

The Parable of the Weeds Explained

Matthew 13: 36-43

DIG: Who is **the farmer** in this **parable** and also in Matthew 13:24-30? What does **the wheat** represent? **The weeds?** **The enemy?** **The harvest?** How do these **parables** relate to what Mattityahu 7:15-20 indicates is our responsibility in the congregations of **God** regarding **wheat** and **weeds**? What does these parables teach about purity in the congregations of **God**? Divine patience? Human accountability?

REFLECT: In this parable and also in Matthew 13:24-30, how can minimizing sin harm your church or messianic synagogue? How can it even hurt other believers? How can it hurt unbelievers? What is **the harvest** field like where **ADONAI** has placed you? What kind of spiritual food are you eating?

Sometime that evening when they were finally alone, **Yeshua's** apostles came to Him and said: **Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field** (Mattityahu 13:36). They had probably been thinking about it all day. Why would **the evil weeds** be allowed to coexist with **the good wheat**? Had **the farmer** done as **the owner's servants** had suggested, and had all **the weeds** immediately been pulled out and destroyed, **the Twelve** would have easily understood. But they were puzzled about **the farmer's** reaction because the Dispensation of Grace and **the end of the age** was a mystery to them. **His** explanation began simply enough.

The Players: **The farmer** is **Jesus Christ Himself**. He answered: **The one who scattered the good seed is the Son of Man** (Matthew 13:37). That is the title that **Christ** used more than any other to refer to **Himself**. It beautifully identified **Him** as **He** fully participated in human life as the perfect **Man**, **the last Adam** (First Corinthians 15:45-47), and the sinless representative of the human race. It was also a title clearly understood by Jews as referring to **the Messiah** (Daniel 7:13; Luke 22:69). The title is used of **Yeshua** by others only twice in the New Covenant, once by Rabbi Sha'ul (Acts 7:56) and once by **Yochanan** (Revelation 14:14).

The field is the world, not the Church or the Jewish people (Mattityahu 13:38a). By implication **the farmer - the Son of Man** - owns **the field**. **He** holds the title deed to it (see my commentary on **Revelation Ce - The Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David Has Triumphed**). **He** is its kosher King, and **He** cultivates **His** crop there. What does **He** scatter? **And the good seed stands for** believers, or **the people of the kingdom of Heaven** (Matthew 13:38b). Those with the truth of the Good News will be **scattered** throughout **His field, the world**.

The Adversary is the enemy. The weeds are the people of the evil one (Matthew 13:38c), and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The weeds are the unbelievers. The phrase people of the evil one is similar to the terminology the Lord used in John 8:44 when He rebuked the Pharisees by saying: You belong to your father, the devil. In addition, First John 3:10 indicates that all who are not the children of God are children of the devil. The Ancient Serpent will also spread his followers throughout the world and often his people will appear to be real believers as well. There is a worldly belief today that all of humanity is related - that we are all brothers and sisters. And while we are all created in the image of God, nothing could be further from the truth. There two families in the world. You are either in the family of God or the family of Satan. There is no middle ground.

The Plot: The meaning of the parable should be clear. The Son of Man - Jesus - scattered the children of His Kingdom in the world. The Enemy of souls - the great dragon - ruined the purity of the crop, mingling his children with those the Son of Man scattered. These unbelieving children of the tempter live together with believers in the world side by side. In the final judgment God will separate the wheat from the weeds.

The Plan: The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels. The judgment at the end of the mystery Kingdom age will separate them (Jesus is using terms that John the Baptist used). Let both grow together until the harvest because the essential character of each scattering will only be certain at that time. Then I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn" (Matthew 13:39-40).

How will the harvesters know the wheat from the weeds? The issue, as always, is the spiritual fruit they produce. Initially, weeds may look like wheat. But in the end, weeds cannot produce wheat kernels. The mature grain visibly sets wheat apart from weeds. It is the same in the spiritual realm. The people of the evil one can imitate the children of God's Kingdom, but they cannot produce true righteousness. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them (Mattityahu 7:18 and 20).

The final judgment will separate the good wheat from the evil weeds. As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age (Matthew 13:40 and 7:19). The Son of Man (see Gl - The Son of Man Has No Place to Lay His Head) will send out His angels, and they will weed out of his Kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil by disobeying His Word (Mattityahu 13:41). The judgment at the end of the age will separate the good wheat for the messianic Kingdom, but the evil weeds will be excluded.⁷¹²

They will throw them into the blazing furnace (Matthew 13:42a). Fire causes the greatest pain known to mankind, and **the blazing furnace** into which sinners are thrown represents the excruciating torment of hell, which is the destiny of every unbeliever. **The fire** of hell **never goes out (Mark 9:44)**, is **eternal (Mattityahu 25:41)**, and is finally seen as a **fiery lake of burning sulfur (Revelation 19:20c)**. The punishment is so fearsome that the Ruach HaKodesh describes it as a place **where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matthew 13:42b)**. Hell will not be a place, as some jokingly envision, where the ungodly will continue to do their thing while the godly to theirs in heaven. It's not a "to each his own" thing. Hell will have no friendships, no fellowship, no camaraderie, no comfort, and no hope. **The great dragon** will not be king of hell, but its number one prisoner. There will be no pleasure in hell of any kind, only torment **day and night forever and ever (Rev 20:10)**.

Jesus' last words of explanation are positive, beautiful and hopeful. **Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the Kingdom of their Father (Mattityahu 13:43a)**. When **the Son of Man** returns with **His** angels, they will not only perfectly separate out **the wicked** for **eternal** punishment but also **the righteous** for **eternal** blessing. **And He will send His angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather His elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other (Matthew 24:31)**. Then comes the long-anticipated and long-postponed thousand year reign of **Yeshua ha-Meshiach** on the earth from Jerusalem.

Least anyone fails to take seriously these truths that are both terrifying and superb, **Christ** adds: **Whoever has ears, let them hear (Matthew 13:43b)**. People who are unsure about their relationship to **ADONAI** should ask themselves if they are **wheat** or merely a counterfeit **weed** that looks like **wheat**, if they are **a child of God** or a child of **the deceiver**. Friend, if you do not belong to **God**, you can believe in, trust in, and have faith in **God** because **He** is in the business of making **wheat** out of **weeds**, believers out of sinners.

Those of us who are sure that we are **children of God** should hear what **the Chief Shepherd** says here so that our attitude toward **the world** might be the loving, merciful, compassionate attitude of our **Lord** - who has called us to witness rather than condemn, to love rather than hate, to show mercy rather than judgment. In that way we prove ourselves **blameless and pure children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation**. **Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky (Philippians 2:15)**.⁷¹³