

THE PARABLE OF THE HID TREASURE

Matthew 13:44

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The newspaper has been filled with world shaking events recently - Watergate, inflation, graft in government, the resigning of our Vice President, Attorney-General, and many other touchy and sticky national and international problems. But the one event that has gained the attention of the whole world is the crisis in the Middle East. The Jews and the Arabs are engulfed in a life and death struggle, and however it ends up there will be world shaking consequences.

B. Bible scholars, who are futurists and premillennial in their theology, have made some bold statements concerning Israel. They have said that this tiny country of Israel has gained its promised land in our day and that it will never lose it again because God is for Israel. I know that God is for Israel but I cannot be sure that it will win all of its wars or never lose its present land. Israel, as we know it today, could be defeated by the Arabs if God willed it, but we know from scripture that God has a sovereign purpose for Israel and in God's time it shall be accomplished. NOTE: God's spiritual purpose for Israel begins near or at the second advent of Jesus Christ. His purpose begins when Israel is a converted nation. ILLUSTRATION: How Will War Go?

ILLUSTRATION: Since the war in the Middle East has broken out, several people have asked me if I thought the Israelis would lose. My answer has been that there might be some mighty embarrassed premillennialists if Israel should get beaten back and driven from their land. Premillennialists sometimes make statements that they cannot substantiate. However, I am willing to say this that God does have a plan for Israel and if their presence in the land is preparatory for God's dealings with Israel then they will keep the land and get even more land than they presently possess.

C. I believe the Parable of the Hid Treasure gives us a hint about God's dealings with Israel in this present age and in the age to come. All of the parables in Matthew 13 are about the mysteries of the kingdom and tell us how the kingdom will develop while the King and His earthly kingdom are absent from this world. NOTE: These parables give us a glimpse behind the scenes of history into factors and forces which are at work today. The Bible is a unique book; it is God-inspired. Whenever we open our Bibles we should have a sense of here is a book that gives us vital, inside information that we can get from no other source. The Bible gives us the key to the mystery of history. NOTE: I want to say again that I cannot be dogmatic on my interpretation of this parable because the Lord gives no divine interpretation. Some of what I say may be speculative and subjective.

D. One very important observation is that the remaining three parables, which includes the Parable of the Hid Treasure, were given to the disciples only (13:36). The first four parables were spoken to the unsaved multitudes. There is something significant about this. These parables were given to men of faith because they deal with the plans and purposes of God which concerns all true believers.

Matthew 13:36: Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field.

II. THE PARABLE 14:44

III. THE INTERPRETATION

A. There are two symbols that are easily identifiable in this parable - the man and the field. From the other parables we can conclude that the “man” is Christ and the “field” is the world, the world of society. NOTE: This man found a treasure hidden in society. The treasure was lost in the world of humanity but the man uncovered it. Then he did an amazing thing. He covered it up again, he buried it. Then he went out and sold all he had to purchase the treasure and the field that the treasure was buried in. NOTE: This parable tells us that Christ uncovered a treasure but buried it again and this treasure remains hidden, and there it will remain until the end of the age which will culminate at the second advent of Christ.

B. What could this treasure be? What is so valuable to Christ that He would sell all to purchase this treasure? May I suggest the treasure is Israel. These Jewish disciples of Christ would immediately connect the idea of a treasure with the teaching in the Old Testament on Israel. Israel is twice declared to be a treasure which belongs to God (Exodus 19:5; Psalm 135:4). Israel, God’s treasure, is of great and inestimable worth and value to God. NOTE: Why is Israel so valuable to God? Because God chose them as a peculiar people to serve Him (Deut. 7:7-8; 14:2). God chose Israel and made certain promises to them and these promises are effective to Jews who are true, believing Jews in Messiah, Jesus Christ. God has plans and purposes for Israel and they will not be altered. But these plans are for believing Jews only!!

Exodus 19:5: Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine.

Psalm 135:4: For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself and Israel for his peculiar treasure.

Deut. 7:7-8: The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn to your fathers. . . .

Deut. 14:2: For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God, and the LORD hath chosen thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all the nations that are upon the earth.

C. An alert listener would say, “Why isn’t God fulfilling His promises now to Israel? Has God’s purpose failed?” To answer this question we must go back into Old Testament and New Testament history concerning the Jews. Originally God chose Israel to be His people so that they would reflect His holiness and be a witness to the world concerning the One, True God and the Messiah who redeems man. Israel, however, was a stiff-necked and rebellious people who would not submit themselves to God in spite of all that God had done for them in grace. When Israel was obedient God blessed but their disobedience caused great lack of power and they were sorely disciplined, even to the point of being driven out of their land by surrounding enemies. There were times in Israel’s history when it was a great nation, especially in the days of King David and King Solomon, but his glory was lost because Israel lost sight of its God. By New Testament times, Israel was a small, powerless and subjugated nation.

D. When the Lord Jesus, the Messiah, came into the world and came to Israel, He found that this treasure had been lost to the world. For more than 400 years Israel was a tiny, obscure nation. No voice of God had been in its midst; no prophet proclaimed divine revelation. The nation's glory was gone. It was a subjected nation under the iron-fisted Romans. The nation was in bondage, the temple was corrupted with money changers and charlatans who were making a fast buck on religion. The nation was spiritually, politically and economically sick. Poverty and misery was rampant throughout the land.

E. When Christ found Israel in His first advent He uncovered it. He uncovered the treasure for a short while. He revealed for a short flash of time the glory that was rightfully Israel's. The long awaited Messiah was in the midst of Israel and Israel's blessing could only come when they were rightly related to the Messiah by faith. Christ, the Messiah, healed the sick, taught righteousness, cleansed the temple and did so many miracles that no one could number them. He revealed what Israel will be like when Israel finally turns to Messiah. In the short 3 1/2 years of His public ministry, Christ uncovered a little of the glory that will be Israel's when it turns to Messiah. NOTE: The secret of Israel's life is its obedience to God through submission to the Messiah who is Jesus Christ. What we presently see in Israel today is a fleshy return of Israel to the land; it is a Zionist movement but it is not a spiritual movement in any way. It is not related to Messiah. In fact, most Jews have given up any hope in a personal messiah.

F. The parable says that Christ covered up or buried the treasure again. Why? Because the nation as a whole rejected the Messiah. As the nation began to reject Christ's person, work and message Christ began to change the thrust of His message. He no longer preached the "kingdom of heaven is at hand" but began to preach more and more to the Gentiles, offering the spiritual benefits of His kingdom to them. NOTE: Israel's opposition became so intense that our Lord withdrew from Jerusalem and refused to go into the capital city again until His appointed hour to die came. Eventually, at the appointed time, Christ came back to Jerusalem, for it was here that He was to be crucified to fulfill Old Testament prophecy. When He came back to Jerusalem, He pronounced solemn words of judgment against the nation of Israel and its religious leaders. In Matthew 23, Christ pronounces a sharp series of woes against the scribes and Pharisees. Again and again He said, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" When Christ rode into Jerusalem upon a donkey, only a handful of people, mostly women and children cried out, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!" Christ, seeing the nation in rebellion with great hatred in its heart towards the Messiah, lamented with uncontrollable weeping over Israel's spiritual condition (Matthew 23:37). Then Christ stopped the sacrifices in the temple and stated that the kingdom had been taken from Israel and given to another nation (Matthew 21:43). Because of disobedience, Israel again had lost the kingdom. The crowning blow came when Pilate brought Christ before the Jews and said, "Behold, your King!" But they wanted nothing to do with Christ, the Messiah (John 19:15). After 70 A.D., Israel and Jerusalem were leveled by the Roman general Titus and the Jews were driven from their land and scattered throughout the world.

Matthew 23:37: O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

Matthew 21:43: Therefore I say unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

John 19:15: But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.

G. We might conclude from this that God has given up on Israel; that His promises are now invalid to Israel because of its rebellion. Not so, for God never forgets Israel because Israel is still God's chosen people (Isaiah 44:21). God will fulfill His promises to Israel sometime in the future. The treasure is presently hidden. Israel is covered up now but God has not forgotten Israel because He keeps all His promises. Israel lost the secret to their lives - obedience to Messiah - and God set the nation aside. Now God is working with the Church. The nation of Israel has been hidden for 1900 years but one day Christ will dig the treasure up again and Israel will have a future. NOTE: The future of Israel is what prompted the Apostle Paul to write Romans 9, 10 and 11. God is not yet finished with Israel (Romans 11:1). Christ has His plan for Israel hidden in this age but He still has a purpose for Israel. Either right before or at the second advent of Christ that generation of Jews who survive the Great Tribulation period will be sovereignly converted by God and all Israel shall be saved. The promises made to Israel in the Old Testament will be fulfilled in the last generation of Jews before the second advent. At this time all believing Israelites shall be saved (Romans 11:25-28). NOTE: God will fulfill His great purpose for Israel in the future and Israel will be a great blessing to the world (Romans 11:11, 12).

Isaiah 44:21: Remember these, O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant: I have formed thee; thou art my servant: O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of men.

Romans 11:1: I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid!

Romans 11:25-28: For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for their fathers' sakes.

Romans 11:11, 12: I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? (That is, Israel had obviously stumbled at that time, but have they fallen completely?). God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy (That is, when God set Israel aside, he allowed his delivering word to go out directly to Gentile peoples everywhere so that they might be the visible demonstration of how God can heal and fulfill human life, and Israel was watching – at least individual Jews have been, all along). Now if the fall of them be the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? (That is, when Israel comes back into its right relationship with God, how much more blessing will this world understand and realize when they see worked out before their eyes God's hand picked nation!)

H. The most significant part of this parable is that Christ will great joy in His heart went out and sold all He had to purchase Israel. This speaks of Christ's atonement for sin that was made to purchase all true Israelites who believe. God promises to redeem Israel in the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31-34). God should have destroyed all Israelites and cast them into the Lake of Fire for their rejection of Messiah. God should have broken His

covenant with Israel, but He did not because God is faithful, loving, just and unchanging. God will carry out His promises to Israel with the last generation of Jews before the second advent of Christ. Christ established the New Covenant when He died on Calvary but He will apply the benefits of the New Covenant to Israel when they turn to Messiah in faith. NOTE: But notice it says Christ purchased the whole field in which the treasure was hid. Does Christ redeem the whole world? No! But the final fulfillment of this parable will be at the second advent, and those believers who survive the Great Tribulation whether Jews or Gentiles will be converted. All believers in the world at that time will be ushered into Christ's kingdom. Only believers can get into Christ's kingdom and these are the ones who Christ purchased with His own blood. NOTE: In Christ's kingdom, Israel will lead the world in justice and peace and Jerusalem will be the center of righteousness when all the saints of all time will be with Christ in His kingdom.

Jer. 31:31-34: Behold, the days come, saith the LORD that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.

I. Will Israel win the war in the Middle East? I don't know. Will Israel be preserved this time? I don't know. I do know this, however, that God has a future for Israel in His sovereign plan and one day that plan will be a reality. We can trust God's Word.

IV. CONCLUSION

A. The Parable of the Hid Treasure teaches us that God is faithful to keep His promises. He never fails even if man is disobedient. The same God who will one day save Israel is now saving all types of men, both Jews and Gentiles, and making them part of the Church. Jews and Gentiles in this present age must trust Christ, the Messiah, if they are to be saved, and avoid the eternal wrath of God.

B. Christ promises to save all that come to Him through faith. He promises to save when a person believes in Messiah, Jesus Christ (John 6:37; John 5:24; John 11:25; Matthew 11:28, 29).

John 6:27: All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

John 5:24: Verily, Verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

John 11:25: Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never

die.

Matthew 11:28, 29: Come unto me, all ye that labor 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.

C. I challenge you to trust in Christ this morning. If you genuinely come to Christ, God will not go back on His word and He will save you.