

Why in Parables?

Why did Christ talk in parables? These are more than just stories or narratives; parables are stories or illustrations that use objects, situations and so on that are common to man to reveal important principles and information. A parable is a short, simple story designed to communicate a spiritual truth, religious principle, or moral lesson. They are a figure of speech in which truth is illustrated by a comparison or example drawn from everyday experiences.

What is a parable?

From Webster's dictionary, parable comes from the Latin word parabola, from Greek parabolé, meaning "comparison." The word parabola may look familiar if you remember your geometry. The mathematical parabola refers to a curve that is shaped like the path of something that is thrown forward and high in the air and falls back to the ground.

Throughout the Bible are ~40 parables, each one packed full of meaning and truth.

PARABLES	MATTHEW	MARK	LUKE
Salt of the Earth	Matthew 5:13	Mark 9:50	
Lamp Under a Bowl	Matthew 5:14-16	Mark 4:21-22	Luke 8:16, 11:33
Wise and Foolish Builders	Matthew 7:24-27		Luke 6:47-49
New Cloth on an Old Coat	Matthew 9:16	Mark 2:21	Luke 5:36
New Wine in Old Wineskins	Matthew 9:17	Mark 2:22	Luke 5:37-39
The Two Debtors			Luke 7:40-43
The Sower	Matthew 13:1-23	Mark 4:1-20	Luke 8:4-15
The Good Samaritan			Luke 10:25-37
The Friend at Midnight			Luke 11:5-13
Growing Seed		Mark 4:26-29	
The Rich Fool			Luke 12:13-21
The Watchful Servants		Mark 13:35-37	Luke 12:35-40
Unfruitful Fig Tree			Luke 13:6-9
The Weeds	Matthew 13:24-30, 36-4		
The Seed	Matthew 13:31-32	Mark 4:26-30	Luke 13:18-19
Yeast	Matthew 13:33		Luke 13:20-21
The Concealed Treasure	Matthew 13:44		
The Pearl	Matthew 13:45-46		
The Casting of the Net into the Sea	Matthew 13:47-50		
Owner of a House	Matthew 13:52		
The Lost Sheep	Matthew 18:12-14		Luke 15:3-7

The Unforgiving Servant	Matthew 18:23-35		
The Vineyard Workers	Matthew 20:1-16		
Lowest Seat at the Feast			Luke 14:7-14
The Great Feast			Luke 14:16-24
Cost of Discipleship			Luke 14:28-33
The Lost Coin			Luke 15:8-10
The Prodigal Son			Luke 15:11-32
The Shrewd Manager			Luke 16:1-13
The Rich Man and Lazarus			Luke 16:19-31
Master and His Servant			Luke 17:7-10
Persistent Widow			Luke 18:1-8
The Two Sons	Matthew 21:28-32		
The Vineyard Owner	Matthew 21:33-44	Mark 12:1-11	Luke 20:9-18
The Marriage Feast	Matthew 22:1-14		
Fig Tree	Matthew 24:32-35	Mark 13:28-31	Luke 21:29-33
Faithful and Wise Servant	Matthew 24:45-51		Luke 12:42-48
The Pharisee and the Tax Collector			Luke 18:9-14
Ten Virgins	Matthew 25:1-13		
The Talent	Matthew 25:14-30		Luke 19:11-27
The Sheep and the Goats	Matthew 25:31-46		

Why did Christ speak in parables?

Mt 13:10-17 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. 12 For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. 13 Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. 14 And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: 15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. 16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. 17 For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

The ears He referred to are the ears of the heart, and to hear with these ears means to understand and respond to the deeper meaning in which the story is trying to convey. According to Christ, the disciples understood the spiritual meaning in the parables, but many in the crowds

did not. Thus these meanings were open to all who heard the word of God including those who understood it but also many remained who chose not comprehend. Most people saw these stories as just that...a simple, one level story as their eyes remained closed to a revealed truth that God was trying to lay out in plain sight for all to see and hear.

2 Timothy 3:1-7 This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. 2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, 4 Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; 5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away. 6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts, 7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

God shows the diverse types of evil people that will be on the earth at the end time and describes their wicked actions. He also relates a core problem: regardless of what evilness they engage in, despite learning and experiencing the dire consequences of their actions, the people rarely were able to come to the truth of how to live a life that corrects sinful behavior. Yeshua, fully aware of their difficulty in comprehension, used their mostly agrarian centered life to open up their understanding: the truth of His word being illustrated by the spoken word right in front of them so they could finally come to understand the crucial spiritual message of salvation being revealed to them.

How we can see the true meaning of parables

John 16:12-15 I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. 13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. 14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you. 15 All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.

Through the Holy Spirit, we will have the tools to fully understand the meaning of all the parables of Christ. His Holy Spirit will help guide us in wisdom and truth.

Many are called but few are chosen

Mt 22:1-14 And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, 2 The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, 3 And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

4 Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. 5 But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: 6 And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. 7 But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. 8 Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. 9 Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. 10 So those servants went out into the highways, and gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. 11 And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: 12 And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. 13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

“Many are called but few are chosen,” this powerful line in the Bible brings to light the biggest downfall of most of mankind...many people have been shown the truth but most of them choose not to follow. The Lord gives us all the word but He will open the eyes of a few to truly see and understand its full meaning in the hope to lead others to see as well.

Luke 13:23-30 Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, 24 Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. 25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: 26 Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. 27 But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity. 28 There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. 29 And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. 30 And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

Mt 7:13-14 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: 14 Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

We must all strive for entrance onto the narrow path; broad is the way that leads to destruction and many will follow it; in contrast, narrow is the way to eternal life. Few will see this and fewer will be able to understand what they are seeing but the way does not change, and we are still required to enter via the narrow gate.

Psalms 119:17-24 Deal bountifully with thy servant, that I may live, and keep thy word. 18 ¶ Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law. 19 ¶ I am a stranger in the earth: hide not thy commandments from me. 20 ¶ My soul breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgments at all times. 21 ¶ Thou hast rebuked the proud that are cursed, which do err from thy commandments. 22 ¶ Remove from me reproach and contempt; for I have kept thy testimonies. 23 ¶ Princes also did sit and speak against me: but thy servant did meditate in thy statutes. 24 ¶ Thy testimonies also are my delight and my counsellors.

“Open mine eyes oh Lord...that I may behold the wondrous things out of thy law”. *This is a very powerful phrase which sums up all that this study meant to convey: to have an open eye/heart, to see the truth, and the bounty which comes out of actions that promote and live God’s truth, while exhibiting reproach and contempt for sinful behavior, removing untruth far from us. If we believe in Him and are open to the words He gives us, He will reward us with peace and His delight. This is a goal which we should all be striving for throughout life.*

KJV Scripture used unless otherwise noted

Proverb to ponder:

Prov. 20:12 The hearing ear, and the seeing eye, the LORD hath made even both of them.

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