

Kingdom Parables

by Albert Leckie

Jesus reveals the character of the kingdom during the parenthesis between the cutting off and coming again of Jesus through the seven kingdom parables.

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Scripture: Matthew 13:10

Topics: "Parables", "Kingdom Of Heaven", "Spiritual Growth"

Description

Albert Leckie explores the 'Kingdom Parables' in Matthew 13, emphasizing the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven revealed through parables. He explains how the rejection of Jesus by Israel leads to a new phase where the kingdom is formed through the sowing of the Word, highlighting the different responses to the gospel. Leckie discusses the parables of the sower, the wheat and the tares, and the mustard seed, illustrating the challenges and growth of the kingdom amidst opposition and corruption. He warns against the dangers of false teachings and the superficiality of faith, urging believers to remain steadfast in the truth of the gospel. Ultimately, he reassures that God's purpose will prevail in establishing His kingdom despite the current challenges.

Transcript

Matthew chapter 13. Matthew 13 verse 10. And the disciples came and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 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 abundance. But whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Epistle to the Ephesians chapter 5. Ephesians chapter 5. And reading at verse 31.

Ephesians chapter 5 verse 31. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they too shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself, and the wife see that your reverence her husband. Chapter 6 of the same epistle. Ephesians chapter 6 verse 18.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all sins. And for me that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak. And finally in the first epistle by Timothy chapter 3. First Timothy 3 verse 8. Likewise must the deacons be grave, not double-tongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre, holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

We have already considered in these meetings the prophecy of Daniel chapter 9 concerning the 70 weeks of years of God's dealings with the nation of Israel. And we have observed that there is a gap or a parenthesis between the 69th and the 70th week. Between the cutting off of the Messiah at the place called Calvary at the end of the 69th week.

And that covenant which a future Roman prince shall yet make with the nation of Israel. We observed how this links up to with the commission given in Matthew chapter 10 to the twelve apostles. From verse 1 to 15 we have the immediate commission given to the apostles.

Then from verse 16 to the end of the chapter we have that commission which has been interrupted taken up at a future date. And we have observed that we today live in the gap between the 69th and the 70th week of God's dealings with the nation of Israel. That we find ourselves today during the suspension of the commission given to the twelve apostles in Matthew chapter 10.

Last night we began to consider the features of the day in which we live. Of this gap, this parenthesis. And may I just say that I'm laying the foundation for what we shall yet consider.

The coming of the Lord Jesus in relation to the church. In relation to the nation of Israel and in relation to the world. When we were together last night we thought of Romans chapter 11.

And there our attention is directed to one of the unique characters of the day in which we live. That blindness, hardness, obduracy has overtaken the nation of Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles become in. That Israel as a nation finds itself with a hardened, with an obdurate, with a blinded heart.

And God in this day in which we live is reaching out and offering salvation to the Gentiles. When we come to Matthew chapter 13 the Lord Jesus is unfolding to us the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. Of the kingdom of the heavens.

And here in this mystery of Matthew chapter 13 our attention is again directed to the unique character of this parenthetical period. Of this gap in God's dealings with the nation of Israel. For we're going to see that in the mysteries of the kingdom we are acquainted with the character of the kingdom during this parenthesis.

The Old Testament predicted as we have seen two events in connection with our Lord Jesus Christ. It predicted that he will be cut off and of nothing. It also predicted that he should come again in power and great glory.

But the Old Testament is altogether silent as to the character of the kingdom between these two events. That is between the cutting off of the Messiah and Calvary and his coming again in power and great glory. But here in Matthew chapter 13 as we shall see in a few moments our Lord Jesus indicates to us in delightful parabolic language the character of the kingdom between these two events.

Now we notice how that this fits in beautifully with what we had before us last night. Let me just direct your attention to the setting of Matthew chapter 13. Had we read in Matthew chapter 12 we should have noticed that as far as the Messiah's presentation to the nation of Israel was concerned the crisis had come.

Matthew chapter 12 divides itself into two sections. From verse 1 to 21 we see the nation of Israel rejecting their Messiah. From verse 22 to 50 we see the Messiah himself in turn rejecting that same nation.

Now let us think of this just for a moment. From verse 1 to 21 we see the nation of Israel rejecting their Messiah and thus we read in verse 14 these solemn words. They hold a counsel how they might destroy him.

Here's the purpose of heart of the leaders of the nation of Israel that their Messiah of the one who said he was their Messiah must be destroyed. Then in the second section the Messiah he is seen to be rejecting the nation of Israel that is from verse 22 to 50. Listen to the language that the Savior uses in respect of that nation.

Verse 34 Oh generation of vipers. Verse 39 an evil and an adulterous generation. Verse 45 even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation.

Thus he rejects the nation of Israel. Speaking of it as a generation of vipers an evil and an adulterous generation and a wicked generation. But notice that if in the first section we have the nation rejecting the Messiah we are acquainted with the dispensational character of the change.

That is once the nation rejects the Messiah there's going to be a change in God's dispensational dealings with man. And what is the dispensational change? Verse 21 in his name shall the Gentiles trust. Is that not what we saw last night? Thus in the first section the nation rejects their Messiah and we're given to appreciate the dispensational character of the change.

Verse 21 in his name shall the Gentiles trust. But in the second section the Messiah is seen to reject the nation of Israel and we're given now to appreciate the spiritual character of the change. Not just the dispensational character of the change but the spiritual character of the change.

And what is this? Well so the Savior in verse 50 for whosoever shall do the will of my father the same as my brother and sister and mother. In other words it's not now a matter of being able to claim Abraham as your father. Oh no the relationship is a spiritual one and whosoever shall do the will of my father the same as my brother and sister and mother.

Thus we see that Matthew 13 is a development of Romans chapter 11. Just a few words on this chapter before I deal with it in detail. The Lord Jesus made a remarkable statement in verse 12 of Matthew 13.

For whosoever hath to him shall be given and he shall have more abundance but whosoever hath not from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Now what exactly did our Savior mean with these words? Whosoever hath to him shall be given and he shall have more abundance. He's addressing himself in a particular way to his disciples as is this.

Whosoever hath the person, whosoever hath the Messiah, whosoever hath the Savior to him shall be given the truth about the Savior to him shall be given the truth about his person and he shall have more abundance but whosoever hath not the person, that's the nation of Israel at large, from him shall be taken

away the person whom he seemeth to have. Thus we understand verse 12. Now then I've mentioned that in this chapter we have the mysteries of the kingdom of heavens and I observed last night with you that when we have this word mystery in the New Testament it has nothing to do with anything that is mysterious in its character.

It simply means a truth hitherto unrevealed but now made known and here the Lord is introducing a truth hitherto unrevealed as to the character of the kingdom during this parenthesis, during this gap. You remember when you go back to the book of Genesis we're told that Pharaoh called Joseph's name Zaphnath-Paneah and you will remember that the meaning of that name is a revealer of secrets and here in Matthew chapter 13 we see our blessed Lord as the true Zaphnath-Paneah for he says in verse 35 I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world.

He is unfolding secrets that have been kept unfolding truth that has been kept secret since the foundation of the world and remember that in Matthew's gospel with the Lord Jesus presented to us as the King and here in this gospel of the King we see the truth of Proverbs chapter 25 and verse 2 it is the glory of God to conceal a thing but the honor of kings to search out a matter and here we have this King grasping the honor of searching out a matter which God hitherto had concealed and after the Lord Jesus had revealed the secrets to his disciples he makes a remarkable statement in verse 52 therefore every scribe which is instructed under the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is in house holder which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old after having unfolded the

mysteries of the kingdom of heaven he says now you're like a householder and you were able to bring out of your treasure things new and old I wonder what our Savior meant when he spoke of things new and old well he says the things that I've been telling you as far as God's purpose is concerned they are old things kept secret from the foundation of the world very old as far as God's purpose is concerned but he says they're new now new in terms of revelation old in respect of divine counsel and divine purpose new now in respect of revelation for I have uttered these things unto you now having given that background to these seven kingdom parables let us think of these seven kingdom parables tonight the seven parables of course of these the first the parable of the sower the second the parable

of the wheat and the tares how that an enemy so tears alongside the wheat while men slept the next parable is the parable of the grain of mustard seed that grew into a great tree and the birds of the air lodged in its branches then we have the parable of the leavened lump or perhaps I should have noted that the parable of the leavened lump precedes the parable of the birds of the air in the branches now what is the parable of the leavened lump a woman insidiously putting into three measures of meal leaven unto the whole became leavened now there's the first four the other three parables of these the parable of a certain man who found a treasure hid in the field then the parable of a merchant man who found one pearl of great price and the seventh parable the parable of the dragnet that

drew in fish both good and bad and in these seven parables we shall observe we have the correct of the kingdom during this gap during this parenthesis but how are we to understand these seven parables you'll notice that six of these parables are similitudes of the kingdom in other words the Lord prefaces six of these parables with the words the kingdom of heaven is likened unto the first parable is the only exception the parable the sower is not a similitude of the kingdom the Lord does not speak of it in that way but in the first parable as we shall see in a moment the Lord Jesus is just indicating how the kingdom is being formed today it is being formed by the sowing of seed another important point to observe indeed a very important point to observe is this that these seven parables

divide themselves into two and the twofold division is obvious in verse 1 the Savior says the same day when Jesus out of the house and sat by the seaside then verse 36 then Jesus sent the body of the way and went into the house thus certain of these parables were spoken by the Lord as he sat by the seaside then certain of the parables were spoken by the Lord to his disciples once he returned to the house now what is the significance of this the first four parables were uttered by the Lord as he sat by the seaside in the hearing of the multitude the other three parables were uttered by the Lord to his disciples when he was in the house alone with his disciples now what is the significance of this twofold division my dear brethren here's a point that we must observe and if we fail to

observe this point we shall never rightly interpret the truth in respect of the kingdom of the heavens in the first four parables we have the kingdom in profession wherein there is both good and bad the kingdom of heaven as seen by the eye of men we might speak of it as Christendom Christendom is just an abbreviation for two words Christ's dominion and all who take upon their lips a confession of Christ as Lord they find themselves in the kingdom of the heavens they find themselves in Christendom but my Bible makes it clear that all who take upon their lips a confession of Christ as Lord do not necessarily belong to the Lord why the day is coming when they're going to cry Lord Lord open unto us and he shall say depart from me I never knew you thus in the first four parables with the

kingdom in profession the kingdom as seen by the eye of men wherein there is both that that's real and that that's unreal but in the three parables spoken by the Lord in the house to his disciples we have the kingdom in its reality the kingdom in which there is nothing but that which is real the kingdom not seen by men but the kingdom as seen by the eye of faith and the kingdom as seen by the eye of God thus we have this twofold aspect of the kingdom but yet another truth in connection with this twofold division and one that I want to establish in our minds helping us to understand the true character of it in which we live in the first four parables we have the devil's attempt to destroy and to corrupt the kingdom of heaven in the first parable he sends down the birds of the air who catch

you with a seed that are sown by the wayside in the second parable an enemy sows tares beside the in the third part of the birds of the air are lodging in the branches the same birds that would catch you with a good seed in the first parable they're lodging in the branches of the third parable and then in the fourth parable we have a woman insidiously putting into the three measures of meal the leaven and this all has to do as we're going to see with the devil's endeavor to corrupt and to destroy God's kingdom but in the third the last three parables in the second section of Matthew chapter 13 we have God's purpose to establish his kingdom and praise God he'll be triumphant he couldn't be otherwise if the devil would seek to corrupt and destroy our God will be triumphant and he shall

establish his kingdom as we shall see it in the treasure in the peril and in the dragnet now there's the background to these seven kingdom parables we begin by thinking of the parable of the sower and we now notice dear brethren the change up to this point of time God had been dealing with the nation of Israel and the nation of Israel had been a vine that God had taken out of Egypt he had cared for it he had nourished it given Israel as a nation special and favored attention but it became a degenerate vine an empty vine a vine that was producing wild grapes thus in Matthew chapter 12 Israel as a nation is rejected and thus today it's not the thought of a vine in a vineyard being cared for by God but it's the thought of a sower in the field scattering his seed far and wide that's the

character of things today and the field is the world and the sower goes throughout the world scattering the word of the kingdom thus there we have another of the unique features of this parenthetical period it's no

longer a vine in a vineyard but a sower sowing seed in the field and the field is the world now notice my dear brethren that in this first parable we're not told who the sower is and this is very important in the next parable we are the one who sowed the wheat the son of man the one who sowed the tares the wicked one but in the first parable we're not told who the sower is in the first parable we're not told the type of seed that was sown in the second parable we are wheat and tares now why is this first of all in the first parable the emphasis is not upon the sower not upon

the seed but on the different kinds of ground into which the seed was sown four different kinds of that's what's emphasized in the first parable but I feel I must say a little word more on that my dear brethren the reason why the sower is not mentioned in the first parable is this that while the sowing commenced with the Savior it didn't stop with him the seed is still being sown today is that not the truth of Hebrews chapter 2 how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him at first it was spoken by the Lord then it was confirmed by them that had him and today it is being preached thus the sower is not specified because the sowing is continued until today but in the second parable we

are told who the sower is I wonder why I want you to grasp this in the first parable we're told that the seed is the word of the kingdom but the wheat in the second parable is not the word of the kingdom it's the children of the kingdom who is it that sows the children of the kingdom ah the sower must now be specified he is the son of man my dear brethren there are lessons to be learned here the preacher can only sow the word of the kingdom Christ alone can sow the children of the kingdom and I feel that as preachers today this is something we need to learn my dear brother you who preach the gospel it's yours to sow the word and no more you can't sow the children of the kingdom only the Savior can and all that more and more of us who were preachers would learn that it's ours to sow the

word and we were done with this appealing and diverse means of getting people to come forward and make some kind of profession my dear brethren that doesn't belong to us and it's time that we learn that it's ours to sow the word and leave it to the Lord to sow the sons of the kingdom for he alone can do that surely we have sufficient confidence in the word to leave the rest with our blessed Lord he sows the children of the kingdom and he alone we sow the word of the kingdom he sows the children of the kingdom but now we notice that the seed it falls in different kinds of ground there is the seed that falls by the wayside there is the seed that falls upon the stony places there is the seed that falls among the thorns and the seed that falls into good ground with regard to the seed that

fell by the wayside the Lord Jesus speaks of this as those who hear but they don't understand and in his interpretation he tells us then cometh the wicked one and catch the way that which was sown in the heart thus we have the seed on the wayside what kind of heart is the wayside heart well of course those of us who seek to do little work for the Lord in the spread of the gospel we often meet the wayside heart the heart that has been made hard by the traffic of this world no matter what you might say no impression is ever made by reason of the traffic of this world's pleasure its politics its business and other things beside it has become become altogether unsusceptible to the word of the kingdom unimpressed by the good message that God sends from heaven what then happens the birds of the

air come down and take away the word out of the heart no I know not who might be here tonight but I wonder if I speak to someone and you've heard the message preached over and over again but little or no impression is made and all too quickly whatever slight impression might be made is quickly wiped away would you like to know the reason for that the birds of the air come down these emissaries of the wicked

one and they snatch away the word out of the heart and the Lord tells us in Luke's gospel lest they should believe and be saved it's a solemn thing to have a hardened heart sometimes hardened according to Hebrews chapter 3 by the deceitfulness of sin and such an individual becoming a dupe of the enemy of their souls the birds of the air now we speak of this heart as the unreceptive

heart the hard heart that's unreceptive and the birds of the air snatch away the good seed then we have the seed that fell upon stony places or rocky ground now of course this isn't a ground that is strewn with stones and strewn with rocks that's not the thought it's ground or soil but a thin layer on top of hard rock it's shallow ground shallow soil on top of hard rock thus the Lord Jesus speaks of it as there not being much earth and forthwith the seed springs up but because there is no deepness of earth when the Sun rises it is scorched and it withers away because there is no root now then here we have an important lesson here notice there is growth upward but there is no root downward and with the test of the warm Sun arises it withers away because there is no root there are those who

are in a particular way amenable to the preaching of the gospel they would apparently and quickly receive it the Lord speaks of them as those who hear and receive with joy and there appears to be plenty of growth upward for a little while but there's no root downward let me say here tonight that growth which is of God is always slow but it's steady usually what grows in a night like Jonah's good it perishes in a night thus here we have the seed sown upon this rocky ground where there isn't much depth there is quick growth upward but no root downward ah dear brethren I want us to be impressed with this tonight how did the Lord Jesus expound this for us he says this is like unto those who hear the word and anon with joy they receive it they endure for a while but when tribulation and

persecution come by and by there's a proof that never was a real mark in the soul the notice the expression anon with joy they receive it Mark 4 says they receive it with gladness my dear brethren when the word is received it is never received joyfully it is never received with gladness why no authorized version says in Acts chapter 2 then they that gladly heard this word were baptized and you consult any good version you'll discover that the word gladly is omitted the result of the reception of the word brings gladness but the actual reception of it never brings gladness who would be glad to receive a word that condemns a word that strips of every vestige of good a word that makes me to realize I'm destined for eternal wrath except for divine mercy no one receives such a message with joy

and gladness brethren we ought to see to this that the gospel preaching today is the kind of preaching that causes men and women to be broken down in the divine presence I'm convinced of this that we've lost the solemnity of the message that God has committed us to preach oh there's much more dear brethren than telling men and women how to get to heaven we've got to tell them about their sin and how God hates it and if they don't forsake it God can't forgive it we've got to preach repentance we've got to preach the blood we've got to preach hell that kind of message will never be received with gladness or with joy the result today is this that oftentimes instead of gospel campaigns we're having gospel carnivals my brother you who preach the gospel keep to the book in your preaching don't

win for the modern tend of topical preaching after all my brother what is it that God blesses if men and women are to be born again they're to be born of incorruptible seed by the Word of God not things topical the Word of God and preach it my brother preach it in such a way that people won't receive it with gladness and endure just for a while but like Noah being warned of God they'll move with fear like those mentioned in Hebrews chapter 6 they'll flee to Christ for refuge here with those who receive it with joy but endure for a while if the seed on the wayside ground is the unreceptive mind the seed upon the stony

places is the deceptive mind but now we have the third kind of ground the seed that fell among thorns and the thorns spring up and choke them choke the seed the Lord Jesus

speaks of those of this of those who only hear then there comes the care of this world and the deceit the deceitfulness of riches and they choke the world and they become unfruitful now what kind of mind is this if the first is the unreceptive mind and the second is the deceptive mind here we have the competitive mind two things crowded notice the care of this world that's poverty and the deceitfulness of riches that's wealth and they choke the world and it becometh unfruitful alias the test of either poverty or wealth proves too much now I want to mention dear brethren both poverty and wealth in this parable are spoken of by the Lord as thorns we're inclined to think that only welfare only wealth can be a thorn but I tell you poverty can be a thorn and I won't deliberate upon that

tonight but when the competition of care and wealth comes along the world is choked and there's an evidence that there never was any work at all then with the seed that fell into good ground it brought forth some 100 fold some 60 fold and some 30 fold here we have ground that's neither hard nor shallow nor thorny it's good ground ground that has been plowed deep the Lord Jesus speaks of this as those who hear and who understand and who bear fruit hearts that have been plowed deep by the convicting of the Spirit of God all here some don't understand others receive with joy but here with individual who hears and who understands whose heart has been plowed deep by the convicting of the Spirit of God here we have the sensitive mind the good ground the sensitive mind I spent more time on that

parable than I had intended but just let me direct your attention to the different prepositions that the Lord employs here notice in connection with the seed that fell by the wayside the preposition is by the wayside then verse 5 upon the stony places verse 7 among the thorns but we come to the good ground it's into the good ground it's only connection with the good ground we have the preposition into apart from that it's by upon and among but in the good ground the seed falls into it thus in that parable we have how the kingdom is being formed during this unique day by the sowing of the word of the kingdom that brings us to the second parable verses 24 to 30 and the Lord expounds it in verses 36 to 43 it's the parable of the tares in the field in the parable the sower the enemy tried to

prevent the work of God he sent down the birds of the air who snatched away the good seed but he failed there was the seed that fell into good ground and there was fruit but if in the first parable he tried to prevent the work in the second parable he tries to corrupt the work how does he corrupt the work by causing there to be sown alongside the wheat this darnal these tares this bastard wheat now I'm told that tares can scarcely be distinguished from wheat that the only in fact can be distinguished really when they're full-grown I want us to appreciate dear brethren tonight that the devil the enemy of men's souls he is a master in the art of imitation what is so deceptive today is this that there is an element of truth in the teaching of every evil cult I repeat the devil is a master in

the art of imitation beginning with those Egyptian magicians who were able to imitate what Moses did the climax shall be the Antichrist who shall yet appear in the earth the counterfeit Christ revelation 13 speaks of as being like a lamb that's Christ but he speaks as a dragon that's the devil now the enemy sows the tares sows this imitation wheat the Lord says while men slept ah this is sad but true how busy the enemy is while we as God's people are sleeping today here the word of Scripture Romans chapter 13 knowing the time that now it is high time to wake out of sleep for now is our salvation neither than when we believed Ephesians chapter 5 awake now that sleepeth sleepeth and arise from the dead and Christ shall give thee light while many of us as God's people they are sleeping the

enemy he is so very busy from morning to night they're knocking on men and women's doors while the majority of the Lord's people they're sleeping the last with so many of our young people today little or no interest in the spread of the gospel they wouldn't think of spending their half-holiday going round the doors distributing tracts they want some kind of entertainment some kind of sport the enemy's not doing that kind of thing he's busy and we're sleeping and we're sleeping while there has been entrusted to us the word of the kingdom ah this is no day for idle indolent Christians while the enemy is so busy this is no day for secret disciples my brother my sister let's not sleep let's be up and doing while the enemy is so busy now the word in verse 13 after the servants came and said

well then that we go and gather them up gather the Lord Jesus said let both grow together let them go together until the time of the harvest and I remember being in London and listening to an open-air meeting where a Roman Catholic priest was preaching and he was asked the question why it was that in the Roman Catholic Church there were so many roads that was how it was put and he quoted this verse did not the parable of Matthew 13 said let both grow together so we let both go together of course he failed to appreciate that the wheat and the darn all they grow together not in the church they grow together in the field but if there's any darn on the church it must be dealt with it must be put away but of course you could never put down out of the world that's impossible fail you to

appreciate the simple teaching of God's word thus let both go together after all it's not ours to try and uproot the darn all we want to get on with preaching the word it's ours not to uproot the unreal it's ours merely to preach the word and leave that with God we cannot take time to develop this much father safe to observe that the darn oh it's bundled together and then it's cast into the burning and this is the end of the darn oh the children of the wicked one cast into the burning of the Savior speaks of a reverse parted to there should be wailing and gnashing of teeth cast into the furnace of fire but what are the feet part of the wheat what are the children of the kingdom God of safely into the barn then shall the righteous shine as the Sun in the kingdom of my father thus in the

second parable with the devil's endeavor to corrupt the Word of God and that by imitation that brings us now to consider the parable of the mustard seed that grew into a great tree verse 31 to 32 the mustard seed that grew into a great tree I know that sometimes this is interpreted as the power of the unspectacular mustard seed referring to faith and what faith can do it can go into a great tree but my dear brethren this is not a parable wherein there is expounded to us the power of the unspectacular what is brought before us here is disproportionate growth a mustard seed never grows into a great and thus we have before us here disproportionate growth in the preceding parables it's grains where the sower sowing seed with the Son of Man sowing wheat and the wicked one sowing that note but

now it's one grain of mustard seed not grains but grain what's the difference in this parable it's not individuals that's in view it's the thing on mass you remember how the Lord Jesus spoke to the church at Sardis he says thou hast a name that thou livest and are dead then he goes on to say nevertheless I have a few names amongst thee which have not defiled their garments name and names the name was what was true of it on mass living but dead but even in the mass there were a few individuals names which had not defiled the garments thus we have a grain here it's the thing on mass it's the mustard seed that grew into a great tree the mustard seed the least of all seeds after all dear brethren that's how the kingdom commenced isn't it how did it commence with a few uneducated men the

majority of whom were fishermen small in the eyes of this world despised and persecuted the whom one day the Lord Jesus found it necessary to say fear not little flock it is your father's good pleasure to give you

the kingdom it began as the smallest of all seeds but this least of all seeds it has grown into a great tree now what does the great tree speak of in scriptures invariably the great tree speaks of earthly greatness and earthly power it speaks of what in fact becomes a protective power on the earth now you see where do you find this where he returned to Daniel chapter 4 you discover that Nebuchadnezzar is spoken of there as a great tree where he returned to Ezekiel chapter 31 you discover the kingdom of Assyria is spoken of as a great tree as Ezekiel chapter 17 Judah in the

future is going to be a great tree speaking of its greatness and power in a day that is yet to be the great tree speaks of earthly greatness and a protective power on the earth thus the kingdom that began in a small way has today become a great tree marked by earthly greatness is that not true of Christendom today my dear brethren how true it is Christendom is powerful is wealthy is influential bishops and popes traveling the world speaking with authority doubling in things there's no right to touch at all and I would tell you we would be shocked if we knew just how much politics were governed by religion today are the churches are wealthy today owning stocks and shares and buildings and lands and jewels and costly vestments and other things beside that's not of God Lord Jesus said to his

own in John chapter 17 you're not of this world but Christendom is a great tree today powerful and influential but when you notice in connection with this great tree there's no mention of fruit there isn't even mention made of leaves mention is only made of branches no fruit no leaves just branches that's significant and this is true of Christendom today no fruit nothing for God no leaves just branches then the birds of the air they come and lodge in the branches who are these birds of the air the same birds of the air as we have in the first parable they find a lodgement in the branches of this great tree who are they emissaries of the evil one evil teachers in eminent places in Christendom now I remember preaching in Newcastle and Tyne some years ago and I attended these meetings a

lovely young lady she spoke to me one night had a real concern about being right with God she felt that she needed to be saved I had a word with her about God's way of salvation she said to me well I have a talk with my minister about this and after a few nights she returned to the meetings and said to me my minister tells me this matter of being saved and being born again it's old-fashioned and just a lot of nonsense there it is the birds of the air finding a lodgment in this great system is not Christendom full today of evil teachers finding themselves in eminent places yes it's true now notice the next parable it's the leavened lump now what is this I'm amazed to think that some of our brethren today are beginning to adopt Christendom's interpretation of this that the leaven speaks of

the gospel and the leavened lump speaks of the ultimate of evangelization of the world my dear brethren that certainly is not the interpretation of this parable let me tell you how it cannot be there are those who say well does this not say that the kingdom of heaven is like in course it's not that the leaven is like the kingdom of heaven but what the woman did with the leaven just as further down the chapter the Lord Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that was seeking goodly pearls we never hear them say the man is the kingdom it's what the man was doing that speaks of the kingdom thus in this parable the leaven is not the kingdom but what the woman was doing with the leaven and I would say dear brethren tonight that nowhere in the scripture and that with an exception

does leaven ever speak of what is good you say but what about the leaven in the wave loaves on the day of Pentecost the two wave loaves of fine flour baked with leather are these two wave loaves speak of the church formed by the Spirit on the day of Pentecost and the leaven speaks of the fact that in the church there are people saved by grace who still possess leaven in their being an evil nature that's why we come

to Leviticus chapter 2 those two wave loaves baked with leaven are termed the oblation of first fruits and there was this instruction it had not to be burnt on the altar doesn't speak of Christ speaks of the church and there will always be leaven in the church the church was formed in Acts chapter 2 as there was Acts chapter 5 the leaven was beginning to work Paul speaks of the

leaven of malice and of wickedness the Lord Jesus says in Luke chapter 12 beware of the leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisy Mark chapter 8 beware of the leaven of Herod we don't need to go outside of Matthew's to understand what the Lord Jesus means by the leaven when we come to chapter 16 in verse 6 the Lord Jesus said to his disciples take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees I said the disciples he's speaking this way because we have forgotten to take bread Lord Jesus said to them don't you remember the five loaves and the five thousand don't you remember the seven loaves and the four thousand then the disciples understood that he wasn't speaking concerning bread but the doctrine of the Pharisees and the Sadducees thus leaven speaks of doctrine and

it speaks of evil doctrine the epistle of the Galatians makes that very clear my dear brethren the three measures of meal is not the world for the world will not ultimately all be evangelized the three measure of meal is not the church the three measure of meal is the pure doctrine of Christ and the leaven is not the gospel the gospel is a seed as we've seen that fructifies not leaven that corrupts how wrong of people to think in terms of the ultimate evangelization of the world and I see my time is more than gone but I must say this my dear brethren nowhere in the Bible do I ever read of a popular gospel and let me repeat that nowhere in the Bible do I read of a popular gospel the gospel is faithfully preached as God would have it preached will never be welcome to the masses are you

listening my dear brethren nowhere do we read of a popular gospel my Bible speaks of the afflictions of the gospel second Timothy chapter 1 be thou a partaker of the afflictions of the gospel I want to say this my brother my sister it breaks my heart today to know that many of God's people think that success is assessed in terms of numbers that spiritual immaturity success is not determined by numbers that's the carnal mind at work it's ours to get on preaching the word not to entertain not so as to increase numbers but to be faithful to God in the sowing of the seed oh there's much that we could learn about this I was going around the doors in Braintree just last week I was invited into a certain home and the two ladies in this home said Mr.

Leckie this way of salvation that is preached today to us it's far too easy they spoke to me of a certain man who appears regularly on a Sunday on television I'd heard his name but that was about all but I learned that he was a man whose name is a household word in ungodly homes and they said to me you're not going to tell me that this man who despots himself in such a way Sunday on a television program he saved I don't believe what they said I know a dear lady down London who was saved about 18 months ago prior to conversion she frequented nightclubs and that kind of thing she told me this when they began to come to our nightclubs with their guitars and tambourines we laughed and we said we're winning at last they're coming down to our level my brother give up entertainment and get on with the world and don't think of success in terms of numbers then you your confidence in the regenerating power of the Word of God and learn but the Bible never speaks of a popular gospel it speaks only of the afflictions of the gospel and I would say tonight with my short experience that preaching the Word of God God still uses it we must not think of the leaven as the gospel and the ultimate evangelization of the world the gospel never appeals to the masses the leaven speaks of evil doctrine the three measures of meals speak of pure doctrine you will remember that Hannah brought a need for a flower three measure of and Abram said before the heavenly visitors three measures of fine flower it's that that speaks of pure doctrine what then is this parable and

here I must finish if in the birds of the air in the branches of the great tree with evil teachers and eminent places in Christendom in the leavened lump we have their evil teaching corrupting the pure doctrine of Christ is that not true I need not that I should tell you that tonight dear brother every truth that's precious to the heart of God is being denied on the sale today his virgin birth his impeccable holiness his atoning death his bodily resurrection his bodily ascension to heaven even being told today that there's going to be atheists in heaven and one has gone so far as to say that it's possible that my Savior was a homosexual one almost feels defiled saying that who's propagating these things not atheists but evil teachers in eminent places in Christendom this is Christendom the kingdom and profession this is the devil's endeavor to destroy the kingdom tomorrow night we're going to think of God's purpose to establish it a much brighter side shall we pray

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