

Tares Among the Wheat

A Consideration in any Congregation is the Intermingling of False Brethren. Scripture Discusses Two Similar Looking but Distinctly Different Plants used to Represent Different Loyalties and Opposing Agendas.

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“For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him: But it was thou, a man **mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance**. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.” These are the words of King David from Psalm 55, which reflects a situation all too familiar in the Church. Someone we fellowship with, who seemed to share the same goals and beliefs, in due time is exposed as being a ‘sleeping agent’ with an entirely different mindset and purpose for being present with us! “*The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.*” (v.21) One befriended, regarded as a brother, eventually is found to harbor sinister intentions.

It is the rare individual who’s been any length of time in the Church who hasn’t been exposed to those who, in time, prove to be implants, serving rather the enemy of the truth. Some have even attained ‘chief seats’!

In recognition of this recurring situation, Jesus posed a parable, which addresses this painful fact. It is not a new thing, nor is it rare. In Matthew 13, beginning in verse 24: “*Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed **tares among the wheat**, and went his way. 26: But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth **fruit**, then appeared the tares also. 27: So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28: He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather*

*them up? 29: But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30: Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest **I** will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the **tares**, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the **wheat** into my barn.”*

Who Are These?

Now, while many might regard *unconverted* people as possibly being these tares, we can see something more definitive in this narrative. True Saints regard this matter one way, but another segment of the congregation has another take on it, which we should be aware of. An unconverted person may have amplified doubts about himself as a result of this parable. Someone new to the faith can often wonder if these words apply to him. But the true message of this parable is not to depreciate the underdeveloped believer. It rather addresses itself to those who are planted into the congregation by ‘*the enemy*’, possibly even without the person even being fully aware of it! This applies more to the ‘*Judas*’ situation as opposed to the ‘as-yet uncommitted’ situation. We should look more to the individuals harboring hidden agendas, even those who think their covert political or doctrinal influencings are of true benefit to the congregation.

But, it’s the persons **operating with deliberate intent** who represent this debilitating element referred to as tares, not necessarily uncommitted peoples.

In this parable, we are acquainted with not only the problem but also what we should do about it. It would be easy to conclude that we ought to take action NOW!

Matthew 13:24-30

A careful analysis of the parable, point by point,

reveals much about this situation, and what response is appropriate.

While men slept: Not necessarily a fault of the congregation, slumber (diminished awareness) is a normal situation. Members, especially newer members are likely to be generous in their assessments of the genuineness of others.

Enemy sows tares: The problem is, we have an enemy who is intent on devouring the true Saints, and has his agents who are useful to him in accomplishing havoc in the congregations. He even has ‘ministers’ who appear for all intents and purposes as ‘angels of light’, how much more an implant among the common membership.

Leaves the scene without notice: Sneaking off is a clear indication of sinister intent.

Plants appear identical thru early growth period: Another significant consideration, a tare, at first, can appear identical or nearly identical to a truly converted person.¹ The worst of these are likely to know themselves, while their fellow members for a time are largely unaware of any sinister intentions.

Later, they began to be noticeable: Fruits in time, or the continual lack thereof, can’t be concealed forever, especially if the tare is achieving his purpose. Rancor, division, doubts and congregational malaise are sure signs of trouble in the midst.

The master evaluates the matter: Naturally, one should seek counsel as to what is taking place. The problem here is that human beings are not so good at identifying those problem individuals, the resemblance of wheat to tares at first being so similar. If a congregation were to go on a ‘tare removal campaign’, they might rip out a number of suspects, but the overall percentage of wheat and tares after the trauma would likely be the same, only with a smaller congregation. Our perceptions aren’t as accurate as are the Masters’. Also, human political ambitions can fog-up the scene, biasing judgment and making identities the more difficult.

¹ DARNEL (especially ‘bearded darnel’ closely resembles wheat.) SEEDS are often poisonous to humans on account of a parasitic growth within them.

Left to mature to the end: It is the potential damage to maturing Saints that causes the Master to instruct that the tares be left to ‘mature out’ in their present venue. The greater danger is the potential injury to and loss of a legitimate member, keeping in mind that they can appear similar to tares in their early development stages also. (Nor should we entirely rule out the possible conversion of a tare as a result of their long term exposure to Saints conducting themselves as they should.)

To intercede earlier would jeopardize the weak: A fellow-laborer isn’t sufficiently skilled to discern which is which, but even if he can, his removal actions could injure the emerging wheat stalk. But the Master knows exactly what’s best, that’s why...

The final harvest will rectify the situation: When the fruits are fully matured and the field is ready for harvest, the reapers, (*angels of God*²) experts at discernment, are sent to separate and gather up the stalks to their proper consignment.

Are dealt with first: It’s interesting to notice the order in which each harvested product is dealt with. The sinister element is extracted first, not unlike other parables and prophecies which explain how the final harvest is to be conducted. In the Great General Resurrection at the end of time (for physical humanity) (also referred to by some as the *Great White Throne*), the ‘goats’ or the ‘grapes of wrath’ at God’s Spiritual harvest, are gathered first, and set at Jesus’ left hand. (Matt. 25:32 & Rev. 14:18)

Then the true wheat is harvested for the kingdom: Furthering the picture from the scene above, that the true harvest of God is ushered into the Family, at which time we will be ready to experience the descent of the Father to Earth to receive the readied Family from His Son. (see 2nd Peter 3:10-13, speaking of that descent and 1st Corinthians 15:24-28, speaking of the time when God’s Kingdom will be turned-over into full control of the Father!) Do we fully believe the truth that’s set forth by Jesus here (as also mentioned specifically in Daniel 12:3? “...many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth **shall awake**, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall **shine as the brightness of the firmament**; and they

² Matthew 13:39

that turn many to righteousness *as the stars for ever and ever.*) Jesus affirms as much in this exquisite and enormously insightful parable, though such things were not acceptable in the religious climate in which He gave it. He had to explain its full significance privately to His disciples afterward!

There Was More to be Said!

Lest we disregard the truer points of this parable, Jesus provided a clear after-explanation of exactly who and what He meant! Continuing later in the chapter, Matthew 13, beginning again in verse 36, “Then...his disciples came unto him, saying, *Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.* 37: *He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38: The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; 39: The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels.* 40: *As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world.* 41: *The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42: And shall cast them into a furnace of fire; ³ there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.* 43: *Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.* Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. “*Their Father*” refers to God the Father, (not Israel’s national ‘Father’ as identified in Isaiah 9:6. ⁴ That Being, the God of the Old Testament, was the One who became the Son!) This passage re-affirms other prophecies indicating the full extent of the glorification process: that God’s True Saints are to take on and exhibit the *brilliant aura of His Glory* (after the end of time, after the post-Millennial Age) which the Father and Son alone currently exhibit!

Though, on the surface, the parable deals with a relatively mundane subject, that of the sinister component that resides within society and the Church, in this narrative, we also see vastly greater

³ This should give absolute fits to those who embrace the teachings of ‘universal salvation’!

⁴ Request: “*Who is the God of the Old Testament*”, “*The Hope of Glory*” and “*My Father, Our Father*”.

Truths: the resurrection from the dead and our **full** Glorification in the Everlasting Kingdom that will project out into Eternity once the Son is done with His harvesting process, and is ready to turn Himself and His Spirit-born Saints and the Kingdom over to the Father!

Do we adequately fathom what it means, “*that God will be all in all*”? (1st Corinthians 15:28)

When **God the Father** (Jesus’ Father and now legitimately our Father) descends to the Earth for the **first and final** time, His unfathomable power will melt the elements down into a brilliant mass of energy, not unlike the sun! Other rather explicit articles deal with this event in greater detail, so I won’t expound further here. Two bold topics: “*The Hope of Glory*” and “*The Elements Shall Melt with Fervent Heat!*” explain this enigmatic picture that Peter so pointedly made clear, not once but twice, and that the Apostle Paul gives us a startling glimpse into in 1st Corinthians 15:24-28.

Should we worry that there could be and likely are **tares among us**? Should we take action? Yes and no! Yes, in that we need to be steadfast in the Truth, that no man undermine our station and cause us to lose our crown. We need to be jealous for the health and welfare of the congregations, by upholding clearly and accurately the teachings of the New Testament. We need to at least acknowledge the presence of a sinister element, that we still have with us in this age, but using the situation as an exercise arena for further strengthening. Likely, that was Gods’ ultimate intention. (cp Dan. 11:32)

Fret you not, the reapers are the Angels! There’s a threshold no tare will cross! Tares beware!

Related Topics: (available from this author)

- “*Who IS the God of the Old Testament?*”
 - “*My Father, Our Father*”
 - “*Understanding the THREE Resurrections*”
 - “*The Hope of the Last Great Day*”
 - “*The Harvests of the World*”
 - “*Understanding the Second Death*”
 - “*The Elements Shall Melt with Fervent Heat!*”
 - “*The Hope of GLORY*”
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