

Jesus spoke as follows:

Matthew 13:24-30 (NKJV)

24 Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;

25 but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.

26 But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.

27 So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?'

28 He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, 'Do you want us then to go and gather them up?'

29 But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them.

30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'"

Matthew 13:36-43 (NKJV)

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His

disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field."

37 He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.

38 The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.

39 The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

40 Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age.

41 The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, 42 and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

43 Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Understanding the Parable:

In this parable, Jesus compares the kingdom of heaven to a man who sows good seed in his field. However, while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares (weeds) among the wheat. When the plants grew, the tares also appeared, leading the servants to ask if they should gather

them up. The master replied to let both grow together until the harvest, at which time the tares would be separated and burned, and the wheat gathered into the barn.

Theological Insights:

1. The Field Represents the World:

The field in the parable symbolizes the world, indicating that the kingdom of heaven is present and active in the world, not confined to a specific place or group. The good seed represents the sons of the kingdom, those who have received the gospel and are living according to God's will. In contrast, the tares represent those who follow the evil one, living in opposition to God's purposes .

2. Coexistence of Good and Evil:

A central theme of the parable is the coexistence of good and evil in the world. The presence of both wheat and tares growing together reflects the tension between the kingdom of heaven and the forces of darkness in the present age. While the kingdom has been inaugurated through Jesus Christ, it is not yet fully realized. In the interim, evil persists and threatens to undermine God's work. However, God's wisdom and timing allow both to grow until the final harvest .

3. Divine Patience and Judgment:

The master instructs the servants to let both the wheat and the tares grow together until the harvest. This reflects God's patience and long-suffering nature, allowing time for repentance and redemption (cf. 2 Peter 3:9). However, the final judgment will come, and there will be a clear distinction between the righteous and the wicked. The tares will be burned in the fire, illustrating the certainty of divine judgment at the end of time .

4. The Role of Angels:

The parable emphasizes that the separation of good and evil is not the responsibility of humans but will be carried out by God's appointed agents the angels. This reflects the principle that ultimate judgment belongs to God alone. While humans may not always discern the difference between the righteous and the wicked, God knows the hearts of all people, and the angels will execute His will perfectly .

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