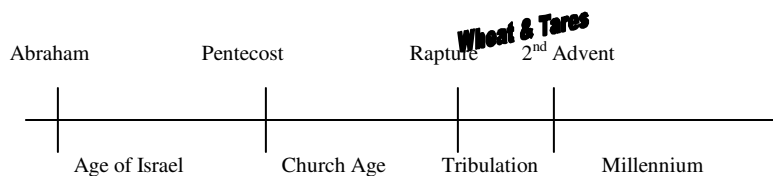


The Church of the Servant King
Survey of the Bible Series
SB_MT13C

The Parable of the Wheat and the Tares
(Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43)

The Time Period of This Parable

The parable of the wheat and tares covers only that time period known as the Tribulation.



It does not relate to the Church Age.

The Interpretation Of This Parable

1. The parable of the wheat and tares includes the following elements:

a sower	wheat
a field	tares
the enemy	the servants
reapers	the harvest
the end of the age	the furnace of fire

2. The sower is the Son of man (Jesus Christ). (v. 37)

3. The wheat is called the "good seed." (v. 34 cf. v. 35)

A. The good seed are the children of the kingdom. (v. 38)

B. The children of the kingdom are believers, and while there will be both Jew and Gentile believers during the Tribulation, the focus of this parable is Jewish believers who are alive on planet earth during the Tribulation. (The reason for the focus upon Jewish believers is that the gospel of the kingdom was to be preached to the Jews first. See Matthew 10:5-6).

4. The field is the world, that is, the people of the world. (v. 38). Remember that the Jews have been scattered among the people of the world since 70 A.D because they are under the 5th Cycle of Discipline.

5. The tares are the children of the wicked one. (v. 38)

A. The tares represent Jewish unbelievers during the Tribulation, and while there will be Gentile unbelievers, the focus of this parable is on the Jews of Israel, not Gentiles. (Again, see Matthew 10:5-6).

B. The wicked one is the devil.

6. The enemy that sowed the tares is the devil. (v. 39)
7. The servants (v. 27) are believers during the Tribulation with special focus on the following believers:
 - A. The 144,000 of Revelation 7:4-8.
 - B. Gentile converts: Revelation 7:9-17.
 - C. The two witnesses (Moses and Elijah): Revelation 11:3.
8. This parable requires someone to expose the tares among the wheat.
 - A. If the wheat and tares could be distinguished by the fruit (the grain), then the servants could have distinguished between the two.
 - B. However, even at harvest time, the wheat and tares will not be completely distinguishable based upon their fruit (production) since angels are required to distinguish between the two.

The point: Fruit is not the primary issue in this parable. The primary distinction is that the wheat represents the believer whereas the tare represents the unbeliever who looks like a believer in everything he does.
12. The reapers are angels. (v. 39 and 25:31)
13. The harvest is the baptism of fire (see Matthew 3:11).
14. The end of this world is not the end of the world. The word "world" is the Greek word for "age;" therefore, the end of the world (age) is the end of the Age of Israel, namely, the end of that phase of the Age of Israel known as the Tribulation. (v. 40)
15. The furnace of fire is hell, not the lake of fire. The baptism of fire removes all unbelievers from planet earth and casts them into "hell fire." It is not until the final disposition of unbelievers at the Great White Throne judgment that unbelievers are cast into the lake of fire.
16. The true sowing in the parable of the sower is to be imitated by a false sowing in the parable of the wheat and tares.
 - A. The true sowing in the parable of the sower is "the Word of the kingdom."
 - B. The false sowing of the parable of the wheat and tares is "the children of the wicked one."
 - C. The difference then between what is being sown in the parable of the sower and the parable of the wheat and tares is this:
 - 1) It is the "Word" that is sown in the parable of the sower.
 - 2) It is "people" that are being sown in the parable of the wheat and tares.
17. The relationship between the good soil of the parable of the sower and the wheat of the parable of the wheat and tares: good soil is required to produce wheat.
18. A subtlety in the parable of the wheat and tares:
 - A. The "good seed" = "children of the kingdom" = "wheat."
 - B. In this case, "wheat" is the product of having planted a "wheat seed."
 - C. The "wheat seed" planted to produce wheat to be harvested is not mentioned in the parable of the wheat and tares.

- D. To produce a “harvested wheat,” “good soil” and a “sown seed” are required.
 - 1) The “good soil” is the “good soil” of the parable of the sower.
 - 2) “Good soil” refers to the spiritual heart that must be prepared by God to receive seed.
 - 2) The “seed sown” is the “Word of the kingdom” of the parable of the sower that will be preached during the Tribulation (24:14).
19. In the parable of the wheat and tares there is to be a side-by-side development of that which is good and that which is evil as the result of these two sowings.
20. There will be a judgment at the end of the age to separate the tares from the wheat.
- A. The judgment is called the “baptism of fire.” (Matthew 3:11)
 - B. The “end of the age” is the end of the Age of Israel.
 - C. The Age of Israel comes to an end at the end of the period known as the Tribulation.
 - D. The tares are unbelievers who reject the “Word of the Kingdom” during the Tribulation.
 - E. The wheat are believers who accept the “Word of the Kingdom” during the Tribulation.
 - 1) The wheat in this parable cannot represent Church Age believers because the church will be raptured at the beginning of the Tribulation, and the period of the Tribulation is the major focus of the parable of the wheat and tares.
 - 2) The wheat of the parable of the wheat and tares are believers who will be saved during the period of the Tribulation.
 - F. The tares will be judged and cast into hell fire.
 - G. The wheat will be judged and allowed to enter the millennium in a physical body.
21. A deeper look at the parable of the wheat and tares makes it clear that production of fruit is not the criteria by which a person enters the millennium or is cast into hell.
- A. Fruit distinguishes wheat from tares, but fruit does not make wheat or tares.
 - 1) Wheat is wheat because it comes from a wheat seed.
 - 2) Tares are tares because they come from a tares seed.
 - B. Considering the production of fruit.
 - 1) Wheat seeds produce wheat fruit because it is the nature of wheat seeds to produce wheat fruit.
 - 2) Tares seeds produce tares fruit because it is the nature of tares seeds to produce tares fruit.
 - C. The wheat is taken into the millennium because it is wheat, not because it has produced wheat fruit.
 - D. The tares are cast into hell because they are tares, not because they did not produce wheat fruit.

22. To make production the criteria by which a person enters the millennium misinterprets the parable of the wheat and tares.

Six Indications in the Parable of the Wheat and Tares That This Parable Relates to Israel

1. The term "*children of the kingdom*" is used in Matthew to refer to Israel. (Matthew 8:11-12)

Matthew 8:11-12

11 And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven.

12 But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. (KJV)

Note: The "children of the kingdom" refers to Jews who were the recipients of the prophecies, and thus, the original heirs of the kingdom are, here, told that without true faith mere race is not sufficient qualification for Christ's kingdom.

2. The judgment outlined in this parable relates to the time when God will again be dealing with Israel as a nation, that is at the end of the age of Israel, namely, the Tribulation period.
3. The wheat and the tares grow together until the judgment, but the church will be raptured before the Tribulation begins.
4. The judgment that falls upon the tares comes through the angels before the wheat is rewarded, so that the chronology here depicts the removal of the tares so that only the wheat is left.
5. The millennial kingdom is set up immediately after this judgment.
6. The church is never judged to determine who will enter into the kingdom and who will be excluded.

Note: The fact that false sowing occurs in the Church Age does not alter the fact that the focus of the parable of the wheat and tares is the Tribulation period.

WHAT DOES THE PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND TARES TEACH?

1. When Jesus comes to establish His kingdom on earth unbelieving Jews will be judged and will be cast into hell.
2. Only those who are true believers will be gathered physically alive into the millennial kingdom.
3. This judgment occurs when Christ comes to earth after the Great Tribulation rather than at the rapture of the church when the Church Age unbelievers are left undisturbed, according to the pre-tribulation rapture interpretation.