

The Church of the Servant King

Thursday Night Bible Study

The Gospel of Matthew

(Thurs_Matt13)

INTRODUCTION

The kingdom motif has played a major role in Matthew's gospel. Matthew uses the phrase "kingdom of heaven" on 33 occasions.¹ He uses the phrase "kingdom of God" on 5 occasions.² He uses the term "kingdom" on 17 occasions.³ J. Dwight Pentecost has stated that it is "almost impossible to make one's way" through the maze of interpretations.⁴ In my opinion, much of the scholarly discussion of the kingdom of God is at such an abstract level to be essentially meaningless and/or irrelevant to the believer of the present age – the Church Age Body of Christ.⁵ For instance,

- Nineteenth century liberal theologians Albrecht Ritschl and Adolf von Harnack believed that the kingdom of God is not something to be established in the future, but is now present in the form of the brotherhood of man. Thus, the predominant liberal view was that the kingdom of which Jesus spoke was a present ethical, non-temporal, and non-political kingdom.
- Johannes Weiss believed that Jesus expected the kingdom to come in the immediate future and that Jesus' ethical commands were **interim rules** (rules applicable to the period between His two advents) in anticipation of the imminent kingdom.
- Albert Schweitzer's view built on Weiss' with the exception that Schweitzer believed that Jesus was so discouraged that the kingdom did not come that He died in despair and disillusionment.

We will not spend any time examining the liberal perspective on the subject of the kingdom in Jesus' ministry; however, I will note in passing that it is readily apparent that these liberal views ignore or misapply a dispensational hermeneutic.

I will provide a very brief overview of some of the more prominent perspectives toward the subject of the kingdom specifically with regard to Matthew 13. I desire to accomplish the following objectives in doing so:

¹ The 33 occasions in which the phrase "kingdom of heaven" is used in Matthew are 3:1; 4:17; 5:3, 10, 19 (twice), 20; 7:21; 8:11; 10:7; 11:11, 12; 13:11, 24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47, 52, 16:19; 18:1, 3, 4, 23; 19:12, 14, 23; 20:1; 22:2; 23:13; 25:1; and 25:14.

² The five occasions in which the phrase "kingdom of God" is used in Matthew are 6:33; 12:28; 19:24; 21:31; and 21:43.

³ The seventeen occasions in which the term "kingdom" is used in Matthew are 4:23; 6:10, 13; 8:12; 9:35; 12:25, 26; 13:19, 38, 41, 43; 16:28; 20:21; 24:7, 14; 25:34; and 26:29.

⁴ J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1958), 247.

⁵ Frequently, I will use the more abbreviated designation of "Church Age" instead of "Age of the Body of Christ" in the interest of brevity. However, the designation of "Church Age" for the present Gentile-centric dispensation in which we now live is not the best designation since the word "church" (Gr. *ekklesia* – ἐκκλησία) is on occasion used to refer to an assembly of believing Jews within the dispensation of the separate and distinct "Age of the Jews" or the "Age of Israel." The first historical reference to an *ekklesia* in Scripture is found in Acts 7:38 where Stephen refers to the "church in the wilderness" – an obvious reference to the "assembly" of Jews under the leadership of Moses during their wilderness sojourn. On another occasion during Jesus' public ministry, we find the word "church" used by Jesus in His dialogue with Peter and that "church" is equated to "the kingdom of heaven" which by interpretation is the assembly of believing Jews and Gentiles who were anticipated to be the inaugurators of the Messianic kingdom. The potential for the fulfillment of Jesus' declaration existed when Peter preached his sermon shortly after the events associated with the Pentecost phenomenon (Acts 2) – specifically Peter's statements in Acts 3:19ff. However, as we now know, due to *en masse* Jewish rejection of that message, the fulfillment of Jesus' declaration has been deferred for a period of time equivalent to the duration of the intercalated "Church Age."

- 1) Understand the primary reasons why “classic” and “revised” (sometimes collectively referred to as “traditional”) dispensationalists have sometimes inserted or overlaid this passage with the Church Age Body of Christ.⁶
- 2) Sort through the confusing maze of perspectives on the kingdom and on the purpose of the parables in Matthew 13.
- 3) Provide examples of inconsistencies in interpretation so as to highlight the importance of the interpretation that will be proffered in this study.

The primary reasons I believe that some dispensationalists have included the Church Age Body of Christ in these parables are:

- 1) Attempts to address questions regarding the nature of the kingdom of God posed by those who tend to ignore the literal, earthly kingdom in favor of a spiritual-only kingdom (a tendency that is fairly prominent among our fellow believers of a Covenant theological perspective).
- 2) A tendency to associate the word “mysteries” in Matthew 13:11 with the Church since Paul uses that same term in the Pauline epistles.
- 3) A tendency to overemphasize the sovereignty of God when interpreting the phrase “to them it has not been given” in Matthew 13:11 versus realizing the reason that some were not given understanding is that they chose not to receive. [There is a tendency among our fellow believers who have been influenced by an overemphasis and a misunderstanding of the attribute of God’s sovereignty as well as the biblical concepts of predestination and election

Let’s briefly review some of the different theological perspectives that are frequently a part of this analysis and discussion.

AN OVERVIEW OF THE DIFFERENT THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

In addition to covenant theology, there are probably three or four major schools of dispensational thought among those who are pre-Tribulationists and premillennialists - 1) *Classic* dispensationalists (e.g. Darby, Scofield, Chafer and perhaps a few others of the late 1800's to early 1900's); 2) *Revised* dispensationalists (e.g. Walvoord, Pentecost and a host of others); 3) *Progressive* dispensationalists (e.g. Bock, Blaising and others perhaps); and 4) a group I will refer to as the “non-Acts 2” dispensationalist.⁷

⁶ The descriptor “traditional dispensationalist” is used by Elliott E. Johnson in Chapter Two (“A Traditional Dispensational Hermeneutic”) and the term is explained in footnote 21 associated with that chapter to be a reference to “what progressive dispensationalists view as a classical and a revised dispensationalism.” See Herbert W. Bateman IV, general editor, *Three Central Issues in Contemporary Dispensationalism – A Comparison of Traditional and Progressive Views* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1999), 70, 83. In Chapter One (“Dispensationalism Yesterday and Today”) by Herbert W. Bateman IV) of the same book, Bateman references another term (“*normative* dispensationalism”) that is sometimes used by certain dispensationalists to refer collectively to “Classic” and “Revised” dispensationalists in contrast to “Progressive” Dispensationalists. Examples are provided in footnote 18 associated with this chapter and include Stephen J. Nichols, Robert Lightner, Charles Ryrie, and Larry V. Crutchfield. Finally, the term “ultra-dispensationalist” is a term that is defined in Chapter 11 of Charles C. Ryrie, *Dispensationalism* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 197-206 and refers to a specific category of “non-Acts 2” dispensationalists, i.e. the late-Acts (post Acts 28) variety specifically. In a book written much earlier, J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 139 uses the term “ultradispensationalists” in a broad-sweeping way to describe anyone who interprets Matthew 13 in an Israel or Jewish-centric (vs. Church Age inclusive) manner. Interestingly, the interpretation of Matthew 13, i.e. understanding Matthew 13 to have nothing to do with the present age of the Body of Christ, is consistent with my understanding and interpretation of Matthew 13, yet I am not an “ultradispensationalist” per Ryrie’s later definition of the term. Thus, there is inconsistency between Pentecost and Ryrie’s use of the descriptor. So, that particular term has been ill-defined and the term has been loosely applied to anyone who deviates from an Acts 2 “traditional” or “normative” model – sometimes in a manner that reflects an attempt to discredit any non-Acts 2 position by lumping all non-Acts 2 positions together. All of this simply reflects the difficulty and hazards associated with broad categorizations of any type.

⁷ Any attempt to create groupings or classifications of dispensational thought is admittedly difficult due to the nuances of differences that exist between dispensationalists. For purposes of these notes and as an aide to an attempt to

All of these groupings are very broad and there are nuances of differences amongst them all. The first three are what I would term "Acts 2" dispensationalists - those who claim that the "Church Age" (not really a good name for the new dispensation, but it is what is commonly used) began at Pentecost between A.D. 30 and 33 (depending upon what year is associated with our Lord's crucifixion, resurrection and ascension). Within the fourth group, there are primarily three sub-divisions: early Acts, mid-Acts and late-Acts. Sometimes "traditional dispensationalists" (another term for groups 1 and 2 primarily) label anyone within the 4th group as an "ultra-dispensationalist."⁸ This is unfortunate, since that label probably applies only to the late-Acts variety, but I would quickly go off topic to pursue this issue any further at this point.

Of course, to the new or growing believer, all of this begins to sound like unnecessary divisions and "non-spiritual" information since that believer is primarily interested in application - not the proper path to get there, i.e. proper observation first followed by proper interpretation, then application. In certain cases where the "righteousness" of one position vs. the others is defended incessantly - that new or growing believer has a point. Nevertheless, it is important that we take a brief look at some of the positions of these various schools relative to our subject so that we might understand the source of the varied positions that exist today.

COVENANT THEOLOGY

Covenant theology understands that Jesus will return as He promised and that He will bring in the fullness of the kingdom; however, this aspect of their understanding tends to be minimized in comparison to the emphasis upon a spiritual kingdom. This focus upon the spiritual nature of the kingdom tends to neglect (to the point of virtually denying the future earthly Millennium in many cases) truths related to the earthly, temporal kingdom of God that will one day be established. Charles Hodge is one example of this system of theology.

First, it is spiritual. That is, it is not of this world. It is not analogous to the other kingdoms which existed, or do still exist among men. It has a different origin and a different end. Human kingdoms are organized among men, under the providential government of God, for the promotion of the temporal well-being of society. The kingdom of Christ was organized immediately by God, for the promotion of religious objects. It is spiritual, or not of this world, moreover, because it has no power over the lives, liberty, or property of its members; and because all secular matters lie beyond its jurisdiction...The kingdom of Christ, under the present dispensation, therefore, is not worldly even in the sense in which the ancient theocracy was of this world.⁹

More recently, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones wrote:

It is a kingdom which is to come, yes. But it is also a kingdom which has come. 'The kingdom of God is among you' and 'within you'; the kingdom of God is in every true Christian. He reigns in the Church when she acknowledges Him truly. The kingdom has come, the kingdom is coming, the kingdom is yet to come. Now we must always bear that in mind. Whenever Christ is enthroned as King, the kingdom of God is come, so that, while we cannot say that He is ruling over

recognize common thought patterns, I have borrowed the classifications of "Classic," "Revised" and "Progressive" from Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1993), 22-23.

⁸ See footnote 6.

⁹ Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* Vol. II (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, reprinted 1995), 604-605.

all in the world at the present time, He is certainly ruling in that way in the hearts and lives of all His people.¹⁰

Within this system, the promises of the Old Testament are viewed as having been largely fulfilled by the death, burial, resurrection of Jesus, and the spread of the gospel to all nations although their complete realization will be seen when Christ returns in judgment. There is no concept of a literal, earthly, millennial reign of Jesus Christ on earth.

HISTORIC PREMILLENNIALISTS AND PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONALISTS

As a general rule, these two groups have emphasized the flip side of the coin when compared to the Covenant theologian. [*Basically, progressive dispensationalists are just the newer form of the group known as Historic Premillennialists*]. These groups of theologians tend to emphasize the future literal fulfillment of the Old Testament promises regarding an earthly kingdom, while at the same time allowing for some fulfillment of these Old Testament promises in the present Church Age. Instead of a view that understands that the present Church Age Body of Christ to be related to the kingdom by virtue of being a participant in the future Messianic kingdom, they have adopted a **both/and** or an **already/not yet** view of the kingdom. This **both/and** or **already/not yet** view of the kingdom of God sees the kingdom as having already arrived in an inaugural form and will not be fully consummated until the Second Coming of Christ. The practical outcome of this position is that a covenantal perspective is incorporated into a dispensational framework.

One positive aspect of these approaches is that they represent an attempt to address certain passages and issues that have perhaps not been examined or explained fully by *traditional* dispensationalists. However, it seems that one of the practical results from the application of the *traditional* or *progressive* dispensational paradigms to the Gospels is that the interpretation that results tends to lead to a certain degree of legalism and a view of the believer in relation to the State that is influenced by laws directed to Israel. The “kingdom” and the Church gets confused. Soteriological truths for the believer of this present, Gentile-centric dispensation become blurred by soteriological principles applicable to a Jewish-centric dispensation, a kingdom-oriented dispensation. The Armenian-like soteriology that we observe in the Gospel narratives associated with the kingdom gospel is frequently super-imposed over the Pauline gospel applicable to the present dispensation. Truths relative to phase 1 and phase 2 of the believer’s existence become blurred. The believer’s view of the function of the State becomes influenced by the theocratic principles designed for God’s program with an elect nation, Israel. In Western Christianity and in particular, in Christianity in the United States, believers become post-millennialists in practice and discouragement results when they observe the world actually moving in a direction consistent with a pre-millennial view of human history. Some of the more prominent names connected with these positions are George Ladd, D.A. Carson, Craig Blaising, Darryl Bock and Robert Saucy.

CLASSIC AND REVISED DISPENSATIONALISTS (A.K.A. TRADITIONAL DISPENSATIONALISTS)

Depending upon the particular question at issue, there are different positions taken by *traditional* dispensationalists. In general, the major point of distinction between *classic* and *revised* dispensationalists has to do with their views regarding the eternal state of Jewish believers and Church Age believers, i.e. heavenly or earthly people. *Classic* dispensationalists saw a distinction, whereas *Revised* dispensationalists either placed all the redeemed in heaven or on the new earth. With regard to the subject of the kingdom in the Gospels and the phrase “mysteries of the kingdom” found in Matthew 13:11, the following chart reflects the positions of some of the major *traditional* dispensationalists.

¹⁰ D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Studies in the Sermon on the Mount* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1959-60, reprinted 1997), 16.

Name	Classic or Revised	Kingdom of Heaven/God Position	The phrase “mysteries of the kingdom”
C.I. Scofield	Classic	Believed that the two phrases were distinct, i.e. the <i>kingdom of God</i> referred to the moral rule of God without reference to a dispensation whereas the <i>kingdom of heaven</i> was a reference to the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant that began with Jesus Christ in His 1 st Advent and would culminate in the Millennium. He saw the kingdom of heaven as consisting of three phases, i.e. at hand with the 1 st Advent, mystery form during the Church, and Millennial. ¹¹	After Jesus’ death, the kingdom of heaven was present in mystery form although he tried to distinguish the mystery form from the Church. He considered the mystery form to be <i>Christendom</i> and defined it as a mystery form of the Davidic kingdom to be established on earth one day. ¹²
Lewis S. Chafer	Classic	Believed that the two phrases were distinct, i.e. the <i>kingdom of God</i> referred to the sovereign authority of God over all creation and the phrase <i>kingdom of heaven</i> referred to the Davidic, earthly, Messianic kingdom. ¹³	Essentially the same as Scofield; however, Chafer attempts to distinguish it from the Davidic kingdom. ¹⁴
Alva J. McClain	Revised	No distinction between terms. However, McClain introduced the terminology of a <i>universal kingdom</i> and a <i>mediatorial kingdom</i> . The former was God’s sovereignty over all things, whereas the latter was God’s rule over the earth through a divinely chosen mediator. The Church was seen as an interregnum, a period between the reigns. ¹⁵	Apparently no mystery form of the kingdom today.
Stanley Toussaint	Revised	Agreed with McClain. ¹⁶	Agreed with McClain. ¹⁷
Charles C. Ryrie	Revised	Agreed with McClain in regard to the idea of a universal kingdom; however, largely followed Scofield without Scofield’s terminology in regard to the kingdom of heaven. He simply used the phrase Davidic kingdom to refer to the same concept. At the end of the Millennium, both Israel and the Church will be in heaven under the universal kingdom of God. ¹⁸	Ryrie agreed with Scofield’s view of the mystery form of the kingdom and called it <i>Christendom</i> also. <i>Christendom</i> spanned the period between the Advents of Christ. Ryrie also recognized a spiritual kingdom which he defined as the rule of Christ over the Church. Thus, the spiritual kingdom was that aspect of <i>Christendom</i> that

¹¹ Craig Blaising & Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1993), 30-31.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Lewis S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology, Volume V* (Dallas, Texas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948), 315-16.

¹⁴ Ibid., 350.

¹⁵ Blaising & Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 39-40.

¹⁶ Ibid., 40.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 40-41.

			consisted of believers of the Church Age. ¹⁹
John Walvoord	Revised	Walvoord defends a distinction between the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God. In this regard, Walvoord is more like Scofield. Walvoord used the phrases <i>universal kingdom</i> to refer to God's sovereignty over all that He made and the phrase <i>spiritual kingdom</i> to refer to what is essentially Scofield's definition of the kingdom of God, i.e. God's rule over the saved of all ages. ²⁰	Walvoord uses Scofield's language, i.e. the mystery form of the kingdom. However, Walvoord equates the mystery form with the Church and does not adopt a trans-dispensational view, i.e. the mystery form is the period between the Advents of Christ. ²¹
J. Dwight Pentecost	Revised	Recognized that the terms are used interchangeably on some occasions, but they are not synonymous. Used the phrase <i>spiritual kingdom</i> in a manner similar to Walvoord's kingdom of God, i.e. God's rule over the saved of all ages. However, he also recognized that the phrase <i>kingdom of heaven</i> sometimes referred to the Davidic kingdom of the Millennium. So, Pentecost also recognized a distinction between the phrases. ²²	The mystery form of the kingdom in Matthew 13:11 is viewed as the period between the Advents of Christ and "is composed of saved and unsaved alike (wheat and tares, good and bad fish)." ²³

What we see from this brief analysis is that there is much diversity of opinion between respected theologians regarding the meaning of the kingdom and specifically the phrase, the "mysteries of the kingdom" in Matthew 13:11. Some of this is due to an attempt to address the charges leveled against dispensational thought by those of a covenant persuasion, a theological system which has dominated the larger portion of professing, organized Christian religion since the second century with Origen. The result is that the parables of Matthew 13 are seen as presenting teaching that is somewhat divorced from the greater context of the chapter and which require a certain amount of *eisegesis* to interpret depending upon one's particular slant. Also, a certain inconsistency in hermeneutic is introduced that merely opens the door for other passages to be interpreted using the same inconsistencies.

My View of the Parables of Matthew 13 and the Phrase "the Mysteries of the Kingdom"

The parables of Matthew 13 should be interpreted in view of Jesus' consistent message and purpose in the gospel narrative both prior to Matthew 13 and subsequent to the chapter to include His acknowledgment of the nation's rejection of His (and His disciple's) gospel, His teaching regarding the final seven years of the Age of Israel (a.k.a. the Tribulation or Daniel's 70th Week) and His teaching regarding the judgment at His Second Advent in Matthew 23:37ff. Both Jesus and His disciples were focused upon the "gospel of the kingdom" until then. This also means that the parables of Matthew 13 relate exclusively to the kingdom about which Jesus and His disciples taught. This all occurred during the Age of Israel prior to the beginning of the Church Age. Jesus was not presenting a spiritual form of the kingdom to the exclusion of the temporal/political kingdom. He did not come to present a mystery form of the kingdom.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid., 42-44.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 142-144.

²³ Ibid., 143.

THE PURPOSE OF THE PARABLES OF MATTHEW 13

Jesus explains the purpose of His teaching using parables in verses 10-17. Before we examine the remainder of the chapter, we will first take a look at Jesus' explanation.

10 And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" 11 Jesus answered them, "To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. 12 "For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. 13 "Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

14 "In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says,
'YOU WILL KEEP ON HEARING, BUT WILL NOT UNDERSTAND;
YOU WILL KEEP ON SEEING, BUT WILL NOT PERCEIVE;
15 FOR THE HEART OF THIS PEOPLE HAS BECOME DULL,
WITH THEIR EARS THEY SCARCELY HEAR,
AND THEY HAVE CLOSED THEIR EYES,
OTHERWISE THEY WOULD SEE WITH THEIR EYES,
HEAR WITH THEIR EARS,
AND UNDERSTAND WITH THEIR HEART AND RETURN,
AND I WOULD HEAL THEM.'

16 "But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. 17 "For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it. (Matt 13:10-17)

It was not "granted" to certain listeners of Jesus to know the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (v. 11) because they had not accepted the fact that Jesus was Who He claimed to be. If they couldn't accept Him as the Messiah, then they certainly could not accept the principles of the kingdom that he taught – the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven." The disciples could know the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" as taught through Jesus' parables because they had accepted Jesus as the King of that kingdom – the promised Messiah of Israel. Those who did not accept Jesus as the Messiah had continually heard His teaching and saw His miracles designed to validate His claims, yet as the prophet Isaiah had once exhorted his own generation, Isaiah's prophecy was likewise applicable to Jesus generation.

The disciples of Jesus' generation were blessed indeed. The Hebrew prophets and other believers of prior generations desired to see the fulfillment of all Messianic prophecies, yet they died believing in something they never saw fulfilled. Here, the penultimate of Hebrew prophecy was being fulfilled in the person of Jesus.

THE PARABLE OF THE SOWER (13:1-9, 18-23)

1 That day Jesus went out of the house and was sitting by the sea. 2 And large crowds gathered to Him, so He got into a boat and sat down, and the whole crowd was standing on the beach. 3 And He spoke many things to them in parables, saying, "Behold, the sower went out to sow; 4 and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up. 5 "Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. 6 "But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. 7 "Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out. 8

"And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty. 9 "He who has ears, let him hear." (Matt 13:1-9)

18 "Hear then the parable of the sower. 19 "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road. 20 "The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; 21 yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away. 22 "And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. 23 "And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty." (Matt 13:18-23).

The Context – Jesus has just been accused of performing miracles in the power of Satan (12:24) and the religious leaders desired to kill him for healing on the Sabbath (12:14). When the religious leaders asked for a sign on command from Jesus, Jesus responded with a prophecy of His death and resurrection (12:38-42). All of these factors reveal a rejection of the gospel of the kingdom by the religious leaders and most of the masses. This prompts Jesus to begin speaking to the multitudes in parables. By doing so, those who were truly positive would continue to pursue an understanding of the meaning of these parables while those who were negative would drift away.

Observations from this Passage – The following points summarize the more important things to observe from this passage:

- A "sower" does the sowing (v. 3).
- The "seed" falls upon different types of ground (vv. 4ff).
 - Some "seeds" fell "beside the road" (v. 4).
 - These seeds are eaten by birds (v. 4).
 - Some "seeds" fell on rocky places without much soil (v. 5).
 - These seeds germinated, but were quickly scorched by the sun (v. 6).
 - Some "seeds" fell amongst the thorns (v. 7).
 - These seeds were choked by the thorns (v. 7).
 - Some "seeds" fell upon good soil and yielded a crop (v. 8).
 - Some produced a crop of a hundred fold (v. 8).
 - Some produced a crop of sixty fold (v. 8).
 - Some produced a crop of thirty fold (v. 8).

Interpretation of this Passage – The following points summarize an interpretation of this passage consistent with the dispensational context in which it is located:

- The "sower" is any person during the kingdom-proximate portion of the Age of Israel who communicates the gospel of the "word of the kingdom" (v. 19) to others (cf. Mk 4:14 – "The sower sows the word").
 - The "gospel of the kingdom" in Matthew 24:14 is synonymous with "word of the kingdom" (Matt 13:19).

"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come." (Matt 24:14)
 - Parallel passages include: Mark 4:1-9, 14-20 & Luke 8:4-8, 11-15.
 - The "word of the kingdom" was preached by:

- John the Baptist (Matt 3:2 – “And saying, Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”).
 - Jesus – prior to His death – (Matt 4:17 – “From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”).
 - Jesus’ disciples (Matt 10:7 – “And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand”).
- The parable is set during the time periods in which the “word [gospel] of the kingdom” is being preached, i.e. during the kingdom-proximate portion of the Age of Israel which encompasses the periods of the Age of Israel prior to the intercalation of the present age of the Body of Christ and the period after the Body of Christ is concluded with the Rapture up to the 2nd Advent of Christ.
- During the period in which the "word of the kingdom" is preached, the response to the “word of the kingdom” by the “good soil” will vary.
 - Matthew reports a response of a hundredfold, sixtyfold and thirtyfold (13:23 cf. Mk 4:20).
 - The implication from both Matthew and Mark is that fruit production will vary among the good soil during the course of the Age of Israel.
- Mark 4:13 reveals that an understanding of the parable of the sower is basic to an understanding of the parable of the wheat and tares, the parable of the mustard seed, the parable of the leaven, the parable of the hidden treasure, the parable of pearl of great price, and the parable of the dragnet in Matthew 13.
 - Mark 4:13 And he said unto them, Know ye not this parable? How then will ye know all parables? (KJV)

This first parable of the sower teaches that "the word of the kingdom" will be preached, but the "word of the kingdom" will be rejected by those whose hearts have been hardened, and by those who become persecuted because of the "word of the kingdom," and by those who allow the details of life to choke out the "word of the kingdom." However, there will be one group who will receive the "word of the kingdom" and there will be various levels of divine production from their lives. The parable of the sower is related to the gospel of the kingdom – a gospel preached to the Jews of the 1st Century A.D. and rejected and which will one day be preached again during the Tribulation period.

Application – There is no direct application of the "Parable of the Sower" to the present dispensation; however, it can serve as a good illustration of something true of people of all dispensations, i.e. there will be varied responses to Truth ranging from rejection to full acceptance.

THE PARABLE OF THE WHEAT AND THE TARES (Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43)

24 Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 "But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. 26 "But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. 27 "The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' 28 "And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?' 29 "But he said, 'No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. 30 'Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn.'"" (Matt 13:24-30)

36 Then He left the crowds and went into the house And His disciples came to Him and said, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." 37 And He said, "The one who sows the good seed is the Son of Man, 38 and the field is the world; and as for the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; 39 and the enemy who sowed them is the devil, and the harvest is the end of the age; and the reapers are angels. 40 "So just as the tares are gathered up and burned with fire, so shall it be at the end of the age. 41 "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, 42 and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43 "Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father He who has ears, let him hear. (Matt 13:36-43)

Observations from & Interpretation of this Passage – The following table will correlate these verses together and provide a good format for presenting the relevant observation and interpretations of this passage.

Verse	Observation	Verse	Jesus' Explanation	COTSK Interpretation
24	A man who sows "good" seed in "his" field.	37	The man who sows is "the Son of Man."	The sower is Jesus Christ.
24	He sowed "good seed."	38	The "good seed" – the sons of the kingdom.	The "good seed" are believers within the kingdom proximate portion of the Age of the Jews or the Age of Israel.
24	He sowed in "his field."	38	The field is the world.	There will be people throughout the world who will accept the gospel of the kingdom preached during the kingdom proximate portion of the Age of the Jews.
25 & 27	His "men" ("slaves") were sleeping.		Not explained.	This is not that important to the purpose of the parable.
25	The man had an "enemy."	39	The "enemy" is the devil.	Satan has a pseudo-gospel and is the great counterfeiter.
25	"Tares" were sown amongst the wheat by the man's enemy.	39	The "tares" are the sons of the evil one.	Those who accept Satan's counterfeit gospel during the kingdom-proximate portion of the Age of the Jews are the unbelievers.
26	The "wheat" sprouts and bears grain.		Not explained.	Simply refers to the elapse of time approaching the harvest.
27	The "tares" "become evident."		Not explained.	Simply refers to the elapse of time approaching the harvest.
27-28	Slaves ask if they should gather the tares.		Not explained.	Used as a natural part of the parable to highlight our Lord's Coming at the proper time.
29	Permission is denied due to concerns over destroying the "wheat."		Not explained.	Highlights the omniscience of God in contrast to any of His creatures – even those who desire to act on His behalf. Production is not the primary issue in this parable.
30	Slaves are commanded to wait until the harvest.	39	The harvest is the end of the age.	The "end of the age" is the end of the Age of the Jews (i.e. the period leading up to and culminating in the 2 nd Advent). The harvest is the gathering of all people (especially Jews) at the end of the Tribulation when people will be judged and the "goats" separated from the "sheep" (Matt 25:31-36) also known as the

				baptism of fire (Matt 3:11).
30	The man commands the "reapers."	39, 41	The reapers are angels who are commanded to "gather out of the Son of Man's kingdom all stumbling blocks and those who commit lawlessness."	Jesus Christ commands the angels who attend His 2 nd Coming. The angels are responsible for removal of unbelievers from the earthly kingdom that is being established. This requires a little bit of time and is probably one of several things that occur during the 75 day period associated with the end of the Tribulation and the establishment of the Kingdom on earth (cf. Rev 11:2-3; 12:6; 13:5 cf. Dan 12:11 & 12 where we read of 1260, 1290 and 1335 days associated with the Great Tribulation, i.e. the last 3 ½ years of the Tribulation)
30	The tares are gathered first to be burned.	40, 42	The gathering of the tares to be burned is associated with the end of the age. The burning with fire is associated with "weeping and gnashing of teeth."	Unbelievers are gathered in association with Christ's 2 nd Advent and the establishment of the Kingdom and they experience the baptism of fire (Matt 3:11) where they are cast into hell to await their ultimate judgment and destiny – the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev 20:11-15) and the Lake of Fire. In both places, there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
30	The wheat is gathered into the barn.	43	The righteous will shine as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father.	Believers in their mortal bodies live on planet earth and transition into the Millennial Kingdom where they enjoy the privilege of living under the theocratic rule of Jesus Christ Himself.

Application from this Passage – There is no direct application for the believer of the present age based upon this passage since this passage is addressing circumstances associated with the end of the Age of the Jews. It stands in contrast to the separation that will occur at the Rapture of the Church – an event at which believers will be removed versus unbelievers being removed.

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED (MATTHEW 13:31-32)
THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN (MATTHEW 13:33)
THE PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE (MATTHEW 13:44)
THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE (MATTHEW 13:45-46)
THE PARABLE OF THE DRAGNET (MATTHEW 13:47-52)

THE PARABLE OF THE MUSTARD SEED (13:31-32)

Observations – The parable of the mustard seed and the parable of the leaven (13:33) are parallel parables and teach a parallel truth. The parable of the mustard seed likens the kingdom of heaven (the Messianic kingdom on earth) to a grain of mustard seed. This parable has four elements:

- A grain of mustard seed
- A sower
- Birds nesting in the branches of the grown mustard plant
- Abnormal growth of the mustard seed into a tree

Interpretation – This parable, like the parable of the wheat and the tares relates to the *kingdom-proximate* portion of the Age of Israel known as the seven-year Tribulation. During that period of human history, the “gospel of the kingdom” will be preached again in anticipation of the 2nd Advent of Christ and the Millennial-Messianic kingdom of Christ on earth to follow. This understanding is based upon the following interpretation of this parable:

- Grain of mustard seed = the gospel of the kingdom
- Sower = Jesus Christ
- Birds nesting in the branches – does not represent evil as in the parable of the sower or soils. In the Hebrew Scriptures, a tree large enough to support nesting birds was considered prosperous and healthy (see Ps 104:12; Ezek 17:23; 31:6; Dan 4:12, 21). So, the birds nesting in the branches are symbolic of the prosperity and rapid growth of the kingdom.
- Abnormal growth of the mustard seed into a tree – the gospel of the kingdom planted by Jesus during His public ministry to Israel and which is once again preached during the Tribulation grows into a great tree (the Millennial kingdom) at His 2nd Advent.

THE PARABLE OF THE LEAVEN (13:33)

Observation – Although leaven sometimes symbolizes evil, the principle of leaven is that a little leaven has an effect upon the whole of the dough with which it interacts. When yeast is kneaded into dough, it expands by itself. Here the kingdom of heaven (the Millennium) is seen to grow based upon the internal dynamic of the Holy Spirit verses being powered by outward armies or organizations. The kingdom was offered without any display of pomp or extravaganza.

Interpretation – *The point of the parable* – The kingdom produces ultimate consequences out of all proportion to its insignificant beginnings.

- The dough [not mentioned] is Israel.
- The yeast or leaven is the gospel of the kingdom.
- This is a parallel truth to the parable of the mustard seed.

Point of comparison – The parable of the mustard seed addresses the extent of the kingdom’s growth whereas this parable (the parable of the leaven) concerns the power and process of its growth.

Point of contrast – Leaven is used to represent evil in 1 Corinthians 5:6-8 and Galatians 5:9 as well as many Old Testament passages such as Exodus 12:15 and Leviticus 2:11. However, this is not always the case, e.g. Leviticus 7:13 and 23:15-18. Historically, dispensationalists have tried to interpret the leaven of 13:33 to represent evil. Most of those who do so interpret the leaven as representing the professing (but not believing) Church that grows throughout the Church Age under the general title of *Christendom*. They interpret the parables of Matthew 13 to be focused upon principles of life related to the period between the advents of Christ (i.e. the Church Age and the Tribulation). This understanding in turn is derived from their understanding of the phrase, the “mysteries of the kingdom (13:11).

Other dispensationalists have interpreted the leaven to represent religious (unbelieving) Judaism during the Age of Israel (pre-Pentecost and Tribulation). However, this too is an interpretation that sees leaven as only representing evil. These alternative interpretations by various dispensationalists overlook the fact that the leaven represents a principle related to a growth dynamic and not evil in context. The spiritual quality [good or evil] of the growth must be evaluated based upon the context. The Jews did not consider leaven to always be evil, otherwise they would never have used it. Instead, it was forbidden on certain occasions, e.g. the feast of unleavened bread. The context of this parable is Jesus’ clarification of the nature of the kingdom of heaven (the Millennial/Messianic reign on earth) through parables.

THE PARABLE OF THE HIDDEN TREASURE (13:44)

Observation & Interpretation – This parable and the next parable (the Pearl of Great Price) are paired in order to make the same general point, but have significant individual emphasis. The purpose of the parable of the hidden treasure is to illustrate the value of the kingdom. The following points interpret this parable:

- Israel is the hidden treasure.
- The field is the people of the world.
- Jesus is the man making the purchase.
- The Cross was where Jesus sold all that He had (His life)
- Jesus paid the price for the entire field (a.k.a. unlimited atonement) in order to obtain the treasure (Israel).
- Jesus recognized Israel as something of value
- That Israel is hidden in the field indicates that while God has temporarily set aside His program for the nation of Israel, He has not forgotten Israel.
- Israel is temporarily set aside and hidden in the field (the people of the world) for the duration of the intercalated age.
- The believers of the Tribulation (last seven years of the Age of Israel) will enter the kingdom because they accept God's redemptive provision – Jesus Christ as their Messiah as He is associated with the gospel of the kingdom to be proclaimed.

THE PARABLE OF THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE (MATTHEW 13:45-46)

Observation & Interpretation – This parable is paired with the parable of the hidden treasure to emphasize the same point, i.e. that the Messianic kingdom is of extreme value to our Lord – so much so that He is said to sell all that He has in this parable also. This is yet another reference to our Lord's death on the Cross in which He gave His life (sold all that He had) and purchased the pearl of great price (the Messianic reign). The merchant is Jesus. The one pearl of great price represents believers who enter the Messianic kingdom.

Note: the point is not that Jesus didn't pay the price for other believers of other ages. The focus of Jesus' preaching at this point in His ministry has been upon the gospel of the kingdom.

THE PARABLE OF THE DRAGNET (MATTHEW 13:47-52)

Observation & Interpretation – This parable is a parallel to the parable of the wheat and the tares. However, the parable of the wheat and the tares focuses upon the coexistence of believing and unbelieving Jews during the Tribulation, the parable of the dragnet focuses upon the situation that will exist when the judgment of the 2nd Advent occurs. An interpretation of the symbolism of this parable follows:

- The dragnet cast into the sea represents the 2nd Advent of Christ.
- The some of every kind represents believing and unbelieving Jews and Gentiles.
- The good gathered into vessels represents Tribulation believers who enter the Millennial, Messianic reign of Christ.
- The bad thrown away represents unbelievers who are cast into hell to await the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Millennium.
- Angels attend Christ at His 2nd Advent to assist Him in executing judgment (Matt 25:31)
- The end of the age (v. 49) is the end of the Age of Israel (i.e. the end of the Tribulation)
- Things new and old (v. 52) refers to truth concerning the kingdom in the Old Testament which was given fresh insight by Jesus in these parables.

SOME CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS REGARDING MATTHEW 13

Perhaps one of the most prominent and influential dispensational theologians of the 20th Century was C.I. Scofield due to his authorship of the Scofield Reference Bible. He is among those dispensationalists who are grouped into the category of Classic dispensationalists.²⁴ Classic dispensationalists included such theologians as John Nelson Darby and Lewis Sperry Chafer. The *Scofield Reference Bible* (first published in 1909 with a second edition in 1917) was generally representative of the views of Classic dispensationalists.

A second category of dispensationalists emerged on the scene in the 1950s who revised the Scofield Reference Bible in 1967. They are known as Revised dispensationalists and include such men as Alva J. McClain, John Walvoord, Charles Ryrie, J. Dwight Pentecost, and Stanley Toussaint.²⁵ Many of the dispensationalists who received their education in the 1950s to the 1990s fall into this category.

The primary distinction between the views of the Classic and Revised dispensationalists is in regards to the eternal state of Israel and the Church. In general, Classics believed that Israel had an eternal inheritance on earth, whereas the Church was to be a heavenly people. In other words, there was an eternal dualism present in eternity. In general, the Revised dispensationalists either placed the redeemed of all ages in heaven or on the new earth in the eternal state.²⁶ As we saw in lesson SB_MT13B, the difference revolved in large part around how the phrases *kingdom of God* and *kingdom of heaven* in the synoptic gospels were interpreted.

There are many other individual nuances of difference among and between the two camps; however, for purposes of Matthew 13, both the Revised and Classic dispensationalists interpret the parables based upon the same understanding of the phrase *mysteries of the kingdom of heaven* in 13:11. That understanding includes the idea that the period covered by these parables is the present age defined as the period between Jesus' teaching and the Lord's Second Coming which period included the Tribulation.²⁷

The point is that the early Classical dispensationalists were trying to develop a more accurate appreciation of the distinctions in Scripture through the development and further refinement of a nescient dispensational hermeneutic. Their efforts as captured at the time in the Scofield Reference Bible have been a tremendous assistance and a source of great comfort to perhaps thousands of Christians in understanding the Bible. The Classic dispensationalists were involved in their own reformation; however, theirs was a reformation of thought primarily regarding Bible prophecy (eschatology), not soteriology as was true of The Reformation. In my opinion, the issue of the kingdom motif in the Gospels and the period that is the subject of the parables of Matthew 13 were two areas where the hermeneutic that was being developed by Classic dispensationalists was left incomplete. The Revised dispensationalists never refined the hermeneutic properly in regards to these issues so that certain inconsistencies within the context of the whole hermeneutical framework remained. The result has been a certain degree of confusion in application to include the emergence of a new dispensational hermeneutic within the 1990s that sees the Church as the spiritual and initial fulfillment of certain promises made to Israel in the Old Testament. This new hermeneutic is known as Progressive Dispensationalism.²⁸

²⁴ Darrell L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Wheaton, Illinois: Victor Books, 1993), 22.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Ibid., 32.

²⁷ Arno C. Gaebelin, *History of the Scofield Reference Bible* (New York: Our Hope Publications, 1943), 41.

²⁸ Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism*, 22.

In order to gain a better appreciation of our study of Matthew 13 and the interpretation of the parables that has resulted from that study, I wanted to spend this final lesson reviewing some facts regarding the recent origins of dispensational understanding as embodied in one of its most influential men, C.I. Scofield.

C.I. Scofield (August 19, 1843 to July 24, 1921)

Brief Biography – C.I. Scofield was born in Michigan to Christian parents who worshipped in the Protestant Episcopal Church. His mother died shortly after his birth. When he was very young, his father moved the family to central Tennessee (near Lebanon) before the Civil War. (The family had originally included four daughters and three sons; however, two of the sons died at a very young age).

During the Civil War, all southern schools were closed and higher education became impossible for Scofield. He enlisted in the Confederate Army. He won the Cross of Honor at Antietam. After the Civil War, at age twenty-two, Scofield traveled to St. Louis where his oldest sister and her husband lived. He became a lawyer and at age twenty-six he was elected by the citizens of Atchison, Kansas to the state legislature. President Grant appointed Scofield to the position of U.S. Attorney for the district of Kansas and the Indian Territory at age thirty. After serving in this position for two years, he returned to St. Louis to practice law.

In 1879 at age thirty-six Scofield placed his trust in Christ under the ministry of a Thomas McPheeters who was very prominent in the Y.M.C.A. After his salvation, he gave up the drinking habit into which he had drifted. He soon came under the influence of Dr. James H. Brookes who was the pastor of the Washington Avenue and Compton Street Presbyterian Church in St. Louis. Dr. Brookes was an ardent pre-millenarian and a firm believer in prophecy. “Here he learned what he could not have learned in any of the theological seminaries of that time.”²⁹ While under the instruction of Dr. Brookes, he wrote a booklet entitled *Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth*. In addition, he gave a number of addresses on prophecy. Soon he joined the First Congregational Church in St. Louis which was pastored by Dr. C. L. Goodell, a friend of Dr. Brookes.

Three years later in 1882, he received a call to become a pastor of a small Congregational church in Dallas. He abandoned his law practice and moved to Dallas. The beginning of his pastorate was a struggle; however, with perseverance the congregation grew to several hundred. While pastoring in Dallas, Scofield was invited by Dwight L. Moody to speak at one of the great summer Bible conferences in East Northfield, Massachusetts. In 1895, Scofield was invited to take the pastorate of a church there and he accepted. Moody was not a well educated man; however, he was a yielded evangelist that the Lord used mightily. Scofield assisted Moody in his understanding of prophecy. Besides becoming pastor of the East Northfield Church, Scofield took the presidency of the East Northfield and Mount Hermon schools which had been established by Moody for the education of boys and girls. Scofield’s ministry in East Northfield lasted seven years and he returned to his Dallas church in 1902. While back in Dallas, he founded the Central American Mission in addition to his pastorate responsibilities.

During the last quarter of the 19th Century, some other events were in progress that would shape Scofield and that would allow him to emerge as a prominent Bible teacher and expositor. In the summer of 1875, a few men including Dr. Brooks met in a cottage not far from Chicago for a week of Bible study. In 1876, they took their meeting to Swampscott, Massachusetts. In 1877 through 1880, they met in New York and their numbers began to expand. In 1883, they settled on a more permanent place for their meetings at Niagara Falls, Ontario. They met here in what has become known as the Niagara Bible Conferences until 1897 when they moved the conference to Point Chautauqua, near Jamestown, New York in 1898 and

²⁹ Ibid., 22.

Asbury Park, New Jersey in 1899. The conference in 1899 was the last of the Niagara Bible Conferences. Men from many different denominations attended these meetings and the focus was on gaining a greater understanding of premillennial eschatology and dispensationalism. Most all of those who attended rejected the prevailing thought that was present at the dawn of the 20th Century that was largely shaped by covenantal theology, i.e. that the world was about to enter a period of unprecedented peace and prosperity as the Church expanded its influence into all spheres of life.

When Scofield had returned to Dallas in 1902, he had been able to obtain financing from several prominent men who attended the Niagara Conferences (and conferences in the first few years of the 20th Century at Sea Cliff, NY) to fund his effort to compile the Reference Bible for which he is so well known. During this time, he consulted with others and there was not always full agreement on such issues as the term kingdom and its use in the New Testament.³⁰ Scofield was greatly burdened by the condition of what he and others of his day termed the professing Church.³¹ The distinction as we have seen between the professing and the possessing Church relates to Scofield's and other Classic dispensationalists' understanding of the kingdom especially as affected by their interpretation of the parables of Matthew 13 and other parables of Jesus, e.g. the parable of the foolish virgins is related to professing Christians instead of unbelievers of the Tribulation.³²

Scofield died on July 24, 1921 and after his death, his Reference Bible and the dispensational viewpoint incorporated in the footnotes came under heavy attack, yet Scofield's positive impact through his Reference Study Bible continues until today.

THE SCOFIELD REFERENCE BIBLE 1917 EDITION SELECTED COMMENTS ON MATTHEW 13

Footnote 1 on Matthew 13:3 – “The seven parables of Mt. 13., called by our Lord ‘mysteries of the kingdom of heaven’ (v.11), taken together, describe the result of the presence of the Gospel in the world during the present age, that is, the time of seed-sowing which began with our Lord’s personal ministry, and ends with the ‘harvest’ (vs. 40-43). Briefly, that result is the mingled tares and wheat, good fish and bad, in the sphere of Christian profession. It is Christendom.”

Portion of Footnote 1 on Matthew 13:17 – “A period of time is to intervene between His sufferings and His glory. That interval is occupied with the ‘mysteries of the kingdom of heaven’ here described.”

Portion of Footnote 2 on Matthew 13:24 – “The parable of the wheat and tares is not a description of the world, but of that which professes to be the kingdom. Mere unbelievers are never called children of the devil, but only religious unbelievers are so called (cf. v. 38; John 8.38-44; Mt. 23:15).”

Portion of Footnote 3 on Matthew 13:45 – “As Israel is the hid treasure, so the Church is the pearl of great cost. Covering the same period of time as the mysteries of the kingdom, is the mystery of the Church (Rom.16:25, 26; Eph. 3:3-10; 5:32).”

Portion of Footnote 3 on Matthew 13:45 – “The kingdom is not the Church, but the true children of the kingdom during the fulfilment of these mysteries, baptized by one Spirit into one body (1 Cor. 12.12, 13), composes the true Church, the pearl.”

³⁰ Gaebelin, *History*, 59.

³¹ *Ibid.*

³² *Ibid.*, 58.

The interpretation and application of the parables of Matthew 13 to the Church did not end with Scofield. Consider Lewis S. Chafer as an example. See *Systematic Theology, Volume IV*, pages 54-55 and *Volume VII*, page 351.