

# The Parable of the Wheat and Tares Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

by R.A. Torrey

*The Parable of the Wheat and Tares teaches that Satan sows wickedness in the world, but God will ultimately judge and punish the wicked, while gathering the righteous into His presence.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 13:24

**Topics:** "Good vs Evil", "Judgment and Redemption"

## Description

R.A. Torrey expounds on the Parable of the Wheat and Tares, illustrating the coexistence of good and evil in the world. He emphasizes that while the Son of Man sows good seed, the enemy sows tares, representing the wicked. The parable teaches that both crops will grow together until the harvest, when the righteous will be separated from the wicked. Torrey highlights the importance of recognizing the reality of evil and the ultimate judgment that awaits both groups. The sermon concludes with a call to remain steadfast in faith, knowing that God will ultimately triumph over evil.

## Transcript

### DISCOVERY OF THE FACTS

1. Two Sowers, vv. 24, 25 To whom was this parable spoken (v. 36)? To whom was it explained? What parable preceded this? How much time intervened between the two? Is there any connection between the two? To whom is the kingdom of heaven likened? Does this form of expression mean that the kingdom is like the man himself or that its progress is like that in this history of which the man is the central figure? What is meant by "the kingdom of heaven"? Whom does the sower in this parable symbolize (v. 37)?

What is implied in the title "Son of Man"? What is symbolized by the good seed (v. 38)? In the preceding parable what did the good seed symbolize (v. 19)? What is the relation between the two? What is the field (v. 38)? Whose field is the world? Who is the god of this world? (2 Cor. 4:4.) Is he rightful ruler in this world? What does our Lord assume to be by claiming the world to be His field? In whose field did the Son of man sow? How many of us have a field? What is our field?

What is it our duty to do in regard to it? If one has a very small field is it important to sow good seed in it? Which is best, a small field well cultivated or a large field poorly cultivated? What harm came to the field? Who is the enemy (v. 39)? Does this mean a personal devil? (2 Cor. 2:11; 11:14; 2 Thess. 2:9, 10; Matt.

4:1-11.) Why do men deny the existence of a personal devil? What proof of his existence have we? Whom do the tares represent (v. 38)? How do wicked men come to be in the world?

How does the devil sow them? (Gen. 3:4, 5.) What is taught by that? Where did the devil sow them? Do the tares ever get into the church? What are tares literally? Is such an atrocious act ever committed in fact? What illustration have we in history of the devil sowing tares? (Gen. 3; John 13:2; Acts 5:3; 20:29, etc.) Does the devil have any helpers in sowing tares? What may we be sure will be sown on top of the wheat we sow in the home, in the Sunday school, etc.? When is the enemy said to have sown the tares?

What did the Saviour mean to teach by that? Can we always be on our guard? What guarantee then have we that we shall always be kept? (Ps. 121:3.) What did the enemy do when he had sown the seed? Why? Does he try to conceal himself today when he has done his work? Was there any similarity between the work of Satan and that of the Son of man? 2. Two Crops Growing Together, vv. 26-29 When were the tares discovered? When and how can tares be distinguished from wheat? When and how can bad men be distinguished from good? (Matt. 7:20.)

Were they tares before they were discovered to be such? How many kinds of seed were there? How many kinds of men are there? (1 John 3:10.) What was the first feeling of the farmer's servants when they discovered the tares? What does this surprise represent? What is our Lord's answer to the question of the origin of evil in the world? What is the origin of the obstacles to Christ's work today? (1 Thess. 2:18.) How far can Satan hinder? (Job 1:12; 2:6.) What was the second feeling of the servants in regard to tares?

What does that represent? Did this spirit ever manifest itself in the disciples? (Luke 9:54.) Have the professed disciples of Jesus ever exhibited this spirit since? Does the householder permit the tares to be rooted up? Does this prohibit the excommunication of church members? (18:15-17; Ro. 16:17; 1 Cor. 5:3-5, 11; 2 Thess. 3:6, 14. What is forbidden? Has the command any bearing on church discipline? What reason does the householder give for not rooting out the tares at once?

How might the wheat be rooted out? What question that men are constantly asking do His words answer? Why does God delay the execution of judgment on the wicked? (2 Peter 3:9.) What element of Christ's character is here set forth? 3. Two Harvests, v. 30 Were the tares and wheat to grow together forever? When is the harvest (v. 39)? What two kinds of harvest are spoken of in the Bible as taking place at the end of the world? (Rev. 14:14-20.) What is to take place at the harvest?

Who are the reapers (v. 39)? What will they do with the tares? What is signified by binding them in bundles? What is meant by the burning (v. 42)? Where else is the doom of the wicked spoken of as fire? (2 Sam. 23:6, 7; Matt. 7:19; John 15:6; Is. 66:24; 5:24; 9:18, 19; 10:16, 17; 33:11, 12; Heb. 6:8; 10:26, 27; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:15; 21:8.) What shall be cast into the fire (v. 41)? What shall the wicked do in the furnace of fire (v. 42)? What does "gnashing of teeth" signify? (Acts 7:45.)

Where is the barn where the wheat is gathered (v. 43)? What shall they do there? Who will shine most? (Dan. 12:3.) How much of the wheat will be gathered into the garner? How many of the tares will be cast into the fire (v. 41)? Does this parable teach that the evil gradually disappears from the world or that evil and good grow side by side until a final, awful catastrophe in which the good shall be separated from the evil? Does the harvest precede or follow Christ's coming? (Matt. 24:30, 31.) Upon what does our place in the harvest depend? What does the lesson teach about the devil's character? About God's?

CLASSIFICATION OF TEACHINGS

## 1. Jesus

His humanity, 37, 41; deity, goodness, 24; the ideal man, 37; the world's rightful Lord, 24; the world's final judge, His long-suffering, severity, 30; His final triumph over Satan and sin, 41-43.

## 2. The Devil

The certainty of his existence, the malignity of his heart, the activity of his movements, the cunning of his operations, the subtlety of his methods, 29, 35; the usurpation of his dominion, 24-26.

## 3. The Angels

Christ's servants, 41; ministers of Christ's mercy, 30; executioners of His wrath, 42.

## 4. Man

Two classes: sons of the kingdom, sons of the devil, 38; not always distinguishable or separable now, 29; will be distinguished and separated when they are ripe--the one for heaven, the other for hell, 30; two destinies: God's garner, the furnace of fire, 30; two experiences: burning in hell, shining in the Kingdom of their Father, 42, 43.

## 5. The Bliss of the Righteous

Its character: real, final, certain, glorious, 30, 43; its nature: holy fellowship, communion with Christ, effulgent glory, 30, 43; time: the end of the age, 40.

## 6. The Doom of the Wicked

Its character: real, certain, final, terrible, 30, 31, 42; its nature: physical torment, moral degradation, unholy companionship, unavailing cries, 30, 42; time: the end of the age, 40.

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