

GOOD AND BAD, OLD AND NEW

Matthew 13:47-53 / "Yeshua" §66

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It is difficult to imagine how the disciples of Jesus would have been feeling on this day in their lives. They had grown up being taught the Hebrew scriptures, their laws and prophecies. They had committed their very lives to follow Jesus as their Messiah, and there is no doubt they would have had very strong, though sometimes misguided, expectations as to the establishment of Jesus' Messianic Kingdom. But on "this day", Jesus is revealing a totally new and foreign Kingdom plan to them, and he is not doing it straightforward, but rather teaching in parables with the message of the Kingdom hidden within. In one incredible day, their lives and expectations are being radically transformed through this revelation.

In this section we will look at the final two parables that the gospel writers recorded for us from this day, and what Jesus was revealing about this New Kingdom. He will be answering two particular questions: Is this New Kingdom eternal? And, does this New Kingdom supplant Judaism?

Part 1.	The Coming of the King
Part 2.	The Authentication of the King
Part 3.	The Controversy over the King
	→ <u>Good and Bad, Old and New</u>
Part 4.	The Training of the Twelve by the King
Part 5.	The Opposition to the King
Part 6.	The Preparation of the Disciples by the King
Part 7.	The Official Presentation of the King
Part 8.	The Preparation for the Death of the King
Part 9.	The Trial of the King
Part 10.	The Death of the King
Part 11.	The Resurrection and the Ascension of the King
Part 12.	The Sequels

IS THIS NEW KINGDOM ETERNAL? (MATTHEW 13:47-50)

This parable is very similar to the parable of "The Wheat and Tares" (13:24-30; explained in vss. 36-43) but seems to have a different emphasis and particular focus. In "The Wheat and Tares", a major part seems to have been to instruct the disciples that they would not be able to discern, then subsequently deal with, false followers who were in the church community, or "Christendom". They were instructed to patiently wait for God to sort it out, for if they were to attempt to sort out the false from true followers, they would actually inflict harm on some true believers. Who was true and false was not able to be known by them.

This parable is more focused on the END of this New Kingdom. This New Kingdom is not eternal, and its end will be marked by a judgment. This aspect of the end of the Kingdom and judgment is also found in "The Wheat and Tares" parable. In both parables there is a time of completion ("harvest", "full net") which Jesus explains as being the "end of the age" marked by an action of separation (wheat/tares, good/bad fish), and then followed with judgment. This parable along with "The Wheat and the Tares" makes it clear that this New Kingdom is not an eternal Kingdom, but is here for a specific amount of time, and during that time, as the message of the Kingdom goes out, there will be people who enter into "christendom" who are false followers, and they will be sorted out at the end of this Kingdom's time on earth.

At this point it is important to make a few comments on the judgment seen in these two parables. Jesus chose to give very explicit explanations of both the parable of "The Wheat and Tares" (see 13:36-43) and the "Net". This judgment marks the end of this "New Kingdom" and the inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom also known as the Millennial Kingdom and Thousand Year Reign of Christ. This judgment is also known as "The Sheep and the Goats" judgment seen in Matthew 25:31-46. We will go into far more detail on this judgment when we come to that part of our study, but for now it may be helpful to look at that passage to get a fuller understanding. Suffice it for now to say that the point Jesus was trying to make to his disciples was that this New Kingdom was not an eternal kingdom, and that there will be a judgment that marks its coming to an end.

DOES THIS NEW KINGDOM SUPPLANT JUDAISM? (MATTHEW 13:51-52)

This next short parable follows on the heels of Jesus' question to his disciples as to if they "have understood all these things"? (v51) In reaction to their positive response, Jesus seems to reclassify these disciples as "scribes". Now we will be familiar with the "scribes" that we have seen so far through our study. They have been, and will be, key accusers of Jesus and people who rejected his Messianic claims. But, it will be helpful to remember who they were *supposed* to be in the Jewish culture. A scribe was one who was learned in the Hebrew scriptures and was responsible for learning, teaching and explaining the Hebrew scriptures to the Jews. They were *supposed* to be theologians and guardians of God's word. As we have seen in our study they had wandered far from their important role in Jewish life. So here we see Jesus establishing these disciples who had "heard and understood" as the new "scribes" who would be responsible for learning, understanding, and teaching this newly revealed message of the Kingdom. However, Jesus makes a point to say that when the scribe is trained, he brings out new **AND** old treasure to the benefit of his guests.

Jesus seems to be answering a question that would naturally have risen, regarding whether this New Kingdom had supplanted Judaism. Was this New Kingdom a total and utter replacement for all that had been taught and revealed through the Hebrew scriptures? The Jewish leaders had rejected Jesus and his offer of the Messianic Kingdom, so was this New Kingdom a rejection of Judaism? We see clearly, that the answer to this is a resounding no. The trained scribe brings out BOTH new and old things from his treasure. The disciples are learning the new, but they have already learned much of the old. This New Kingdom is built upon the "old" revelation of God through the Hebrew scriptures. The life and death of Jesus, as well as the rest of the New Testament writings are going to be chock full of both "new and old" truths revealed by God. This New Kingdom hadn't supplanted Judaism, but had been built upon it, fulfilling parts of it, explaining parts of it and awaiting the fulfillment of parts of it. The encouragement to these new "scribes" is that the message of this New Kingdom goes hand in hand with the Hebrew scriptures, and the full teaching of the Kingdom will include both.

Now that Jesus has begun to reveal this New Kingdom through parables, he heads back to his hometown to see how they will receive him and his new revelations.

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