

WHAT THE  
BIBLE  
IS ABOUT

6

WHAT THE  
**B**IBLE  
Is ABOUT

**Matthew 13**

The Kingdom Parables

**Most people who claim to  
follow Jesus Christ know  
far more about the Messenger  
than about His Message.**

# GO THE GOSPEL!

Hear It Believe It Live It

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures,

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

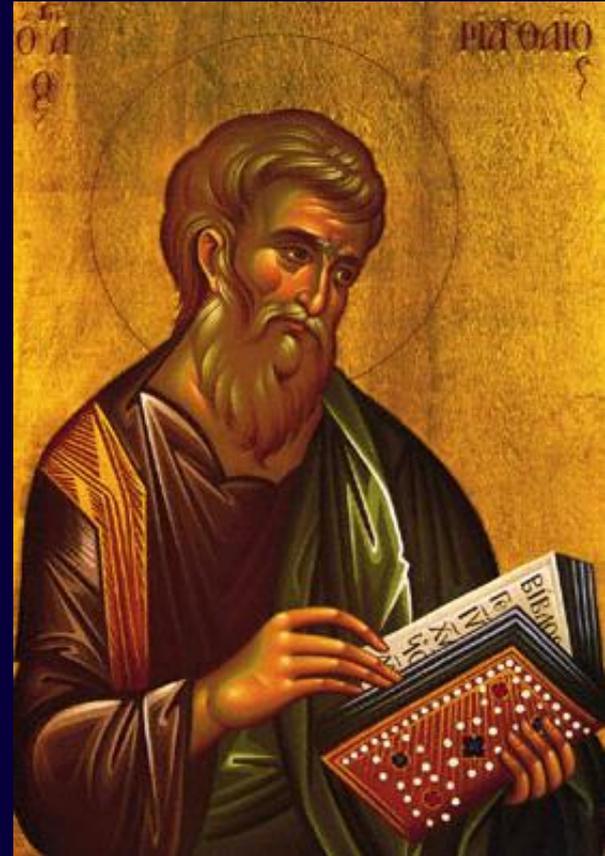
# Gospel presented four ways to four groups

	<b>2</b> Jesus as King <b>matthew</b> a tax collector written 2 <sup>nd</sup> A.D. 40-140	<b>1</b> Jesus as Servant <b>mark</b> a missionary written 1 <sup>st</sup> A.D. 55-70	<b>3</b> Jesus as Man <b>luke</b> a doctor written 3 <sup>rd</sup> A.D. 62	<b>4</b> Jesus as God <b>john</b> a fisherman written 4 <sup>th</sup> A.D. 80-90
<b>Presents as:</b>	<b>MESSIAH</b>	<b>SERVANT</b>	<b>SON OF MAN</b>	<b>SON OF GOD</b>
<b>Genealogy:</b>	Abraham (legal line)	—	From Adam (Blood line)	Eternal (Pre-existence)
<b>What Jesus:</b>	Said	Did	Felt	Was
<b>Written to:</b>	<b>Jew</b>	<b>Roman</b>	<b>Greek</b>	<b>Believers (all)</b>
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Miracle:</b>	Leper cleansed (Jew = sin)	Demon expelled	Demon expelled	Water to wine
<b>Emphasis:</b>	<b>Credentials</b>	<b>Servanthood</b>	<b>Compassion</b>	<b>Jesus' Deity</b>
<b>Ends with:</b>	Resurrection	Ascension	Promise of Spirit (see Acts)	Promise of return (see Revelation)

the  
Gospel  
according to  
Matthew

# Who was Matthew?

- Original name Levi (“joined to (Rome?)”)
- Son of Alphaeus (“exchange” or “changing”)
- Jesus renamed Matthew “gift of YHWH”
- A Galilean from Capernaum
- A tax collector (publican) who took shorthand
- Left all (business, wealth) to follow Jesus
- Records the words of Jesus (**doer** and **teacher**)
- Wrote soon after Jesus’ ministry (AD 40-50) to Jews to prove Jesus is the OT Messiah
- Records 20 miracles. Shows that Jesus **fulfilled** Tenakh prophecies.
- The NT is silent on Matthew’s life



Matthew

# Distinctives of the book of Matthew

- A detailed narrative of Jesus' **six major messages**:
  - ① the Sermon on the Mount (chap 5—7)
  - ② the charge to the apostles (chap 10)
  - ③ the parables of the kingdom (chap 13)
  - ④ the lesson on forgiveness (chap 18)
  - ⑤ denunciation of the Pharisees (chap 23)
  - ⑥ Mount of Olives prophecy (chap 24-25)
- Ministry of John the Baptist (the bridge to the OT)
- Structured account of Jesus' life/ministry
- Introduces the mystical church of Jesus
- Main theme is **the Kingdom**

# The Jews knew about God's kingdom

## 🔴 Tenakh (Old Testament):

- “For the kingdom is the LORD’s.” (Psalm 22:28)
- “The kingdom shall be the LORD’s.” (Obadiah 21)
- “The LORD shall be king over all the earth.” (Zech 14:9)

Jews pray for it twice daily in the Shema ritual (Deut 6:4-9) response ‘*Baruk Shem*’.

## 🔴 New Testament:

- John the Baptist’s first sermon started, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt 3:2)
- Jesus Christ’s first sermon started, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (Matt 4:17)
- After the unpardonable sin, Jesus stated, “From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force.” (Matthew 11:12)
- Christians pray, “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10; Luke 11:2)

**But Matthew uses two terms**

KINGDOM  
OF HEAVEN

KINGDOM  
OF GOD

**But Matthew uses two terms**

**KINGDOM  
OF HEAVEN**

**Used by Matthew 33 times, and ONLY by Matthew!**

**KINGDOM  
OF GOD**

**Used by Matthew 5 times, even in adjacent verses!**

## So do we have a problem?

Do they mean the same thing?

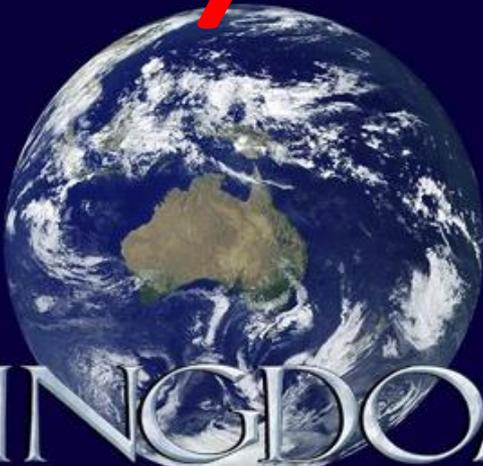
KINGDOM  
OF HEAVEN



KINGDOM  
OF GOD

Do they refer to different things?

KINGDOM  
OF GOD



KINGDOM  
OF HEAVEN

- Attempts to “harmonize” often blur critical distinctions.
- In Hebrew and Aramaic, prepositions “of” and “from” are the same word (מִן, *min*, of (31X) and from (29X).
- Matthew’s unique use of “Kingdom of Heaven” is a Greek genitive of *source* (e.g., “Kingdom *from* or *out of* Heaven”).

KINGDOM  
OF HEAVEN

KINGDOM  
OF GOD

So what is the difference?

KINGDOM  
OF GOD



KINGDOM  
OF HEAVEN

## The book of Matthew on the

# KINGDOM OF GOD

- “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” (Mat 6:33)
- “But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.” (Mat 12:28)
- “And again I say to 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.” (Mat 19:24)
- “Which of the two did the will of *his* father?” They said to Him, “The first.” Jesus said to them, “Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you.” (Mat 21:31)
- “Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.” (Mat 21:43)

## The book of Matthew on the

# KINGDOM OF GOD

A spiritual kingdom  
of righteousness  
and holiness

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With God on His  
throne and Jesus  
on His right hand

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With God on His  
throne and Jesus  
on His right hand

“Now when He was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, He answered them and said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.”

(Luke 17:20-21)

Where Jesus reigns  
in the heart of the  
redeemed

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• “And again I say to 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.” (Mat 19:24)

Although Satan **still has power** in this world:

• “And the devil said to Him, “All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours.” (Lk 4:6-7)

Where Jesus reigns  
in the heart of the  
redeemed

taken from you and  
(3)

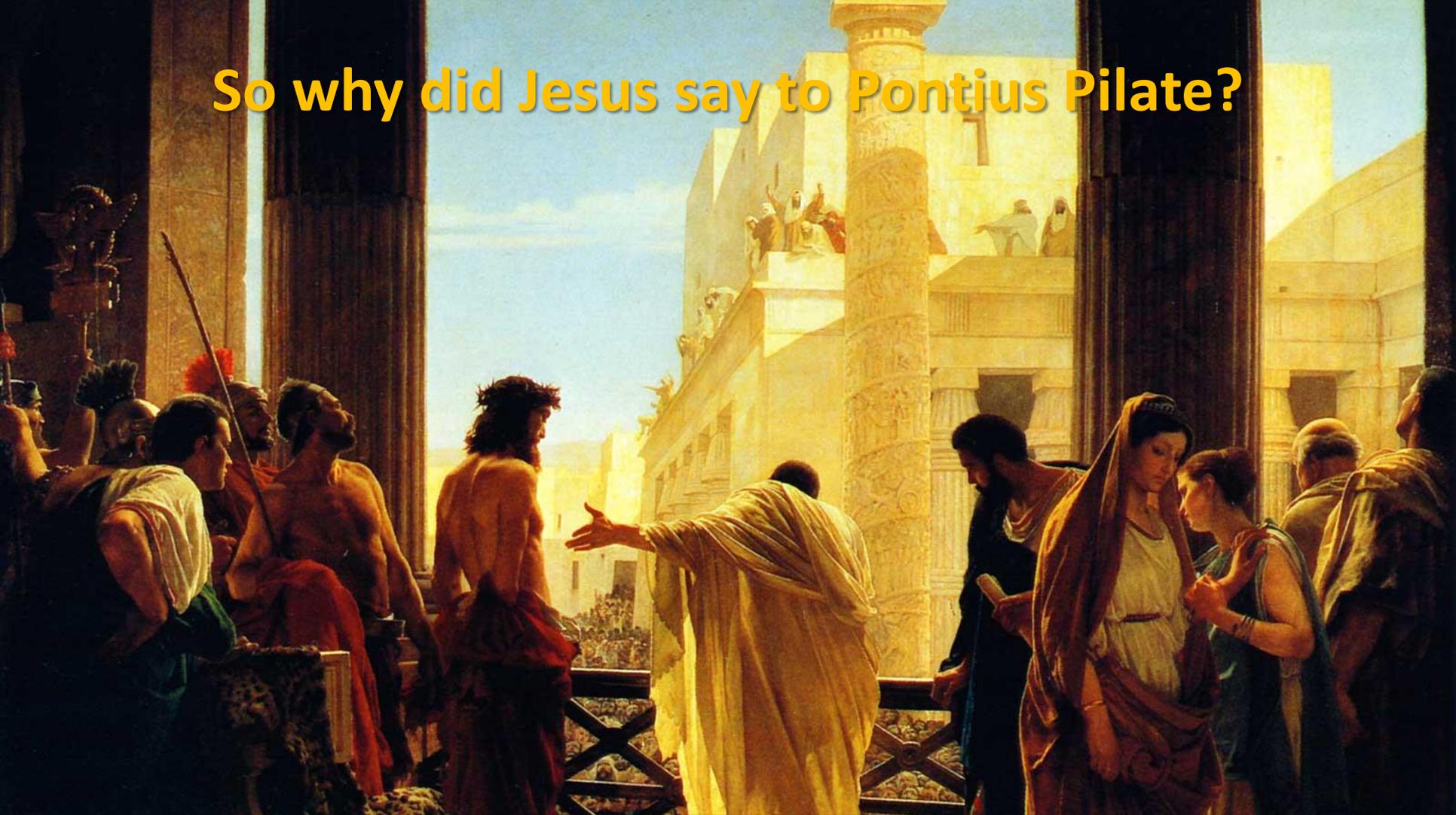
Kingdom of God and kingdom of heaven are synonyms.  
God is in heaven. Jesus reigns in our hearts.

The background features a golden, glowing city skyline with various skyscrapers, including one with a prominent spire, set against a backdrop of soft, white and golden clouds. A bright sun or light source is positioned behind the city, creating a lens flare effect. In the foreground, the words "KINGDOM OF GOD" are written in large, bold, 3D gold letters with a slight shadow, giving them a prominent, three-dimensional appearance.

# KINGDOM OF GOD

This is what most Christian religions teach, if they even bother.

## So why did Jesus say to Pontius Pilate?



“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here.”

# So why did Jesus say to Pontius Pilate?

now

“My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but **now** My kingdom is not from here.”

And what Jesus' last message before Ascension ?



Ivan Filichev's *Ascension* (1993)

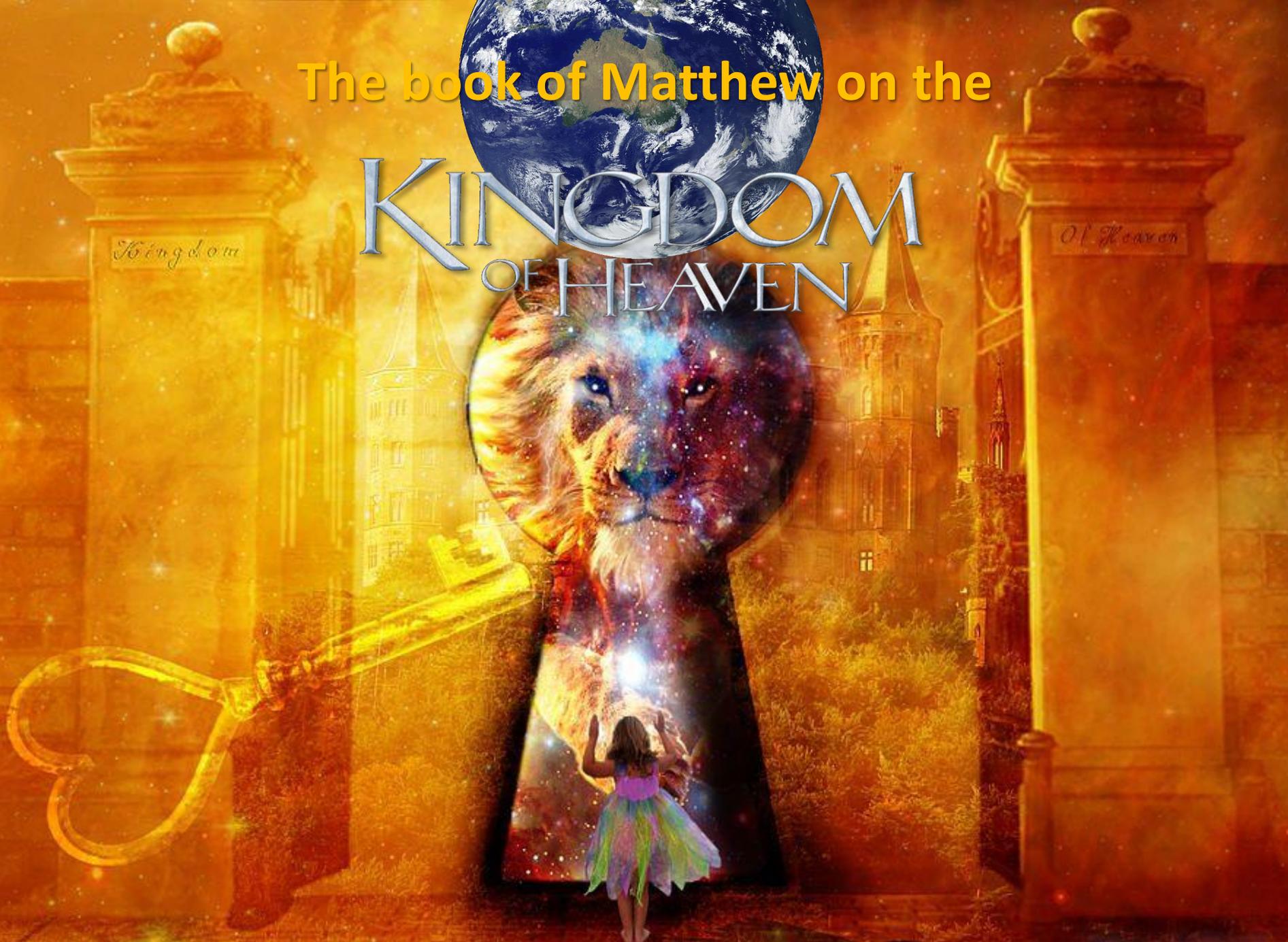
## And what Jesus' last message before Ascension ?

Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying,  
“Lord, will You at this time **restore the kingdom to Israel?**”

And He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Men in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

The book of Matthew on the

# KINGDOM OF HEAVEN



The book of Matthew on the

# KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

<sup>10</sup> And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" <sup>11</sup> He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given."

Dolores Develde's *Kingdom of Heaven* (2013)

Matthew 13:10-11

*Dolores DeVelde 2013*

# A literal earthly political kingdom

The Second Coming is doctrine in both Old and New Testaments, leading to a literal, earthly reign by Jesus on the Throne of David:

- The LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and His Name one. (Zechariah 14:9)
- Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: (Isaiah 9:6)
- He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares. (Isaiah 2:4)
- To him was given ruling authority, honor, and sovereignty. All peoples, nations, and language groups were serving him. His authority is eternal and will not pass away. His kingdom will not be destroyed. (Daniel 7:14)
- And on and on and on....

## A literal earthly political kingdom

The Second Coming is doctrine in both

- The LORD shall be king
- one LORD, and

### About our “Blessed Hope”:

There are at least 1,845 verses in the Old Testament attesting to it. 17 of 39 Old Testament books give prominence to the event. 318 verses in 216 chapters of the New Testament attest, with 23 of its 27 books giving prominence to the event.

- And

# Chapters 1-9: Jesus offered the Kingdom to Israel

For 2½ years the teaching, preaching, parables, miracles and healings of Jesus proved His credentials to all with eyes to see and ears to hear.



FOLLOW ME!



FOLLOW ME!



# Chapter 10: Jesus sends out the 12 Disciples

Expect **acceptance** and **rejection!**





## Chapter 11: Jesus offers rest to the weary

“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Matthew 11:28-30

### Saint John the Baptist in Prison Visited by Two Disciples (1455/60)

Giovanni di Paolo (1399–1482)

The Art Institute of Chicago

## Chapter 12: Israel rejects the Messiah

But when the Pharisees heard *it*, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.

Matthew 12:24

Nikolai Ge, 1868

**Matthew 12:31-32**

**The  
Unpardonable  
Sin**

# The book of Matthew

- In Chapters 1-9 Jesus offered the kingdom of heaven to Israel for 2½ years, demonstrating his credentials with divine miraculous evidence.
- In Chapter 10, Jesus sent out the 12 disciples, who came back enthused from more miracles.
- Jesus affirmed his mission to John the Baptist and offered rest to the weary in Chap 11.
- Yet Israel rejected Jesus in Chapter 12. This chapter ends with the “unpardonable sin.”

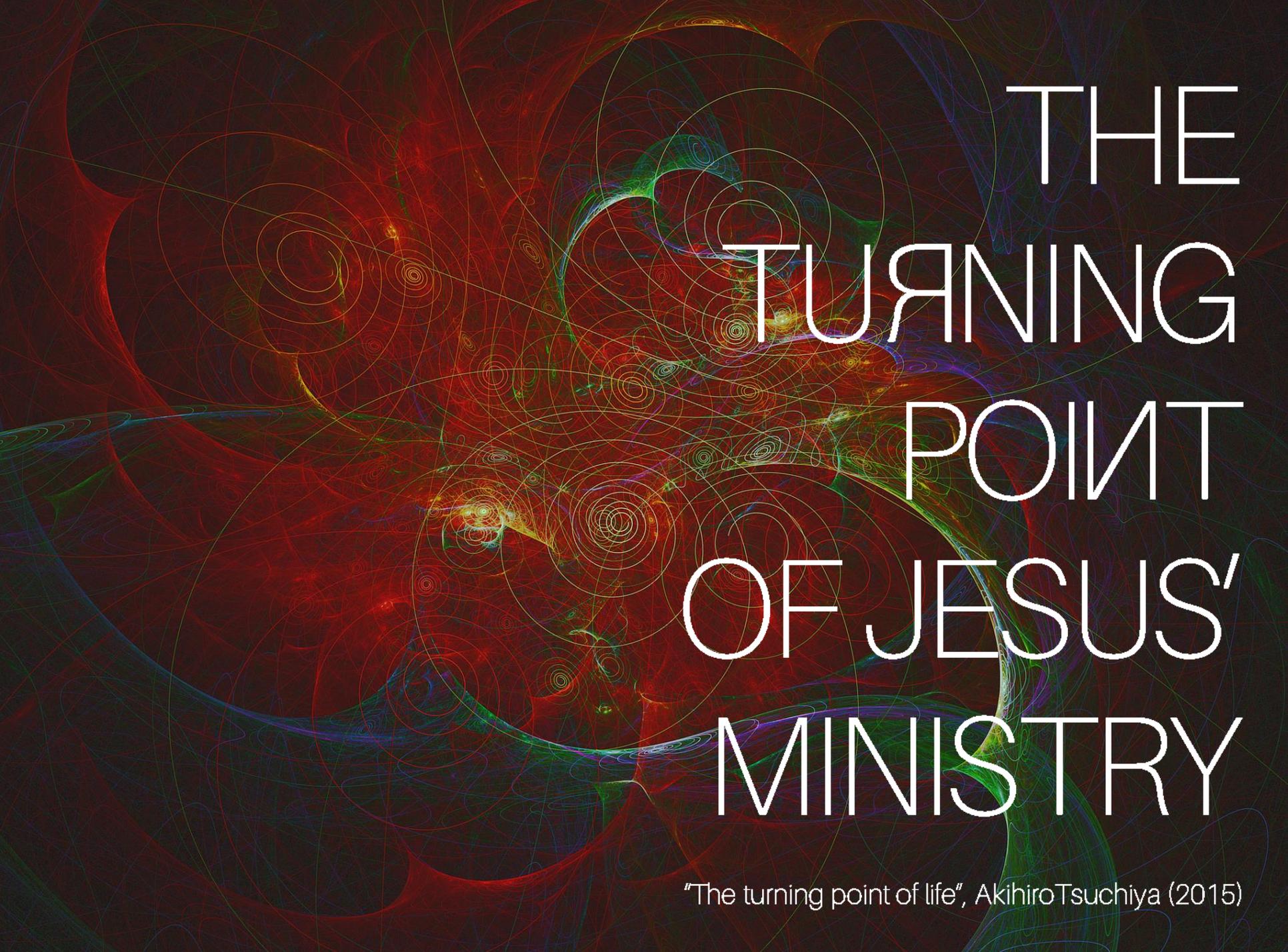
“Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.”

(Matthew 12:49b-50)



“Christus Remunerator (Christ Paid)” 1837

Ary Scheffer (1795-1858)



# THE TURNING POINT OF JESUS' MINISTRY

"The turning point of life", Akihiro Tsuchiya (2015)

## The worm turns

- Chapter 12 ends His offer of the **Kingdom of Heaven** to Israel. **They rejected it!**

From this point on,  
Jesus speaks publicly  
**only** in parables.

- Chapter 13 will now use seven “kingdom parables” to announce a “**mystery**” not in the Old Testament.

# Matthew Chapter 13

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## THE KINGDOM PARABLES



KINGDOM

**Truth** hidden in plain sight

PARABLES

<sup>1</sup> On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea. <sup>2</sup> And great multitudes were gathered together to Him, so that He got into a boat and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore.



## Parable of the sower and the four soils

<sup>3</sup> Then He spoke many things to them in parables, saying: "Behold, a sower went out to sow.

<sup>4</sup> "And as he sowed, some [seed] fell by the wayside; and the birds came and devoured them.

<sup>5</sup> "Some fell on stony places, where they did not have much earth; and they immediately sprang up because they had no depth of earth. <sup>6</sup> "But when the sun was up they were scorched, and because they had no root they withered away.

<sup>7</sup> "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them.

<sup>8</sup> "But others fell on good ground and yielded a crop: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty.

<sup>9</sup> **"He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"**

## Why Jesus spoke in parables

<sup>10</sup> And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?"

<sup>11</sup> He answered and said to them,

"Because **it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven**, but to them it has **not** been given.

<sup>12</sup> "For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

<sup>13</sup> "Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

# Why Jesus spoke in parables

<sup>14</sup> "And in them the prophecy of Isaiah\* is fulfilled, which says:

'Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, And seeing you will see and not perceive;

<sup>15</sup> For the hearts of this people have grown dull. [Their] ears are hard of hearing, And their eyes they have closed, Lest they should see with [their] eyes and hear with [their] ears, Lest they should understand with [their] hearts and turn, So that I should heal them.'

\*Isaiah 6:9

<sup>16</sup> "But blessed [are] your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear; <sup>17</sup> "for assuredly, 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].

## Spiritual significance of the parable

<sup>18</sup> "Therefore hear the parable of the sower: <sup>19</sup> "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand [it], then the wicked [*evil one*] comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.

<sup>20</sup> "But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup> "yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles.

<sup>22</sup> "Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful.

<sup>23</sup> "But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands [it], who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

Fell by wayside  
(without understanding)

- Birds steal the seed away

Soil Beside  
the Road



Fell among  
thorns

- Too entangled in the cares of this world

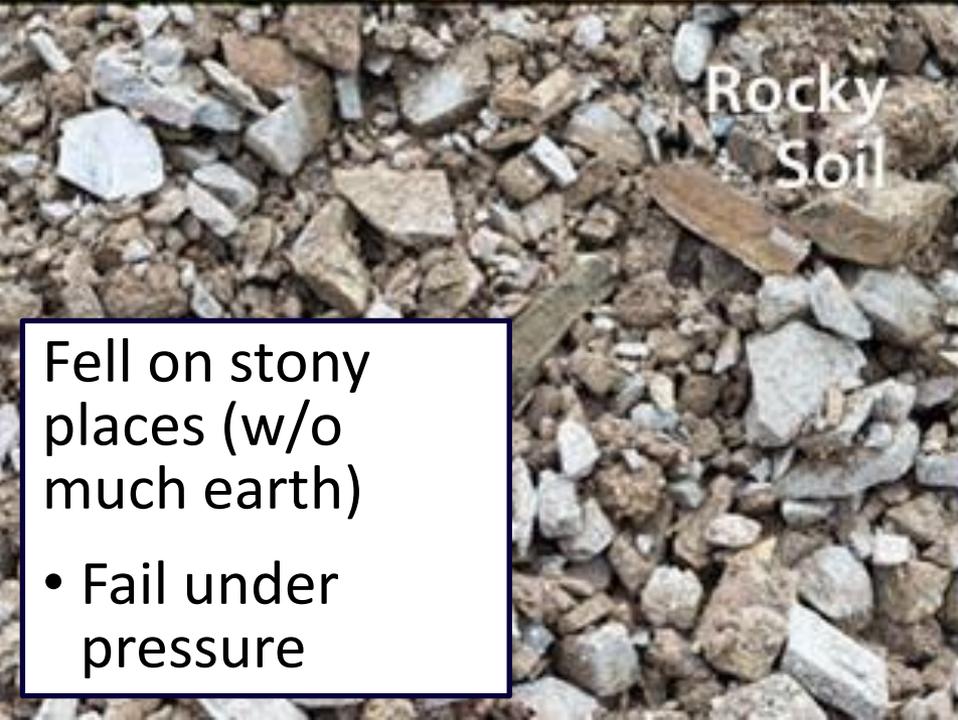
Thorny  
Soil



Fell on stony  
places (w/o  
much earth)

- Fail under pressure

Rocky  
Soil



Good  
Soil

Fell on good  
ground

- Hear and understand
- Bear much fruit



## Sower and 4 soils (summary)

1. Why does the parable of the sower does not begin with “The kingdom of heaven is like”?
2. What is the “seed”?
3. What do the soils represent?
4. What conditions are required for a good harvest?
5. Who is the sower?
6. What does the sun represent?
7. What environment was Jesus presenting (i.e., a great harvest or rejection?)
8. What is the test of true faith?
9. Can someone believe and still not be saved?
10. What do crop yields (some 100X, 60X, 30X) mean?

## Parable of the tares (weeds) and the wheat

<sup>24</sup> Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; <sup>25</sup> "but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. <sup>26</sup> "But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.

<sup>27</sup> "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?' <sup>28</sup> 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?' <sup>29</sup> But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup> 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.'

## Tares (a weed, aka cockle, zīzania, darnel)

- ❖ Darnel *Lolium temulentum* is a species of rye-grass whose seeds are a strong soporific poison.
- ❖ It bears a close resemblance to wheat while growing until the ear appears, but the difference is obvious when mature.
- ❖ It grows plentifully in Syria and Palestine.
- ❖ Roman law prohibited sowing darnel among the wheat of an enemy.



## Explanation of the parable of the tares

<sup>36</sup> 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."

<sup>37</sup> He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup> The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked [one]. <sup>39</sup> The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

<sup>40</sup> Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. <sup>41</sup> 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, <sup>42</sup> and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

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

# Some thoughts on the Tares and the Wheat

- ❖ Satan opposes the kingdom by trying to snatch the Word from hearts (Matt. 13:4, 19). But when that fails, he uses other means.
- ❖ The tares are **imitation Christians**. These counterfeit or false Christians (2 Cor. 11:26) believe a counterfeit gospel (Gal. 1:6–9). Satan encourages counterfeit righteousness (Rom. 10:1–3) and has a counterfeit church (Rev. 2:9). At the end of the age, he will even produce a counterfeit Christ (2 Thess. 2:1–12).
- ❖ We must oppose Satan and expose his lies. But we must also sow the Word of God and bear fruit in the place where He has planted us.
- ❖ God will sort out the counterfeits. It's not our job.
- ❖ The real focus of this parable is on **the righteous**! They persevere and “shine forth” in the end.

## Parable of the mustard seed

<sup>31</sup> Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, <sup>32</sup> which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."



The mustard seed symbolizes something small and insignificant. It produces a large plant, but not a “tree” in the strictest sense, and is not particularly attractive to birds.

Birds in the parable of the sower are satanic (Matt. 13:19). A tree is a symbol of world power (Daniel 4:12; Ezekiel 17:23).

This parable suggests an **abnormal growth** of the kingdom of heaven, such that Satan can work in it.

From humble beginnings, many churches have become influential, wealthy, powerful and complex... and attractive to “birds”.



Mustard crop in Israel.

## Parable of the woman and the leaven

<sup>33</sup> Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."



## Parable of the woman and the leaven

<sup>33</sup> Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."



### What is "leaven"?

1. a substance, as yeast or baking powder, that causes fermentation and expansion of dough or batter.
2. fermented dough reserved for producing fermentation in a new batch of dough.
3. an element that produces an altering or transforming influence.

## What does this parable indicate?

1. What does leaven symbolise to Jews?
2. Why does it mean that? What's the connection?
3. What sin does God hate most? Why?
4. What happens to leaven during Passover ceremonies?
5. Is there any significance to “three measures of meal”?
6. Are there any exceptions to the negative portrayal of leaven?

# Parable of the woman and the leaven (summary)

- ❖ The mustard seed illustrates false *outward* expansion of the kingdom through marriage with the world (Pergamos), while leaven signals *inward* development of false doctrine (as in Thyatira).
- ❖ Throughout the Bible, leaven is a symbol of evil. Like sin, it corrupts by “puffing up”.
- ❖ Leaven had to be removed from homes during Passover (Ex. 12:15–19; 13:7). It was excluded from sacrifices (Ex. 34:35), except for loaves used at the Feast of Pentecost (Lev. 23:15–21), where it symbolised Jews and Gentiles in the church.
- ❖ Jesus used leaven to picture hypocrisy (Luke 12:1), false teaching (Matt. 16:6–12), and worldly compromise (Matt. 22:16–21). Paul used leaven to picture carnality in the church (1 Cor. 5:6–8) as well as false doctrine (Gal. 5:9).

# The kingdom parables so far

## ● The Beginning of the Kingdom

- The parable of the sower and the four soils      Ephesus

## ● Opposition to the Kingdom

- The tares—false Christians      Smyrna
- The mustard seed—false growth      Pergamos
- The leaven—false doctrine      Thyatira

# The kingdom parables so far

## ● The Beginning of the Kingdom

- The parable of the sower and the four soils Ephesus

## ● Opposition to the Kingdom

- The tares—false Christians Smyrna
- The mustard seed—false growth Pergamos
- The leaven—false doctrine Thyatira

Things look bleak!

- The kingdom of heaven began with the sowing of the Word of God in the hearts of men, but most ignored it.
- Then Satan sowed counterfeit Christians, encouraged false growth, and introduced false doctrine.

## Things look bleak, but....

- The real test is at *the end* of the age, not *during* the age.
- At the close of this age, God will have three peoples:
  - the Jews,
  - the believing *ekklesia*,
  - and the saved Gentiles who will enter into the kingdom.
- So let's look at the rest of the story before we freak out! We have three parables to go.

## The kingdom parables fulfilled OT prophecy

<sup>34</sup> All these things Jesus spoke to the multitude in parables; and without a parable He did not speak to them, <sup>35</sup> that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world."

**The first four Kingdom parables  
were spoken in public.**

**The last three were spoken  
to his Disciples in private.**

## Parable of the treasure in a field



<sup>44</sup> "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field."

# “the kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden”

	Common Protestant views	John Calvin's interpretation	St. Thomas Aquinas' interpretation	Using Old Testament symbolism
<b>Hidden Treasure found and rehidden</b>	Jesus Christ (Salvation – Kingdom of God)	Kingdom of Heaven	Gospel	The nation of Israel (Ex. 19:5; Ps. 135:4)
<b>The Field</b>	“The field is the world” (Matt. 13:38)	“The field is the world” (Matt. 13:38) (fleshly desire)	The discipline of Heavenly learning	“The field is the world” (Matt. 13:38)
<b>Man who sells all to buy field</b>	Sinner	Believer	Sinner	Jesus Christ (John 11:51; Isa. 53:8)



## Parable of the pearl of great price

A painting depicting a market scene. In the center, a merchant in a dark blue and green robe stands behind a wooden counter, examining a large pearl. A crowd of people, including men in various head coverings and a woman in a red dress, surrounds the counter, looking on with interest. In the foreground, a man in a yellow tunic is bent over, possibly handling goods. The background shows a stone wall and a doorway. The overall scene is rendered in a classic, somewhat somber style with warm, muted colors.

<sup>45</sup> "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, <sup>46</sup> who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had and bought it."

# “the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant”

	<b>Common Protestant view</b>	<b>Alternate Protestant view</b>	<b>Pope Pius XII <i>Sacra Virginitas</i> 25 March 1954</b>	<b>Using New Testament symbolism</b>
<b>The merchant</b>	The sinner (you and me)	The sinner (you and me)	Multitudinous men/women of the Roman Catholic Church	Jesus Christ, the source of salvation (Hebrews 5:9)
<b>The pearl of great price</b>	Jesus Christ (Salvation)	The Kingdom of Heaven (Salvation)	Holy virginity and perfect chastity consecrated to service of God	The “Church”-believing Jews and Gentiles (Eph. 2:11; 4:4–6)
<b>Sold all that he had</b>	Dedicates life to Christ	Diligent seeking and taking action for the deal of a lifetime	Dedicates and consecrates body and soul to God in perpetuity	Christ died for the church (Eph. 5:25)



## Parable of the dragnet

<sup>47</sup> "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind, <sup>48</sup> which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away.

<sup>49</sup> "So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, <sup>50</sup> and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth."

# “the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet”

	Common Protestant view	Catholic View (Origen, etc.)
The timing	The end of the age (Mat. 13:49; Rev 19:11); The Day of the Lord	<i>Seculi finis est littus, tunc est tempus separare</i> (The end of the world again, and then it is time to separate)
The sea	The world	Humanity (“peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues” Rev. 17:15)
The dragnet/ angels	“The sheep and the goats” (Matt. 25:31-46; )	A seine to capture all to be separated on shore (the net is the Gospel)
Good fish (righteous) (Zech. 10:3)	The just (justified by faith), believers	Those living who heard or read the Gospel and truly believed
The rest (wicked) (Zech. 10:3)	The wicked (rejected Jesus) non-believers	Those living who heard or read the Gospel pretending to believe or rejecting it

# Parables of the Kingdom of Heaven!

## The beginning of the Kingdom

Parable of the Sower  
and the Four Soils

## Growth and corruption of the Kingdom

Parable of the  
Mustard Seed

*Visible*  
(Supernatural)

*Invisible*  
(Human)

Parable of the  
Leaven

## Value and preciousness of the Kingdom

Parable of the  
Hidden Treasure

*Finding is  
Accidental*  
(Kosher)

*Seeking is  
Deliberate*  
(not Kosher)

Parable of the  
Pearl of Great Price

## Gathering and separation of the Kingdom

Parable of the  
Wheat and Tares

*Condition  
due to Satan*  
(present)

*Separation  
by angels*  
(future)

Parable of the  
Dragnet

# A test that the Disciples (passed?)(failed?)

<sup>51</sup> Jesus said to them, "Have you understood all these things?"

They said to Him, "Yes, Lord."

<sup>52</sup> Then He said to them, "Therefore every scribe instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out of his treasure things new and old."

every scribe	Every evangelist (Matthew 23:34)
instructed concerning the kingdom of heaven	who understands the things taught of the Kingdom of Heaven
is like a householder	is like a person who is head of a household with generations of children, etc.
who brings out of his treasure things new and old	Christ the Word of God is the greatest treasure, who has introduced new truths to complement the old, and fulfilled unanswered matters/issues



# What is Jesus telling the disciples?

Like Ezra's original scribes, disciples of the kingdom of heaven must be:

## ● Scribes who discover the truth.

- We have truth in God's Son (John 14:6) and God's Word (17:17).
- We are taught by the Spirit of Truth (John 16:13) who is truth (1 John 5:6).

## ● Disciples who do the truth.

- Scribes emphasize *learning*; disciples emphasize *living*.
- Disciples are doers of the Word (James 1:22) who learn by doing.

## ● Stewards who protect and dispense the truth.

- Stewards guard treasure, but also dispense it as it is needed.
- New principles and insights are based on old truths.

## Prophet without honour in His own land

<sup>53</sup> Now it came to pass, when Jesus had finished these parables, that He departed from there.

<sup>54</sup> When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this [Man] get this wisdom and [these] mighty works?

<sup>55</sup> "Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joses, Simon, and Judas? <sup>56</sup> And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this [Man] get all these things?"

<sup>57</sup> So they were offended at Him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honour except in his own country and in his own house."

<sup>58</sup> Now He did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief.

# Conclusion

- The kingdom began in a small way. It is not conspicuous. Many people will not notice it. Others will hear about it and want to be part, but will fall away for one reason or another.
- The kingdom has many trials. It is not the utopia that some people want it to be. Some people prefer the things of this world, but others treasure it so much they are willing to give up everything.
- The kingdom begins with God. He sows the seed; seeks a harvest, sets the standards, makes the judgments, gives both grace and duties, tells us to forgive others and to work for the kingdom.
- The Kingdom parables do not describe a wonderful world that comes only after the King returns. They describe a time of invitation, rejection, choices, testing, trials, growth, judgment. The kingdom of heaven is an age in which we work before we are rewarded. Jesus does not describe the kingdom after that.

KINGDOM

**Truth** hidden in plain sight

PARABLES

PERGAMUM



THYATIRA



SARDIS



SMYRNA



PHILADELPHIA



EPHESUS



LAODICEA



## Jesus' report cards to ALL congregations

**Each was surprised** by its report!

Those thinking they **were** doing well, **weren't**.

Those thinking they **weren't** doing well, **were**.

# Why?

The reports are through **God's eyes**, not Man's!

*“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD.”*

Isaiah 55:8

# Historical Interpretation in the Day

## Real Cities

### ✿ **Ephesus**

("Desired One" or "Darling")

### ✿ **Smyrna**

("Myrrh", "Suffering" or "Death")

### ✿ **Pergamos**

("Mixed marriage" or "Serpent")

### ✿ **Thyatira**

("Perpetual sacrifice", "Semiramis")

### ✿ **Sardis**

("Escaping" or "Remnant")

### ✿ **Philadelphia**

("Brotherly love", "Church of Love")

### ✿ **Laodicea**

("Rule/judgement of/by the people")

## Real Issues

- The loveless church  
(Active and busy, but lost sight of why.)
- The persecuted church  
(God sees your plight. Have strength.)
- The compromising church  
(Stop your compromise with the world.)
- The corrupt church  
(Many good works, but corrupt leaders.)
- The dead church  
(Blinded by pride, the enemy is winning.)
- The faithful church  
(You persevere through trial; well done.)
- The lukewarm church  
(Worldly wealth but spiritually naked.)

# Each letter NAILED the specific congregation

## ✿ **Ephesus**

("Desired One" or "Darling")

➤ Devotion, not just doctrine

## ✿ **Smyrna**

("Myrrh", "Suffering" or "Death")

➤ Endure persecution

## ✿ **Pergamos**

("Mixed marriage" or "Serpent")

➤ Stand fast against the world

## ✿ **Thyatira**

("Semiramis" or "Daughter")

➤ Abandon pagan practices

## ✿ **Sardis**

("Escaping" or "Remnant")

➤ Watchfulness, diligence

## ✿ **Philadelphia**

("Brotherly love")

➤ Outreach; faithfulness

## ✿ **Laodicea**

("Rule/judgement of/by the people")

➤ Prosperous compromise

# Expectation

● **Ephesus**

Early church

Return

● **Smyrna**

Persecuted church

Remain

● **Pergamos**

Married church

Reclaim

● **Thyatira**

Corrupt church

Remove

● **Sardis**

Dead church

Reborn

● **Philadelphia**

Obedient church

Reward

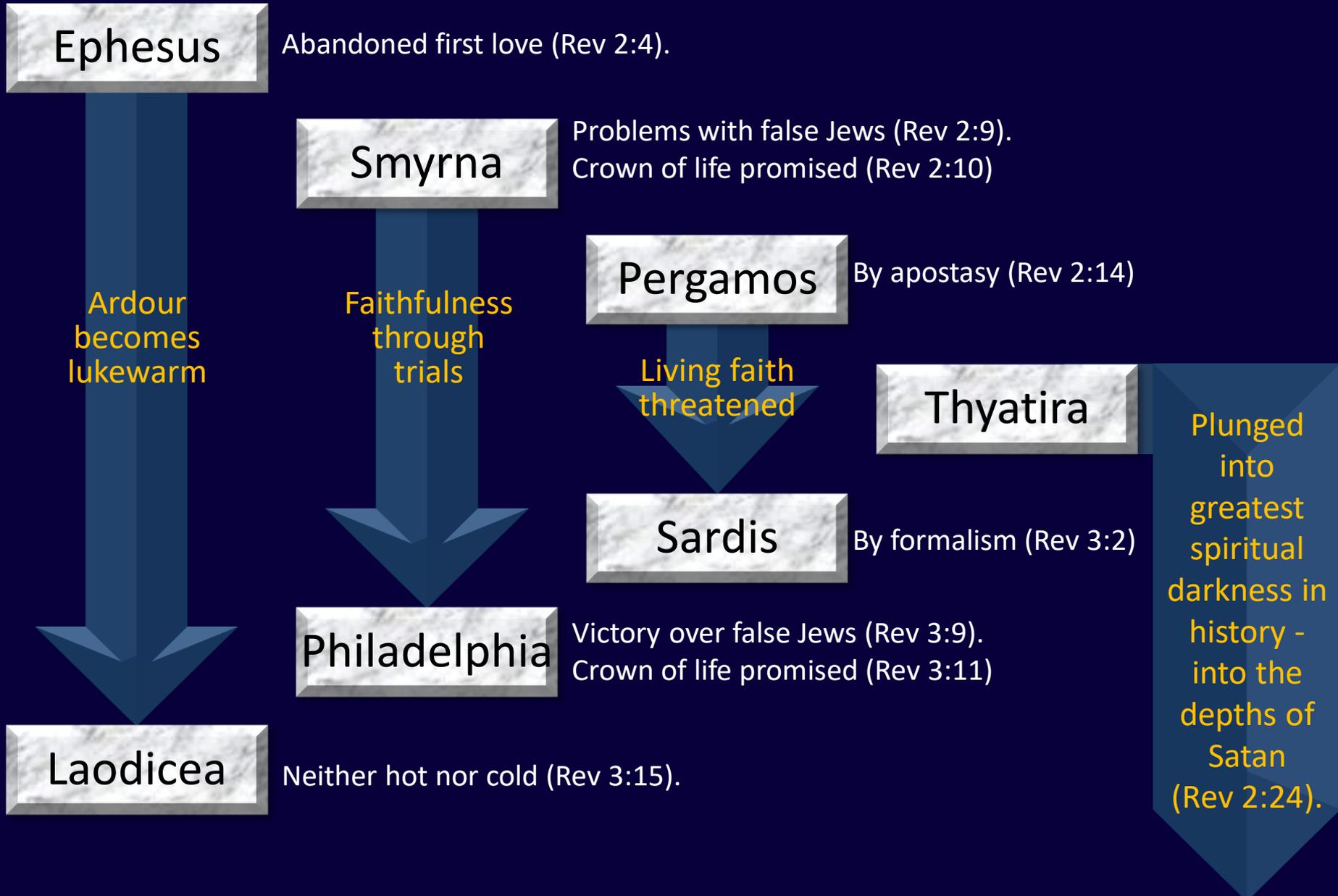
● **Laodicea**

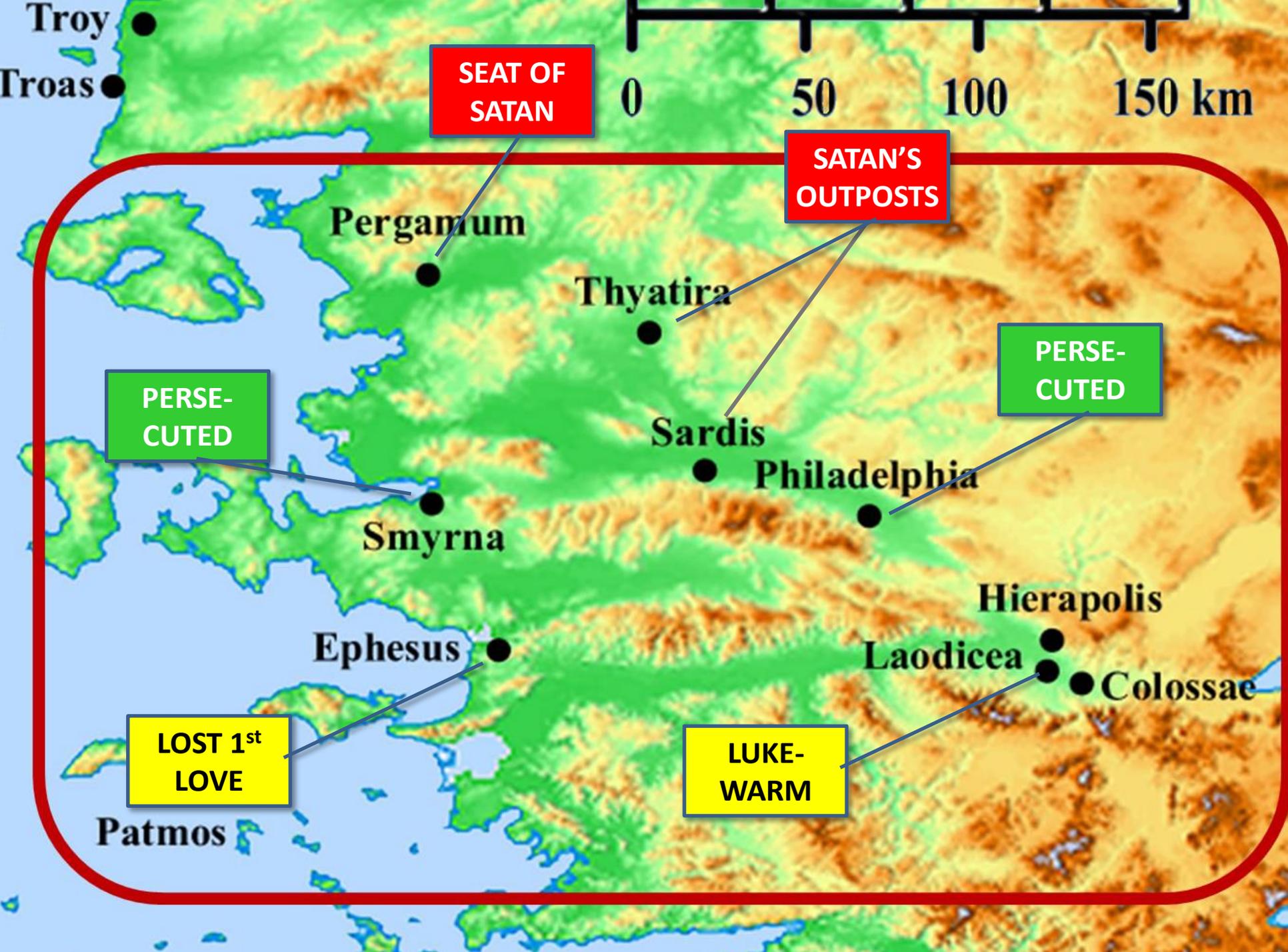
Apostate church

Repent



# Chiastic Church Correlation





Troy  
Troas



**SEAT OF SATAN**

**SATAN'S OUTPOSTS**

**PERSECUTED**

**PERSECUTED**

**LOST 1<sup>st</sup> LOVE**

**LUKE-WARM**

Pergamum

Thyatira

Sardis

Philadelphia

Smyrna

Hierapolis

Ephesus

Laodicea

Colossae

Patmos



**SEAT OF SATAN**

**SATAN'S OUTPOSTS**

**PERSECUTED**

**PERSECUTED**

**LOST 1<sup>st</sup> LOVE**

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Pergamum

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Laodicea

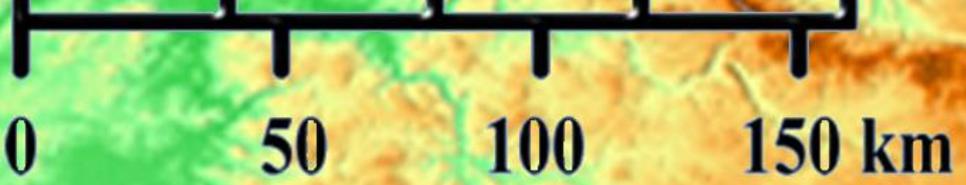
Colossae

**SPIRITUALLY CORRUPT**

**SPIRITUALLY STRONG**

**SPIRITUALLY WEAK**

Troy  
Troas



Patmos

# Historical Parallels with the Old Testament

Adam affection for Eve superseded his first love (God); expelled from Eden.	<b>Ephesus</b>	As with Adam, Ephesus lost its first love. Overcomers will be restored to Eden.
Trouble for Israel in Egypt up to the 10 plagues. Passover lamb saved faithful.	<b>Smyrna</b>	Tribulation in Smyrna (10 days). Faithful promised not hurt of second death.
From Exodus through Judges, did right in their own eyes. Balaam/Balak. Manna.	<b>Pergamos</b>	Did right in own eyes, married idolatry. Balaam/Balak. Promised hidden manna.
People wanted king. Kingdoms peaked w/ Solomon; declined through Jezebel.	<b>Thyatira</b>	Parallels Israel becoming kingdom with imperial papacy. Jezebel.
Remnant escape Nebuchadnezzar and remain faithful after AD 606.	<b>Sardis</b>	Sardis (meaning "remnant") survive through conquest.
Under Cyrus open door to return to Israel and rebuild Temple. Homeland in Israel.	<b>Philadelphia</b>	Small faithful remnant spared severe hour of trial; Open door. Homeland w/ Jesus.
Spiritual Israel blind to Christ despite John the Baptist. Jerusalem destroyed AD 70.	<b>Laodicea</b>	Spiritual Laodicea blind to Christ ("Stand outside and knock.") Jesus offers grace.

# Parallels with the Seven Kingdom Parables

Seed is sown. Some is gobbled up by birds. Some superficial. Some burned off by persecution. Some takes root.	<b>Ephesus</b>	False Apostles (birds) error entered the church and Ephesus lost its first love. Nicolaitans (clergy) are a problem.
Enemy sows tares (false Christians) among the wheat. Persecuted by Rome and Synagogue of Satan.	<b>Smyrna</b>	Tribulation in Smyrna (10 days). Faithful promised not hurt of second death. No criticism.
Abhorrent unnatural growth from a small mustard seed into a huge tree, which provides shelter for birds.	<b>Pergamos</b>	Married the world, compromise, served under Satan's seat, Nicolaitans, apostasy, church-state union (4th-5th century).
Woman (Jezebel?) kneads leaven (sin, hypocrisy, wickedness) into fellowship offering; symbolic of sacrifice not peace.	<b>Thyatira</b>	Apostate satanic doctrine and unending sacrifices; parallels Israel becoming kingdom with imperial papacy; Jezebel.
Treasure (faithful Jewish remnant in the diaspora) hidden in the field (world). Jesus' sacrifice buys the field for them.	<b>Sardis</b>	Sardis (meaning "remnant") survive through conquest; dead church; real remnant are those few remaining faithful.
Oysters not Kosher. Jewish Merchants sell but do not prize pearls. They grow by irritation; must leave shell for value.	<b>Philadelphia</b>	Small faithful Christian remnant spared severe hour of trial; open door. Promised homeland with Jesus.
Parable of the net where all are caught and separated afterwards.	<b>Laodicea</b>	Rich in worldly wealth but spiritually poor, Laodicea blind to Christ ("I stand outside and knock"). Jesus offers grace.

# Summary of the Church Age

Church Age	Brief description
<b>Ephesus</b> AD 30-100	Rapid spread during the lives of the apostles (see the book of Acts).
<b>Smyrna</b> 100-313	Pagan persecution of the underground church until Constantine as Emperor issued the Edict of Milan.
<b>Pergamos</b> 313-600	Marriage of the church to the State (Roman Empire), mixing residual paganism and Christianity.
<b>Thyatira</b> 600-1517	The medieval rule of the Roman Catholic Church as a queen, living deliciously with the kings of the earth.
<b>Sardis</b> 1517-1648	Reformation and the Catholic Counter-reformation and ongoing destruction of the Protestant movement.
<b>Philadelphia</b> 1648-1900	Rapid spread worldwide through missionary zeal and outreach.
<b>Laodicea</b> 1900- ?	Apostasy and the decline of the nominal lukewarm modern (Western) church.

# Patterns recur over time

City	Prophetic patterns observed
<b>Ephesus</b> ("Desirable")	Considered "most desirable" ancient site in Asia. Artemis statues/amulets still best seller in shops. First love (Living Water) lost as bay receded (siltified).
<b>Smyrna</b> ("Myrrh", "Suffering")	Long-lost ruins found underneath Muslim cemetery. Site of 1922 Christian (Armenian, Greek) genocide. Arab Spring has ethnically cleansed Middle East.
<b>Pergamos</b> ("Mixed marriage")	Satan's seat now in Berlin inspired Nazi ceremonies. Caduceus (commerce) now used as medical symbol. Plundered by archaeologists; treasures in Berlin.
<b>Thyatira</b> ("Perpetual sacrifice")	Subsumed under town; no interest in excavation. No evidence of Christian presence; ruins of spruiked basilica are actually of secular city hall/guild hall.
<b>Sardis</b> ("Escaping" or "Remnant")	Appearance w/o substance; impregnable citadel built on clay, now eroded; fell numerous times thru sloth. Integration of wealthy synagogue with gym/baths.
<b>Philadelphia</b> ("Brotherly love")	Indefensible, but final Christian city in Asia; never fell. Main evidence are three pillars of 6 <sup>th</sup> century basilica. Only site with current chapel (nuns tending roses).
<b>Laodicea</b> ("Rule of the people")	Moved to well rather than stay with calcified water. Excavations say, "We need nothing" re govt funding. Aspires to be greater tourist site than Ephesus.

# The seven Kingdom parables

## Revelation Chapters 2 & 3

- ✿ **Ephesus**  
("First", "Desired One" or "Darling")
- ✿ **Smyrna**  
("Myrrh", "Suffering" or "Death")
- ✿ **Pergamos**  
("Mixed marriage" or "Serpent")
- ✿ **Thyatira**  
("Perpetual sacrifice", "Semiramis")
- ✿ **Sardis**  
("Escaping" or "Remnant")
- ✿ **Philadelphia**  
("Brotherly love", "Church of Love")
- ✿ **Laodicea**  
("Rule of the people", "Lukewarm")

## Matthew Chapter 13

- The Sower and the Four Soils  
Matthew 13:3-9
- The Tares and the Wheat  
Matthew 13:24-30
- The Mustard Seed  
Matthew 13:31-32
- The Woman and the Leaven  
Matthew 13:33
- The Treasure in the Field  
Matthew 13:44
- The Pearl of Great Price  
Matthew 13:45-46
- The Dragnet  
Matthew 13:46-50

# Revelation 2 & 3 versus Paul's Epistles

## Revelation Chapters 2 & 3

### ✦ **Ephesus**

("Desired One" or "Darling")

### ✦ **Smyrna**

("Myrrh", "Suffering" or "Death")

### ✦ **Pergamos**

("Mixed marriage" or "Serpent")

### ✦ **Thyatira**

("Perpetual sacrifice", "Semiramis")

### ✦ **Sardis**

("Red Stone" or "Remnant")

### ✦ **Philadelphia**

("Brotherly love", "Church of Love")

### ✦ **Laodicea**

("Rule of the people", "Lukewarm")

## Paul's 7 epistles

- Ephesians (keep self & church holy)
- Philippians (joy through suffering)
- Corinthians (marriage to world)
- Galatians (religious externalism)
- Romans (Paul's definitive doctrine)
- Thessalonians (raptured Church)
- Colossians (A few km from Laodicea; instructed to trade letters with Laodicea; Greek phrases unique to these letters).

## Promises to the Overcomer

- **Ephesus** Eat of the Tree of Life
- **Smyrna** Not hurt of second death
- **Pergamos** Manna, Stone, Name.
- **Thyatira** Power over nations.
- **Sardis** Walk with Him in white;  
name not blotted out.
- **Philadelphia** Pillar in Temple, name of God,  
name of His city, new name.
- **Laodicea** Sit with Him on His throne.

# Each letter applies to YOU AND ME individually

- ❖ **Ephesus** ➤ Neglected priorities  
(“Desired One” or “Darling”)
- ❖ **Smyrna** ➤ Satanic opposition  
(“Myrrh”, “Suffering” or “Death”)
- ❖ **Pergamos** ➤ Worldly compromise  
(“Mixed marriage” or “Serpent”)
- ❖ **Thyatira** ➤ Flee pagan practices; the Word  
(“Perpetual sacrifice”, “Semiramis”)
- ❖ **Sardis** ➤ Watchfulness, diligence  
(“Escaping” or “Remnant”)
- ❖ **Philadelphia** ➤ Loyal Ambassadorship  
(“Brotherly love”, “Church of Love”)
- ❖ **Laodicea** ➤ Repent and be committed to Jesus  
(“Rule of the people”, Lukewarm”)

# The seven Kingdom parables

## Revelation Chapters 2 & 3

- ✿ **Ephesus**  
("First", "Desired One" or "Darling")
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("Myrrh", "Suffering" or "Death")
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("Mixed marriage" or "Serpent")
- ✿ **Thyatira**  
("Perpetual sacrifice", "Semiramis")
- ✿ **Sardis**  
("Escaping" or "Remnant")
- ✿ **Philadelphia**  
("Brotherly love", "Church of Love")
- ✿ **Laodicea**  
("Rule of the people", "Lukewarm")

## Matthew Chapter 13

- The Sower and the Four Soils  
Matthew 13:3-9
- The Tares and the Wheat  
Matthew 13:24-30
- The Mustard Seed  
Matthew 13:31-32
- The Woman and the Leaven  
Matthew 13:33
- The Treasure in the Field  
Matthew 13:44
- The Pearl of Great Price  
Matthew 13:45-46
- The Dragnet  
Matthew 13:46-50

# Revelation 2 & 3 versus Paul's Epistles

## Revelation Chapters 2 & 3

### ✦ **Ephesus**

("Desired One" or "Darling")

### ✦ **Smyrna**

("Myrrh", "Suffering" or "Death")

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("Perpetual sacrifice", "Semiramis")

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### ✦ **Philadelphia**

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