

PARABLE OF WHEAT AND WEEDS: THE QUESTION OF EVIL MATHEW 13:24–30

Introduction

Some of man's basic questions about the presence of evil in the world and judging others are covered in this parable. It is a parable that has some very practical answers and lessons for man.

1. There are both good and evil people in this world and in the Kingdom of Heaven (vv. 24-26).
2. Christ sows the righteous: the devil sows the wicked (vv. 24-25).
3. Men question why there is evil in the world and in the kingdom (church). Did God plant the evil as well as the good (vv. 27-28)?
4. Men are not to judge who the wheat and weeds, the good and bad, are. Why? Because it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between the good and bad, and some of the good might be rooted up (v. 29).
5. A day of harvest and of judgment is coming (vv. 29-30).
6. God alone has the wisdom to judge correctly (vv. 29-30).

Jesus explains the parable in vs. 36-43. Glancing at the major points of the parable will help one get an overview of the parable.

- I. The parable: describes the Kingdom of Heaven (vv. 31-43) (v. 24).
- II. A man (Christ) sows good seed (the righteous) (v. 24).
- III. An enemy (the devil) sows weeds (the wicked) (v. 25).
- IV. A day for fruit comes (v. 26).
- V. A day of questioning comes (vv. 27-30).
- VI. A day of harvest is coming (v. 30).

I. *Mathew 13:24 Kingdom of Heaven*

This parable describes the Kingdom of Heaven (See *Kingdom of Heaven*, Mt. 19:23-24).

II. *Mathew 13:24, 37–38 Mission of Jesus Christ*

A man sows good seed. *The man* is Christ, the Son of Man (v. 37); *the good seed* are the righteous (v. 43), *the children* of the kingdom (v. 38). *The field* is the world. Note two things.

1. What the man, Christ, does. His work is to sow righteous people in the world.

Mat 20:28 “Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Luke 19:10 “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

Psa 126:5 Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.

2. The man, Christ, owns the world. The world is “his field.”

John 1:3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

Col 1:16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities: all things were created by him and for him.

Heb 1:2 But in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe.

Thought 1. Note several lessons.

- 1) Christ owns the field. The world is His by right because He created it (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:2).
- 2) Christ does sow in the world. He works actively. He is not far off out in outer space someplace, disinterested and inactive. He is vitally interested in the world, and He works hard at sowing the righteous.
- 3) Seed is scattered all over the field. God has scattered the seed, the righteous all over the world. No single nation possesses all the righteous of the earth. No single nation is a favourite of God. God does not discriminate between people. He is not partial.
- 4) Seed is to bear fruit. If it does not, it is either *dead* or else it is not real seed.
- 5) There is no righteous person apart from Him. He is *the sower* of the righteous seed.

III. **Mathew 13:25, 38–39** *The Enemy, Satan*

Satan, an enemy, sows weeds. *The enemy* is the devil (*diabolos*. v. 39), the liar, the deceiver, the one who struggles against the truth. *The weeds* are the children of the devil or the wicked one (v. 38).

1. Note what the enemy (the devil) does. His work is to sow wicked or lawless people in the world and to do it secretly so that they will be unnoticed (vv. 38, 41). He came while men slept (v. 25).

They were...

- unconscious
- too busy
- too unconcerned
- unaware
- too preoccupied
- too enticed with pleasure and other affairs

The devil operated under the cover of darkness and deception.

John 8:43-45 *“Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me!”*

John 13:2 *The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus.*

Acts 5:3 *Then Peter said, “Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?”*

Acts 13:10 *“You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord?”*

Acts 26:18 *To open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’*

2 Cor 4:3-4 *And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*

Eph 2:2 *In which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.*

1 John 3:10 *This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.*

2. Note that the enemy (the devil) sows in the same field as the Lord. The bad are sown among the good. The devil’s method is counterfeit and imitation (2 Cor. 11:13-15). Some within the world and within the church have not been sown by the Lord. They may be in the world and in the church; they may even look like they belong to Him, but they do not.

2 Cor 11:13-15 *For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, masquerading as apostles of Christ. And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will be what their actions deserve.*

Thought 1. The devil is a sworn enemy to Christ, to the world, and to all good. He is the sworn enemy of man, to his peace, and to the fulfilling of his purpose and life on earth. Whatever power he uses on earth is the same as the power used by wicked men: it is usurped and unjust (See *Satan*, Rev. 12:9).

Thought 2. One reason so many weeds are sown is because so many righteous are sleeping when they should be watching over the field (v. 25). Satan never sleeps; he is ever awake for every opportunity.

1 Pet 5:8 *Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.*

Thought 3. Note the words, “And went away.” Satan does not want to be known as the sower of wicked men. In fact, he wants the wicked to disclaim him, never to confess that he is their “father” (Jn. 8:44). The weeds are “in the Lord’s field” professing that they belong to God, but they are deceived (2 Cor. 11:13-14).

Titus 1:16 *They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.*

IV. Mathew 13:26 Only Profession is False Profession

A day for bearing fruit always comes. It comes for every professing Christian. The weeds themselves were called “darnel,” some form of plant or wild corn that was slightly poisonous and narcotic. When eaten it would cause dizziness and nausea. It was called the bastard wheat. Its roots became intertwined with the roots of the wheat. If it were rooted up, it would destroy the wheat plant before the fruit became mature. The method used to get rid of it was to let it grow and then to harvest it with the wheat. It was then separated from the wheat, bundled together, and cast into a flaming fire.

Note something: the weeds (that is, the unregenerate) looked like wheat when sown and during the growing stage. All men appear the same in religious practices. It is during the fruit-bearing stage that the difference appears. Unregenerate men can imitate true believers for only so long; eventually their true nature begins to show.

Mat 7:17 *“Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit.”*

Gal 5:19-23 *The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

Titus 1:15 *To the pure, all things are pure, but to those who are corrupted and do not believe, nothing is pure. In fact, both their minds and consciences are corrupted.*

1 John 3:10 *This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother.*

Thought 1. A person’s nature always comes out eventually. A weed shows itself. A wicked person may profess to be righteous, but a life of selfishness and

unrighteousness will eventually take hold. The profession may continue, but so will the life of wickedness.

Thought 2. A fact to note: the weeds (wicked) among the wheat (righteous) are hurtful to the wheat.

- 1) They are an evil reflection upon the wheat. They sometimes make it very difficult for the world to distinguish between *good* and evil; therefore they are the primary cause for the charge of hypocrisy levelled against the church.
- 2) They stymie the growth of the wheat. Their behaviour and conversation and thoughts are centred in the world, not on Christ. Therefore the righteous are not edified when weeds are clinging to them.
- 3) They are a threat to the wheat. They can draw needed nourishment from the wheat. The professing weed can tempt and lead the righteous away from the Lord and His nourishment, tempt and lead the righteous into the world and its delights.
- 4) They can cause the death of the wheat. The professing weed can persecute and even kill the wheat.

V. *Mathew 13:27–30 A Day of Questioning*

A day of questioning comes. There is the question concerning weeds or evil in the world.

=> Where does evil come from?

=> If there is a God, why is evil allowed to continue?

At this particular stage of the disciples' growth, Jesus simply states that evil persons are present — that someone who is an enemy to God plants them. His statement without an explanation is enough, at least for the present time. However, in answering the question of evil, a person needs to consider the full revelation of God that is given in Scripture. Scripture reveals that Jesus Christ, the Son of Man, is the original Sower or Creator. He is the Master and Owner of the field or world. He created man to be perfect (v.43), that is, in His own image; and He planted within man a spirit to do right (Gen 1:26). But immediately after creation, the other sower, the devil, went right to work. He began with Adam and Eve (Ge.3:1f); and ever since, he has sown nothing but weeds, the unrighteous, among God's "good seed."

There is the question as to why evil is allowed to continue in the world and why hypocrites are allowed to continue in the church instead of being disciplined and expelled. This question, of course, concerns judging others. Jesus' answer to this question needs close attention. A person on this earth is not to judge others (Note Mt. 13:30).

1. It is sometimes hard to distinguish between the wheat and the weeds, the righteous and the hypocrites who profess to be righteous but are not. But note: if a person judges, he may tear out some wheat along with the weeds.

2. A day of judgment is coming; however, it is not to be executed by men, but by Christ at His return.

Thought 1. Evil is of great concern to the righteous. We must always be before the Lord dealing with the presence of evil and our responsibility toward it.

Thought 2. Note who is to blame for wicked people in God's kingdom and church. It is not God's servant but the devil who is responsible. God's servant is not at fault for hypocrites in the church; he is not to be blamed for hypocrites.

Thought 3. Great caution and patience must always be shown in dealing with the sins of men.

Mark 2:17 *On hearing this, Jesus said to them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."*

Luke 19:10 *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost."*

John 20:21 *Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you."*

2 Pet 3:9 *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

MATHEW 13:29–30 JUDGING OTHERS

There are three very practical reasons why no man can judge another.

1. A person is to be judged for his whole life. He is not to be judged for a single act or for a particular period of his life. No one sees another person's whole life. In fact, very little of a person's life (thought or activity) is seen by any one individual.
2. A person may make a serious mistake or go through a stage of terrible sin. Then, by the eternal mercy and eternal grace of God, he may turn back to Christ and make the rest of his life a wonderful service for God.
3. Any person who is judged to be righteous today may fall into sin later, years later. Only God can see the whole of a life. Only God can see and know all the facts that led the person to sin: facts within his being and facts without; pressures within and pressures without; relationships within and relationships without. Only God can know a person completely and fully accurately know all the ramifications of every thought and act and stage of life.

Mat 7:1 *"Do not judge, or you too will be judged."*

Rom 2:1 *You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgment on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgment do the same things.*

Rom 14:4, 13 *Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in your brother's way.*

1 Cor 4:5 *Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait till the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of men's hearts. At that time each will receive his praise from God.*

James 4:12 *There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you — who are you to judge your neighbour? □*

VI. **Mathew 13:30 Judgment**

A day of harvest is coming. The ones to be judged and condemned are in the kingdom; they include all those who offend others and who do injury (are lawless). (See *Hell-fire*, Mt. 5:22 and *Hell, Torment*, Lk. 16:24; *Judgement*, Mathew 8:12; and *Reward*, Mt. 13:43).

MATHEW 05:22 HELL FIRE OR GEHENNA (GEENNA)

*“But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, ‘Raca,’ is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, ‘You fool!’ will be in danger of the fire of hell.” **Mathew 05:22***

The word is used eleven or twelve times in the New Testament, and in every case it is spoken by Jesus except in the Epistle of James. It illustrates the terrible truth of the second death, of man's final separation from God. Jesus pointed to the burning, repulsive rubbish dump outside the city limits of Jerusalem and said that it was exactly what hell was like. The dump was called Gehenna. It was in the Valley of Hinnom which served as a public incinerator. Hanging over it was a layer of thick, smouldering smoke arising from what seemed to be an eternal flame. The smell and filth became a breeding cesspool for a loathsome worm that was difficult to kill (Mk. 9:44). Thus, Jesus found in Gehenna a description of just what it means to be separated from God eternally and to die the second death. Several facts are said about hell or Gehenna:

- It is the same as the lake of fire, a place of torture (Rev. 19:20; 20:10, 14-15).
- It has to do with the second death (Rev. 21:8; Jn. 8:24).
- It is Hell (Mt. 5:29-30; 10:28; 23:15, 33; Lk. 12:5).
- It is eternal fire (Mt. 18:8).
- It is the fire of Hell (Mt. 18:9; Jas. 3:6).
- It is unquenchable fire (Mk. 9:43-49).

The teaching of Jesus should always be remembered. Remembrance is critical in determining a person's fate. Hell is a definite place, a real place that is specifically located. It was originally prepared for the devil and his angels. But all men who choose to follow self and evil and to reject God shall also be sent to hell eternally.

Mat 3:10 *"The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."*

Mat 5:29-30 *"If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell."*

Mat 7:19 *"Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."*

Mat 10:28 *"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell."*

Mat 11:23 *"And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths. If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day."*

Mat 13:42, 50 *"They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth... And throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Mat 16:18 *"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."*

Mat 18:8-9 *"If your hand or your foot causes you to sin cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life maimed or crippled than to have two hands or two feet and be thrown into eternal fire. And if your eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to enter life with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into the fire of hell."*

Mat 23:15 *"Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites: You travel over land and sea to win a single convert, and when he becomes one, you make him twice as much a son of hell as you are."*

Mat 23:33 *"You snakes! You brood of vipers! How will you escape being condemned to hell?"*

Mat 25:41 *"Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'"*

Mark 9:43-48 *“If your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life maimed than with two hands to go into hell, where the fire never goes out. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than to have two feet and be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, pluck it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell, where their worm does not die, and the fire is not quenched.”*

Luke 3:9 *“The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”*

Luke 10:15 *“And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to the skies? No, you will go down to the depths.”*

Luke 12:5 *“But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear him who, after the killing of the body, has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.”*

Luke 16:23-24 *“In hell, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. So he called to him, ‘Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.’” □*

LUKE 16:24 HELL - TORMENT

To be anguished, tortured, and greatly distressed; to suffer pain and sorrow. The Bible unquestionably teaches there is to be a torment for unbelievers in fire. However, it must be remembered that the fire we know is material and temporal; it is not spiritual or eternal. Earthly fire does not last forever. Nothing on earth does. Earthly fire is of the physical dimension of being. The fire of hell, whatever its nature and qualities, is spiritual and eternal. It never ends. And men must face this; they must not shrink from the truth of hell. Why? Because hell, that is, separation from God, is much worse than any experience here on earth. It will be much worse than any physical experience imaginable. This is the teaching of Scripture. This is the point Jesus was making. Man absolutely must flee from hell. Man absolutely must flee to Christ for salvation. (See Mt. 5:22, 29; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15, 33; 25:41; Mk. 9:43-48; Lk.12:5; 16:23; 2 Th. 1:8-9; 2 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 14:10-11; 16:10; 18:10; 19:20; 20:10-15; 21:8.) □

MATHEW 08:12 JUDGMENT

*“But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” **Mathew 08:12***

Jesus' great power shall reject the unbelieving. The judgment of unbelievers is to be. Note: Jesus predicted that the Jews who persist in unbelief shall perish. They are rejected by God, despite the fact they had been chosen to be the children of God and had been given so many privileges (see Jn. 4:22; Rom. 9:1-33; 10:1-21).

1. There will be *darkness*: a region, a place, a habitation, a home of pitch black that forbids any sight whatsoever. A place without light, without gleam or hope of any light whatsoever. It is a place of utter darkness in which one lives completely incapacitated, helpless, and hopeless. It is far away from the splendour and glory and brightness of God's presence. It is being cast into the gloom and blackness of the outer world. It is misery, the misery of a lost soul.

Mat 8:12 *"But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Mat 22:13 *"Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"*

2 Pet 2:17 *These men are springs without water and mists driven by a storm. Blackest darkness is reserved for them.*

Jude 1:6 *And the angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their own home — these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day.*

Job 18:5 *"The lamp of the wicked is snuffed out; the flame of his fire stops burning."*

Prov 20:20 *If a man curses his father or mother, his lamp will be snuffed out in pitch darkness.*

2. There will be *weeping*: grief, loud grief, mourning, groaning, wailing, floods and floods of tears.
3. There will be *gnashing of teeth* (**brugmos**): grinding; biting in hostility and bitterness and indignation; spitefully snapping the teeth. It is rage, fury, and despair because nothing can be done. A person's state is permanently determined.

Mat 8:12 *"But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Mat 13:42 *"They will throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Mat 24:51 *"He will cut him to pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Mat 25:30 *"And throw that worthless servant outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

Psa 112:10 *The wicked man will see and be vexed, he will gnash his teeth and waste away; the longings of the wicked will come to nothing.*

Thought 1. Entrance into heaven is based upon one thing and one thing only: faith in Christ. Heritage, godly parents and children, religious profession, baptism, and church membership — all are useless without faith. Without faith, man has only the judgment of God to look forward to. □

MATHEW 13:43 REWARD

“Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.” Mathew 13:43

The righteous shall be glorified. The promise is given to the righteous, the promise that they shall “shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.” What does this mean? Several things need to be said.

1. Just what a *glorified* man will look like is not known.

1 John 3:2 *Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.*

2. It will involve a *glorious* body.

Phil 3:21 *Who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body. (see Rom 8:17)*

1 Cor 15:41-44, 48-50, 53 *The sun has one kind of splendour, the moon another and the stars another; and star differs from star in splendour. So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. As was the earthly man, so are those who are of the earth; and as is the man from heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven. I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.*

3. It will involve *shining like* the sun, a reflection of the glory of God (See Glory of God, Rom. 3:23.) □

ROMANS 03:23 THE GLORY OF GOD

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. Romans 03:23

The “glory of God” is God’s standard for man. It means His *moral glory*. It means His excellence, splendour, brilliance, brightness, magnificence, pre-eminence, dignity, majesty, and grace. It means the absolute perfection of God, the perfection of His person. It is this “glory of God” which demands that man correspond perfectly with God — if man wishes to be at peace with God and to live in His presence.

1. Glory is *light*, perfect light. It is the very highest degree of light: the perfection of splendour, brightness, brilliance, resplendence. This is seen in many passages.

=> John saw how bright the glory of God is when he had the vision of the new Jerusalem. (The new Jerusalem will be the centre or capital of world government in the new heavens and earth.)

Rev 21:10-11 *And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.*

Rev 21:23 *The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp.*

=> Jesus experienced the light of God’s glory.

Mat 17:2 *There he was transfigured before them. His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light.*

=> Paul experienced the light of God’s glory.

Acts 22:6 *“About noon as I came near Damascus, suddenly a bright light from heaven flashed around me.” (see Acts 22:11; 9:3-9)*

=> Moses experienced the light of God’s glory.

Exo 34:29-30 *When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord. When Aaron and all the Israelites saw Moses, his face was radiant, and they were afraid to come near him. (see 29-35)*

2. Glory is *purity*, perfect purity. It is the very highest degree of virtue and goodness, of quality and morality. It is the highest excellence of character and the perfection of being.

1 John 1:5 *This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.*

Mat 19:17 “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments.”

Mat 5:48 “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”

Rev 15:4 “Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.”

3. Glory is majesty, perfect majesty. It is the very highest degree of pre-eminence and magnificence, of dignity and honour, of meriting worship and praise.

Isa 6:1, 3 *In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the train of his robe filled the temple. And they were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory.”*

Isa 57:15 *For this is what the high and lofty One says — he who lives forever, whose name is holy: “I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly and to revive the heart of the contrite.”*

Psa 93:1 *The Lord reigns, he is robed in majesty; the Lord is robed in majesty and is armed with strength. The world is firmly established; it cannot be moved. (see Psa 97:1)*

4. Glory is being, perfect being. It is the very highest degree of worth, quality and merit, preciousness and value. (Jn. 17:2-3.)

Rev 4:11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.”

Isa 43:10 “You are my witnesses,” declares the Lord, “and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me.”

Mat 19:17 “Why do you ask me about what is good?” Jesus replied. “There is only One who is good. If you want to enter life, obey the commandments.” □

MATHEW 19:23–24 THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “I tell you the truth, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” Mathew 19:23-24

The Kingdom of Heaven evidently means the same thing as the Kingdom of God, eternal life and salvation. The Kingdom of Heaven and the Kingdom of God are interchanged when Jesus says, “it is hard for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt. 19:23) or “Kingdom of God” (Mt. 19:24). Eternal life (Mt. 19:26) and salvation (Mt. 19:25) belong to the very same concept. Eternity and salvation, the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven, is the very subject being discussed in Mt. 19:16-30. Having eternal life, being saved or entering into the Kingdom of God or of Heaven is more difficult for a rich man than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.

The Kingdom of Heaven and of God is revealed in four different stages throughout history.

1. There is the spiritual kingdom that is at hand; it is present right now (Mt. 4:17; 12:28).
- a. The present kingdom refers to *God’s rule and reign and authority in the lives of believers.*

Eph 1:18-23 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

Phil 2:5-11 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in the very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the

name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Col 1:13 *For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.*

- b. The present kingdom is offered to the world and to men in the person of Jesus Christ.
- c. The present kingdom must be received as a little child.

Mark 10:14,15 *When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."*

- d. The present kingdom is experienced only by the new birth.

John 3:3 *In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again."*

- e. The present kingdom is entered now and must be received now.

Mat 21:31 *"Which of the two did what his father wanted?" "The first," they answered. Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you."*

Mark 10:15 *"I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."*

- f. The present kingdom is a spiritual, life-changing blessing.

Rom 14:17 *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

- g. The present kingdom is to be the first thing sought by believers.

Mat 6:33 *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*

- 2. There is the professing kingdom that is also in this present age. It refers to the people who profess Christianity in every generation. It pictures the imperfect state of the Kingdom of Heaven or professing Christianity, what professing Christianity is like between Christ's first coming and His return. This imperfect state is what is called "the secrets of the kingdom of heaven" (Mt. 13:1-52, esp. 11)

Mat 13:24-25 *Jesus told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away."*

3. There is the millennial kingdom that is future. It is the actual rule of Christ or the government of Christ that is to come to this earth for a thousand years.

a. The millennial kingdom is the kingdom predicted by Daniel.

***Dan 2:44** “In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever.”*

***Dan 7:18, 22, 27** But the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will possess it forever - yes, for ever and ever, until the Ancient of Days came and pronounced judgment in favour of the saints of the Most High, and the time came when they possessed the kingdom. Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be handed over to the saints, the people of the Most High. His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship and obey him.*

b. The millennial kingdom is the kingdom promised to David.

***2 Sam 7:12, 16** “When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be established forever.”*

***Psa 89:3-4** You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant, ‘I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.’”*

***Zec 12:8** On that day the Lord will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the Angel of the Lord going before them.*

c. The millennial kingdom is the kingdom pictured by John.

***Rev 20: 4-6** I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.*

4. There is the perfect kingdom of the new heaven and earth that is future.

- a. The eternal kingdom is the rule and reign of God in a perfect universe for all eternity.

John 14:1-3 *“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father’s house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.*

1 Cor 15:24 *Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power.*

2 Pet 3:10-13 *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.*

Rev 21:1 *Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea.*

- b. The eternal kingdom is the perfect state of being for the believer in the future.

1 Cor 15:50 *I declare to you, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.*

Rev 21:4-5 *“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.”*

- c. The eternal kingdom is an actual place into which believers are to enter sometime in the future.

Mat 8:11 *I say to you that many will come from the east and the west, and will take their places at the feast with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.*

- d. The eternal kingdom is a gift of God that will be given in the future.

Luke 12:32 *“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the kingdom.” □*