gifts to Rebekah – and it is exactly this same word of the kingdom that Paul is referring to when he describes the message given to him by the Lord to take to the Gentiles – 2Ti 2:8 ¶ *Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to **my gospel**, 9 for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer,*

And

2Th 2:14 *to which He called you by **our gospel**, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

And

1Ti 1:11 *according to **the glorious gospel** [Lit. **the gospel of the glory**] of the blessed God which was committed to my trust.*

Eph 1:13 *In Him you also trusted, after you heard **the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation;***

i). And so we could go on, but I think we get the idea – all of these different phrases used by Paul, 'my gospel', 'our gospel', 'the gospel of the glory', 'the word of truth', 'the gospel of your salvation', refer to the same thing – the word of the kingdom.

j). The word of the kingdom is the message which began to be preached on the day of Pentecost following the Lord's resurrection and ascension – the day that marks the beginning of the Church – and was preached to the Jew first and then to the Gentiles - Ga 2:9 *and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.*

2). And just as incredibly as the parables demonstrating the certainty and necessity of the Lord's death and resurrection, so they also, equally incredibly, lay out for us exactly what would take place within the corporate structure of

the one new man in Christ beyond the Lord's death and resurrection, following that day of Pentecost, before there was even a one new man to hear the word of the kingdom and before the Lord had even gone to the cross and been raised from the dead.

a). It may be a good idea for us to pause for a moment here and reflect on the fact that what we see in these 4 parables given outside the house by the sea is the description that God Himself gives us of what would transpire with respect to His Church and the word of the kingdom during the time of the dispensation allotted to the Church. This is not man's idea or denominational spin, but the prophetic truth of the word of God.

b). And just to make sure that those with eyes to see and ears to hear would understand this the Lord re-presents exactly the same prophetic truth some 60 years beyond the beginning of the Church through His servant John recorded in the Book we know as 'the Revelation'.

c). As we have previously seen then the first 4 Matthew 13 parables describe for us what happens when 'anyone hears the word of the kingdom'. They begin with the parable of the sower showing the response of individuals to hearing the word of the kingdom with the 4th group, those who hear it and understand it, producing fruit, some 100, some 60, some 30.

d). They continue with the parable of the wheat and tares describing Satan's tactics against this 4th group, those producing fruit at the beginning of this dispensation, where false teachers arise from amongst the ranks of the eternally saved with a message that is counterfeit to the word of the kingdom.

e). The parables continue on with the parable of the mustard seed which describes what happened to the Church as a result of the introduction of this counterfeit message, a result that shows us exactly what the 'Church' has become; culminating in the parable of the leaven which brings the whole of the 2000 years of Church history to its conclusion.

f). The leaven introduced into the 3 measures of meal is exactly the counterfeit message introduced by the tares. We can know this simply by looking at the first mention of the word leaven in the scriptures in relation to the feast of unleavened bread where it is clearly used as a picture of corruption and then relate it to the context in which it is used in the parable. But just to make sure that we do understand this correctly the Lord uses leaven as a symbol of corruption in such a way elsewhere as to leave us in no doubt - Mt 16:6 *Then Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees."*12 *Then they understood that He did*

not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

g). *the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees* – This is how the Lord uses the word leaven – to describe the very thing which was taught by the Pharisees and Sadducees, their doctrine, which sought to do away with the King and His message – and it is leaven picturing counterfeit doctrine that we see in the parable of the leaven which, by the close of this dispensation, will have brought about a complete corruption to the word of the kingdom.

3). 1Ti 4:1 ¶ *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods [Lit. meat] which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.*

a). And here in 1 Timothy Chapter 4 we see this same counterfeit doctrine described as ‘doctrines of demons’, coming from ‘deceiving spirits’ resulting in ‘some’ departing from ‘the faith’, departing from the word of the kingdom, the gospel of the glory of Christ, that which Paul calls ‘my gospel’.

b). And we can see that this counterfeit doctrine focusses in on one particular area – ‘forbidding to marry’.

c). As we consider this let’s remember the foundational and immovable fact that God established the marriage relationship in the beginning, in Genesis, for the purpose of rulership. Whenever a husband/wife relationship is seen then rulership must be in view, or to say this same thing another way, whenever rulership is seen then a husband/wife relationship must be in view.

d). This is exactly what we see in foundation with Adam and the Woman, this is why God the Father takes Israel as His wife and why, having divorced her for harlotry, He will again take her as His wife yet future and this is why Christ must have a wife in order to rule in the Millennial Kingdom, and why no eternally saved person whether Jew or Christian can participate in rulership either, apart from the Husband/wife relationship. All of this we have seen in times past in the Books of Ruth and Esther as well as Genesis Chapters 24-25, all pointing to that Day yet future when that pictured through the

husband/wife relationship established by God at the outset of His dealings with Man will be brought to fulfillment in the Millennial Kingdom.

e). To understand this central and fundamental and foundational truth would bring the realization that there can be no participation in rulership on the earth today for those comprising the Church as Christ has not yet married His Bride and nor has God the Father re-married Israel. There is no Husband/wife relationship in this context at present and therefore rulership cannot be in view – hence the reason for the ‘doctrines of demons’, ‘forbidding to marry’ – forbidding that which would make clear this foundational truth.

f). And even in our everyday experience within our own husband/wife relationships the same truth concerning rulership is in view and consequently we should keep in mind – 1Pe 3:7 *Husbands, likewise, dwell with them with understanding, giving honor to the wife, as to the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life, that your prayers may not be hindered.*

Eph 5:31 "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

The husband/wife relationship is ‘a great mystery’ which declares and demonstrates the relationship that must exist between Christ and His Church with a view to rulership by the Husband/Wife in the 7th Day.

g). And the ‘foods’, literally the ‘meat’, seen in 1 Timothy Chapter 4, that the tares, those promulgating the doctrines of demons, were commanding Christians sown out into the world to abstain from would be any scriptural teaching in the spiritual or the natural concerning the husband/wife relationship as God had ordained it from the beginning because of what it pictures with respect to rulership.

h). We don’t need to catalogue the success, nor the excess, that Satan has accomplished in this crucial area. The husband/wife relationship, because of what it pictures, cannot be taken lightly and cannot be undermined.

4). Whilst on the island of Patmos the apostle John, the same John who was present with the Lord on the day He gave the parables recorded in Matthew Chapter 13, is taken in the Spirit beyond the end of this dispensation to

witness the events at the Judgment Seat of Christ following the resurrection/rapture of the Church - *Re 1:10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, 11 saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea." 12 Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, 13 and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.*

a). The 7 churches seen here represent the entire church, all the eternally saved from this dispensation, and we see the complete church standing before the Lord as Judge.

b). This event prophetically takes us to the point in time immediately following the completion of the destructive work of the leaven which had been placed in the 3 measures of meal 2000 years beforehand by the tares. Here is the Church then that had become a tree complete with the birds of the air nesting in its branches standing before the Lord.

c). And as we look at that which the Lord says to His Church we will see the same dispensational history beginning and ending in exactly the same place as the first 4 parables in Matthew Chapter 13.

d). *Re 2:1 ¶ "To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, 'These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: 2 "I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars 3 "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary. 4 "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. 5 "Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place--unless you repent. 6 "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. 7 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.'"*

It is the church of Ephesus we will remember which had received an extraordinary amount of Kingdom teaching. Paul himself spent an extended

period of time in this location - Ac 19:1 ¶ *And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus.....8 ¶ And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God. 9 But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.10 And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.*

e). Priscilla and Aquila were also there, as was Apollos and Paul left Timothy there with specific instructions - 1Ti 1:1 ¶ *Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Savior and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope, 2 To Timothy, a true son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. 3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia--remain in Ephesus that you may charge some that they teach no other doctrine,*

f). It is to the church of Ephesus that Paul writes the letter that contains the 'great mystery' 'concerning Christ and the church' and instructions for the spiritual warfare and it is to the elders of the Ephesian church that he gives the warning concerning the 'savage wolves' and those who will rise up within their midst speaking 'perverse things' to draw away disciples after themselves.

g). What we can see here through this one particular church, in microcosm, is the account of what happened at the beginning of this dispensation with all those who heard the word of the kingdom, understood it and produced fruit.

h). This period of fruitfulness for the Ephesians is pictured in v2-3 in Revelation Chapter 2 and would place those within the Ephesian church in the 4th part of the parable of the sower - 2 *"I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars 3 "and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name's sake and have not become weary.*

i). However, beginning with v4 we can now see the work of the tares, the savage wolves that Paul had warned about that would be found in their midst - 4 *"Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love.*

1Ti 1:18 ¶ *This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare, 19 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck, 20 of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander, whom I delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.*

j). For the Ephesians to be told that they had 'left their first love' speaks directly to their relationship with Christ as their betrothed, and future Bridegroom – the 'great mystery' of the husband/wife relationship that Paul had written to them about – they had stepped back from this foundational truth. And Hymenaeus and Alexander are examples of those whose faith 'suffered shipwreck' as a result of speaking blasphemy, speaking against this very thing.

k). Right here then we can see the work of the tares amongst the wheat in response to those who heard the word of the kingdom and understood it and were producing fruit, some 100, 60,30.

l). What we see with the Ephesian church in the Revelation and what we see happening with the 4th group from the parable of the sower deals with exactly the same time and exactly the same thing – and through both of these examples is the implicit warning, given directly in the Book of Hebrews – Heb 2:1 ¶ *Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away.*

This is a warning that has remained current throughout the course of this dispensation for everyone who hears the word of the kingdom and understands it.

m). We will though need to pick this up again next time – if the Lord is willing.