

The Kingdom at Hand

Lesson Nineteen

Matthew 8-15; Mark 4-7;

Luke 8, 9, 17; John 6

This lesson deals with many aspects of Jesus' ministry. Several of Jesus' parables will be studied. The details of the death of John the Baptist will be related as well as some of Jesus' miracles.

THE SOWER

Matthew 13:1-23

Mark 4:1-20

Luke 8:4-15

Jesus often used parables to illustrate spiritual truths he wanted to communicate. A parable is a story that makes a point by using comparison or by using an illustration. It is a way of teaching. About thirty parables are recorded in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke. John contains no parables.

The Parable of the Sower is recorded in Matthew, Mark, and Luke. This parable (like many others) had obvious meanings and some deeper hidden meanings that needed further explanation. Only those sincerely interested in what Jesus had to say would be interested in those hidden meanings, and so the explanation would be shared with smaller groups.

And when many people were gathered together and had come to Him out of every city, He spoke by a parable. "A sower went out to sow his seed. 1 As he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. Some fell upon a rock. As soon as it sprang up, it withered away because it lacked moisture. Some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked it. Others fell on good ground and sprang up and bore fruit, some a hundredfold, some sixty-fold, some thirty-fold." 2 When He had said these things, He cried, "He that has ears to hear, let him hear."



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Were many people gathered to hear Jesus? yes

What are the four places where the seed fell? 1) wayside

2) rocks 3) thorns 4) good soil

Which seed survived to become productive plants? That which fell of good soil

As noted in the introduction, there were often deeper meanings involved in the parables. These deeper meanings were usually explained to a smaller group of devoted followers. Such is the case with the Parable of the Sower. **Read Luke 8:9-15** for the explanation of this parable.

To whom does Jesus further explain this parable? *His disciples*

What is the seed? *The Word of God*

What happens to the seed that falls on the path? *Devil takes it away from their hearts*

What is the problem with the seed that falls on the rocks? *It is received with joy but they fall away in times of testing*

What happens to the seed that falls among the thorns? *It is choked by life's worries, riches, or pleasures*

What happens to the seed that falls on the good soil? *It produces a crop*

THE TARES AMONG THE WHEAT THE DRAW NET

Matthew 13

Many of the parables of Jesus are illustrations of what the kingdom of God is like. The next two parables are examples of these types of parables. Both deal with what will happen to the wicked at the time of the final judgment. This is a matter for God to decide, and we should not try to do this. It is God's business.

*Another parable He put forth to them saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares **3** [weeds] among the wheat and went his way. But when the blade sprang up and brought forth fruit, the tares appeared also. So the servants of the household came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? From where then, did the tares come?' He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Would you, then, have us go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares, you root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest. In the time of harvest, I will say to the reapers, "Gather together first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them. But gather the wheat into my barn."'"*

What is the problem? *An enemy put weed in the crop*

When will the problem be dealt with? *At the harvest*

The explanation of this parable is found in **Matthew 13:36-43. Read it.**

To whom does Jesus give the explanation? His disciples

Who is the sower of the good seed? Jesus (Son of Man)

What is the seed? believers

What are the weeds? Non believers

When is the harvest? The day of judgment at the end of time (end of the age)

Who are the harvesters? angels

What will happen to all who do evil? Thrown into the fire

What will happen to the righteous? They will shine like sunshine in the kingdom of their Father

The next parable has the same point as this last one.

"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was cast into the sea and gathered every kind of fish. **4** When it was full, they drew it to shore and sat down and gathered the good into vessels but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world. The angels shall come forth and sever the wicked from among the just and shall cast them into the furnace of fire. There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth."



What will happen at the end of time? Believers and non believers will be separated

DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST

Matthew 11, 14

Mark 6

A little more than a year before the death of Jesus, John the Baptist is put to death by Herod. This section will deal with the reasons for the imprisonment of John and how his death came about. **Read Matthew 14:1-5. (Slide 5, 6)**

Who does Herod think Jesus is? John the Baptist raised from the dead

Why was John imprisoned by Herod? John told Herod it was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife

Why hasn't Herod killed John sooner? He was afraid of the people

Now, when John had heard in the prison the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples and said to Him, "Are You He that is to come, or do we look for another?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John again those things which you hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. Blessed is he who does not fall away on account of me."

What are John's disciples to tell him? What Jesus is doing

The last statement is a bit confusing. It is directed to John so that he does not fall prey to discouragement and doubt.

Herod's "illegal" wife, Herodias, was especially resentful of John and wanted him killed. **Read Mark 6:21-25** to see how she accomplishes this.

Who does the entertaining at Herod's birthday party? Herodias' daughter

Is Herod impressed? yes

What does Herod promise the girl? Anything up to half the kingdom

With whom does the girl consult? mother

After consultation, what does the girl ask for? Head of John the Baptist on platter



And the king was very sorry; yet because of his oath and because of those who sat with him, he would not reject her. He sent an executioner and commanded John's head to be brought. 7 He went and beheaded him in the prison and brought his head on a platter and gave it to the damsel. 8 The damsel gave it to her mother. When his disciples heard of it, they came and took up his corpse and laid it in a tomb.

Mark 6:20 indicates that although Herod had imprisoned John because of his criticism of Herod and Herodias, Herod feared John and considered him to be righteous. This verse further indicates that Herod liked to listen to John. This may explain why Herod was "very sorry."

Why will Herod not back down from his offer? His oath before guests

FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND MEN

Matthew 14:13-21

Mark 6:34-44

Luke 9:10-17

John 6:1-16

Please note that this miracle is recorded in all four of the Gospels. Only one other miracle occurs in all four Gospels – the miracle of the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus.

Matthew's account of this miracle includes the explanation that the number "five thousand" includes only the men who were present. There were women and children who were fed, also.

After these things, Jesus crossed over the Sea of Galilee; and a great multitude followed Him, because they saw His miracles that He did on those who were diseased.

Jesus went up into a mountain and there He sat with His disciples. The Passover, a feast of the Jews, was near. When Jesus looked up, He saw a great company coming to Him. He was moved with compassion toward them because they were as sheep not having a shepherd. He spoke to them of the kingdom of God and healed their sick. When the day was now far gone, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a desert place, and now it is late. Send them away that they may go into the country round about and into the villages and buy themselves bread, for they have nothing to eat."

Of what does Jesus speak to the people? The kingdom

What does He do for the people? Heals their sick

What problem arises? It is late and there is no food

What is the disciples' solution? Send them away to buy food

Read John 6:5-9 to see what happens next.

For which disciple's advice does Jesus ask? Philip
(This would be appropriate since he came from Bethsaida which was near there.)

What is Philip's reply? Not enough money for food

What information does Andrew contribute to the conversation? There is a boy
with five small loaves and two fish

Are the disciples hopeful that food can be arranged for the crowd? no

And He commanded them to have everyone sit down by companies upon the green grass. They sat down in ranks by hundreds and by fifties. So the men that sat down numbered about five thousand. When He had taken the five loaves and the two fish, He

looked up to heaven and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to His disciples, 9 and the disciples gave to those who were seated; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost." Therefore, they gathered them together and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves and of the fish.

What does Jesus do before He distributes the food? He blesses it

Do the people eat until they are full? yes

How much food is left? Twelve baskets full

The story does not end here. **Read John 6:14-15** for the rest.

What do the people say about Jesus? He is a prophet

What do they plan to do? Make Jesus king

What is wrong with this plan? Jesus' kingdom is not of this world

CHRIST WALKS ON THE SEA THE GERGESENES

Matthew 8, 14

Mark 5

Luke 8

This episode occurs immediately after the feeding of the five thousand. Jesus had the disciples go ahead of Him in the boat. He stayed behind to dismiss the crowd and to be alone for prayer.

And when evening had come, His disciples went down to the sea and entered into a ship and went over the sea toward Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not come to them. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary. In the fourth watch [after 3:00am] of the night, Jesus went to them, walking on the sea. 10 When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled saying, "It is a spirit"; and they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them saying, 11 "Be of good cheer; it is I. Be not afraid."

When does Jesus come to the disciples? At night

Where are the disciples at this time? On a boat in the Sea of Galilee

Do the disciples recognize Jesus? no

What to they think they see? ghost

Now read Matthew 14:28-34 for the conclusion of this event. (Slide 12)

What request does Peter make? Wants to come on the water

Does Peter walk on the water? yes

When does he begin to sink? When he takes his eyes off of Jesus

What happens when Jesus and Peter enter the boat? Wind dies down

What reaction do the disciples have to all of this? They say He is the Son of God

The next miracle in this lesson takes place on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. In this area there were many Gentiles. The Gentiles had herds of pigs, while the Jewish people did not keep pigs. Jewish people were forbidden to eat the meat of pigs.

When He had come to the other side, into the country of the Gergesenes, He was met by two men who lived among the tombs and were possessed with devils. They were very fierce so that no man might pass by that way. Behold, they cried out saying, "What have we to do with You, Jesus, Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?"

*One of them **13** had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him and the fetters broken into pieces. No man could tame him. Christ asked him, "What is your name?" He answered saying, "My name is Legion for we are many." There was a good way off from them a herd of many swine feeding. So the devils begged Him saying, "If You cast us out, let us to go away into the herd of swine." He said to them, "Go."*

*When they had come out, they went into the herd of swine. Behold, the whole herd of swine ran violently down a steep place into the sea and perished in the waters. They that kept them fled and went into the city and told everything and what had happened to the men **14** possessed by the devils. Behold, the whole city came out to meet Jesus. When they saw Him, they pleaded with Him that He would depart out of their coasts.*

In the accounts of this event recorded in Mark and Luke, only one demon-possessed man is reported.

Do the men or the demons speak to Jesus? demons

Do the demons recognize the Christ? yes

Why is the demon named Legion? Because they are many

To what "time" of torment is the demon referring? The judgment

The demons think they will escape if they are allowed to go where? Into the pigs

Will Jesus let them go to the pigs? yes

How do the pigs react? They run down into the sea and drown

Why do the people of the area want Jesus to leave? Concerned about finances

Do the people of the area care more about their finances or the deliverance of the demon-possessed men? finances

THE SYROPHENICIAN WOMAN THE DEAF AND MUTE MAN THE TEN LEPERS

Matthew 15

Mark 7; Luke 17

As in the case of the Samaritan woman and the centurion, Jesus again deals with a Gentile. Like the episode with the Samaritan, this Gentile is also a woman. Like the centurion, this Gentile is rewarded and commended for her extreme faith.

Read Matthew 15:21-28. (Slide 15)

To what region does Jesus go?

Tyre and Sidon

Referring to the map, about how far is that from the Sea of Galilee?

30-40 miles

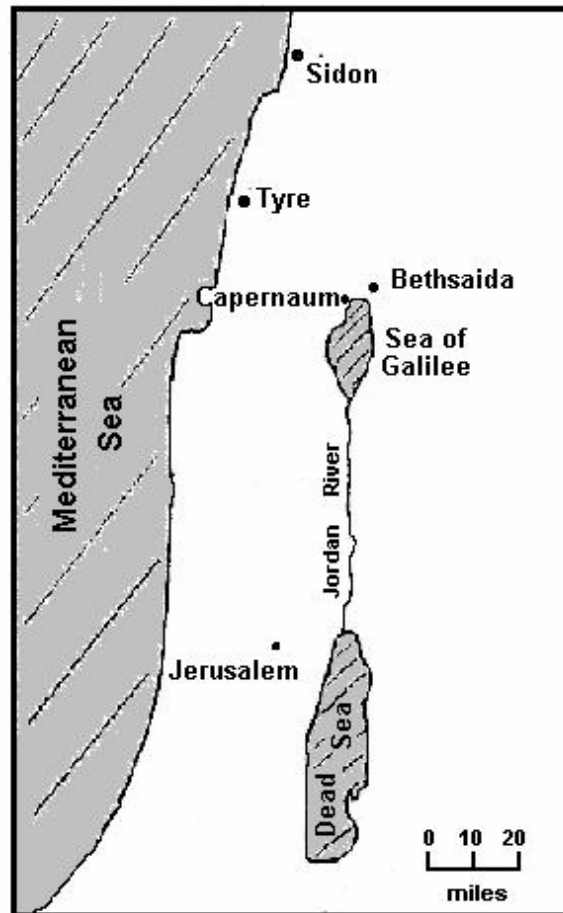
Who cries out to Jesus? _____

A Canaanite woman

What is the woman's problem?

Demon-possessed daughter

Does Jesus respond to her immediately? no



Does she give up or keep trying to get Him to help her? Keeps trying

What does Jesus tell her? He has come to the Israelites not the Gentiles

Who are the dogs? The Gentiles

Does the woman recognize the truth of what Jesus tells her? yes

Does she claim to have an equal right with the Jews to call on Jesus? no

How is her faith rewarded? Her daughter is healed

The next miracle included in this lesson happens after the one above.

*Departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, He came to the Sea of Galilee. They brought to Him one who was deaf and had an impediment in his speech. They begged Him to put His hand upon him. He took him aside from the multitude **16** and put His fingers into his ears, and He spit and touched his tongue. Looking up to heaven, He sighed and said to him, "Eph-phatha" that is "Be opened." Straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loose. He spoke plainly. Jesus charged them that they should tell no man; but the more He charged them, so much the more they talked about it and were beyond measure astonished saying, "He has done all things well. He makes both the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak."*



Do the people do what Jesus asks of them? no

The last miracle to be studied in this lesson deals with the healing of ten lepers and the response of the lepers to their healing. Once again, the Samaritan foreigner in the story exhibits the more proper response to the healing. **Read about it in Luke 17:11-19. (Slide 17)**

Do the lepers ask Jesus for help? yes

How many come back to thank Jesus? one

Where is he from? Samaria

What is the last thing Jesus says to this man? "Your faith has made you well."

It is thought that this last statement indicates that the Samaritan man, because of his faith, has received the additional blessing of eternal salvation.

REVIEW

1. What is a parable? *A story that makes a point*
2. Which Gospel contains no parables? *John*
3. Were the explanations of the parables shared with the multitudes? *no*
4. Which seed produces a crop? *The seed that fell on good soil*
5. What will happen to the wicked on the day of judgment? *They will be separated from the righteous and thrown into the fire to burn*
6. Who imprisoned John the Baptist? *Herod*
7. Who most actively seeks to have John the Baptist killed? *Herodias*
8. What request does Herodias' daughter make? *Head of John the Baptist*
9. Is her request granted? *yes*
10. Which two miracles are recorded in all four Gospels? *Feeding 5,000 & resurrection*
11. Do all of the five thousand get plenty to eat? *yes*
12. How much is left over? *Twelve baskets full*
13. How does Jesus get to the disciples after feeding the five thousand? *Walks on water*
14. Who joins Him? *Peter*
15. Where are the demons sent? *Into the pigs*
16. What then happens? *The pigs run off of a cliff and drown*
17. Who persistently requests Jesus' help? *The Canaanite woman*
18. Does her persistence pay off? *yes*
19. How many lepers ask Jesus to help them? *ten*
20. How many lepers come back to thank Jesus? *one*