

SABBATH THOUGHT 2026-10-31—MYSTERIES & PARABLES

May God bless you on His Sabbath day!

When speaking to His disciples, Jesus once told them:

JOHN 15:15 “No longer do I [*Jesus Christ*] call you servants, for a servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for **all things that I heard from My Father I have made known to you.**

What did Jesus pass along from God the Father to the disciples? He revealed the mystery of the Kingdom of God:

MARK 4:10-12 But when He [*Jesus Christ*] was alone, those around Him with the twelve [*not just the twelve who became apostles*] asked Him about the parable. 11 And He said to them, “**To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God;** but to those who are outside, **all things come in parables,** 12 “so that ‘Seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand; lest they should turn, and *their* sins be forgiven them.’ “

Outside of the book of Revelation¹, mysteries always pertain to the Kingdom of God and salvation. The mysteries are described as:

- The “mystery” of the Kingdom of Heaven/God—Matt. 13:11; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10.
- The “mystery” of the Gospel—Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3.
- The “mystery” of the salvation of God through Jesus Christ—Rom. 16:25; 1 Cor. 2:7; Eph. 1:7-9; Col. 2:2.
- The “mystery” that salvation has come to the Gentiles—Rom. 11:25; Eph. 3:3-9; Col. 1:27.
- The “mystery” of the *ekklesia* and the Body of Christ—Eph. 5:32.
- The “mystery” of faith and godliness—1 Tim. 3:9, 16.
- The “mystery” of lawlessness—2 Thess. 2:7.

The “mystery of lawlessness”, about the Beast in the end-times, is a warning against losing salvation through deception:

2 THESSALONIANS 2:1-2 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, 2 **not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled,** either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.

Matters of the Kingdom of God and salvation were a mystery because they were not understood by the ancient prophets:

¹ Even the prophetic book of Revelation describe the war of Satan for the souls of mankind. It is a warning of death to those who reject God and glory upon those who receive eternal sonship.

1 PETER 1:10-12 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, 11 searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ that was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. 12 To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering [the messages of prophets was for future generations] the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

The full revelation to the saints came from Jesus Christ:

COLOSSIANS 1:5-6, 26 because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, 6 which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as it is also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth; ... 26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His [Jesus Christ's] saints.

Even though Jesus spoke plainly about certain matters to the disciples, He usually spoke about the Kingdom of God and salvation through parables:

MATTHEW 13:10-11 And the disciples came and said to Him [*Jesus Christ*], “Why do You speak to them in parables?” 11 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.

There are, by my account, about 60 parables of Jesus (refer to the article [Parables of Jesus](#) on the website) and each one describes some aspect of the Kingdom of God and salvation. The following are just some of the topics addressed in parables.

JUDGMENT—JUSTICE VERSUS INJUSTICE

Justice, equity, and fairness are major themes of salvation. Justification is the basis of redemption and salvation:

ROMANS 3:24 being justified [G1344 = dikaioo] freely by His [God the Father's] grace through the redemption [ransom] that is in Christ Jesus,

Many do not realize just how much justice according to the Law of God has to do with salvation. Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ is justification:

ROMANS 5:16 And the gift is not like *that which came* through the one who sinned [*Adam*]. For the judgment *which came* from one *offense* *resulted* in condemnation, but the free gift which came from many offenses resulted in justification.

Justification is when God renders a judgment with a verdict of innocence under the Law of God:

1 CORINTHIANS 6:11 ... you were washed, but you were sanctified [*G0037* = *hagiazō* = *cleansed*], but **you were justified** in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

Baptism unites us in the resurrection of Christ to live as a New Creation, practicing the justice of the Law of God:

[DOUAY] 2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-21 **If then any be in Christ a new creature**, the old things are passed away, behold all things are made new. ... 21 Him, who knew no sin, He hath made sin for us, **that we might be made the justice of God** in him.

The parables of the Wheat and Tares (Matt. 13:24-30, 36-43) and the Fish Dragnet (Matt. 13:47-50) are only two that describe how the angels of God will reap and separate the just from the unjust and cast the wicked into the Lake of Fire.

MATTHEW 13:49 “So it will be at the end of the age. **The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just,**

JUDGMENT—WORKS

Works are *required* to become citizens of the Kingdom of God. These are not salvational works of God but Good Works that are part of the Service of Giving & Receiving². This is explained in many parables including the Sheep & Goats (Matt. 25:31-46), the Wicked Vinedressers (Matt. 21:33-44), the Good & Bad Trees (Matt. 7:15-20; 12:33), the Vineyard Workers (Matt. 20:1-16), and the Rich Man & Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31).

1 PETER 1:17 And if you call on **the Father, who without partiality judges according to each one’s work**, conduct yourselves throughout the time of your stay *here* in fear;

KINGDOM IS A TREASURE

Perfect peace and unspeakable joy have forever eluded mankind, which is why they are the greatest of all God’s achievements when His Kingdom is fully established. Those who seek the Kingdom know the eternal “increase of peace”³ is a Hidden Treasure (Matt. 13:44). It is like a Pearl of Great Value (Matt. 13:45-46) but taking possession of that priceless treasure requires giving up something:

MATTHEW 13:44-46 “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. 45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, 46 “who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and **sold all that he had** and bought it.

The Kingdom is a treasure hidden from the world. Everyone who takes hold of that treasure must give up something. The cost to each person is unique and it is

² Phil. 4:15; 2 Cor. 9:6-13.

³ Isa. 9:7.

reckoned according to their character, status, and situation. However, the 'purchase' price is the same for everyone—all must forfeit their lives:

MATTHEW 10:38-39 “And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me [*Jesus Christ*] is not worthy of Me. 39 “He who finds his life will lose it, and **he who loses his life for My sake will find it.**

SALVATION—FORGIVENESS

Salvation requires love for God, Christ, and all mankind. No one can have relationships with people, whether neighbors, brethren, or enemies especially, without offenses occurring. Refusing to forgive the offenses and sins of others forfeits salvation—God does not forgive the unforgiving that is clearly spelled out in the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant (Matt. 18:23-35). However, forgiving offenses is also the conclusion of the parables of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32) and the Lost Sheep (Matt. 18:10-14):

LUKE 15:28-32 “**But he [the faithful son] was angry [with his father]** and would not go in. Therefore his father came out and pleaded with him. 29 “So he [*the faithful son*] answered and said to *his* father, ‘Lo, these many years I have been serving you; I never transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet you never gave me a young goat, that I might make merry with my friends. 30 ‘But as soon as this [*prodigal*] son of yours came, who has devoured your livelihood with harlots, **you killed the fatted calf for him.**’ 31 “And he [*the father*] said to him [*the faithful son*], ‘**Son, you are always with me, and all that I have is yours. 32 ‘It was right that we should make merry and be glad, for your brother was dead and is alive again, and was lost and is found.**’ “

RETURN OF CHRIST

Five parables are included with the Olivet Prophecy. They are not prophetic insights but, rather, wisdom for salvation. The first three parables—the Fig Tree (Matt. 24:32-36), the Thief in the Night (Matt. 24:43-44), and the Ten Virgins (Matt. 25:1-13)—all have one common message; no one KNOWS when Christ returns:

MATTHEW 25:13 “Watch therefore, for **you know [perceive, ascertain, or know] neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of Man is coming.**

Even if all prophetic events are able to be predicted, the return of Christ cannot be KNOWN. The meaning behind know emphasizes there will be no foreknowledge, the moment is undiscoverable, and none will be aware of it until it begins to take place:

1 THESSALONIANS 5:2 For you yourselves know perfectly that **the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.**

LUKE 21:27-28 “Then they will see **the Son of Man coming** in a cloud with power and great glory. 28 “Now **when** these things **begin to happen**, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near.”

The Day of the LORD is the vengeance of God announced by the Seventh Trumpet. At some point shortly after the trumpet is sounded and prior to God's vengeance,

the saints are resurrected⁴. There are about eleven instances in the Bible⁵ that state no one knows the “day or hour” of Christ’s return and yet some spend much of their time trying to predict it. Others will be deceived and claim He “delays” His coming. Predicting it is like trying to understand the eternity of God—it is impossible.

SALVATION—PREPARING & WAITING

Because the return of Christ is unknown, that time can only be spent patiently waiting for it⁶:

JAMES 5:7-8 Therefore **be patient, brethren, until the coming of the Lord.** See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, waiting patiently for it until it receives the early and latter rain. 8 **You also be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.**

Jesus Christ returns when “**YOU do NOT expect**”⁷ it. Why is it kept secret from the saints? Perhaps so they will defend against attacks by the Enemy of salvation. The Parable of the Thief in the Night (Matt. 24:42-44) warns to be on guard:

MATTHEW 24:43-44 “But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, **he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into.** 44 “Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

There is not even a hint that these parables are about prophecy and world events. They are warning to watch and guard against thieves who would break into a *house* and *steal*; that is, steal salvation from our SPIRITUAL house. Salvation has nothing to do with knowing prophecy and predicting world events. But it is a gift of time. End-time prophecies exhort us to do works befitting salvation⁸ in the limited time available even if Christ returns after our deaths:

JOHN 9:4 “I [*Jesus Christ*] must **work the works of Him [God the Father] who sent Me while it is day; the night is coming** when no one can work.

JOHN 12:35 Then Jesus said to them, “**A little while longer the light is with you. Walk [work] while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you;** he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going.

MYSTERY FINISHED

Biblical “mysteries” of the Kingdom of God and salvation were revealed in full by Jesus through parables and there are three major phases. Two are not yet complete. Only one has been finished—the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Through Him, the hope and desire of mankind has become the hidden treasure of the Gospel of

⁴ The saints will witness God’s vengeance—Ps. 58:10.

⁵ Matt. 24:36, 39, 42-44; 25:13; Mark 13:32-36; Luke 12:40; Acts 1:7; 1 Thess. 5:1-4; 2 Pet. 3:10; Rev. 3:3; 16:15.

⁶ Dan. 12:12; Ps. 27:14; 37:7; Rom. 8:25.

⁷ Matt. 24:44.

⁸ Acts 26:20.

the Kingdom of God. As Christ died, “mystery of Christ”⁹ was fulfilled when He said, “It is finished.”¹⁰ The next phase will be completed at the Seventh Trumpet:

REVELATION 10:7 but in the days of **the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He [already] declared [proclaimed the gospel] to His servants the prophets.**

The “mystery of the Gospel”¹¹ was *already declared* (past tense) to the saints. The word is *evangelize* in Greek, so it specifically refers to the Gospel that was revealed in the parables of Jesus. Hints about it were preached by the ancient prophets but it was only fully declared by the 25 named and unnamed prophets¹² that came after Christ, especially those who authored the New Testament. This part of the mystery is finished when the Seventh Angel sounds the Seventh Trumpet and the saints are resurrected! The last phase of the “mystery of the Gospel” is finished when the New Heavens and New Earth appear:

REVELATION 21:1-6 Now I [John] saw **a new heaven and a new earth**, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw **the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven** from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, “Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God. 4 “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for **the former things have passed away.**” 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, “**Behold, I make all things new.**” And He said to me, “Write, for these words are true and faithful.” 6 And He said to me, “**It [the mystery of the Kingdom] is done!** I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.

For the Firstfruit saints, there is no mystery. Their lives must be spent living justly and doing Good Works of Giving & Receiving so they will hear those precious words, “Well done, good and faithful servant ... Enter into the joy [of the Kingdom] of your Lord.”¹³ Time is short and the “mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven” and salvation will soon be finished—“in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.”¹⁴

May God’s grace and peace be upon you!

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⁹ Col. 4:3.

¹⁰ John 19:30.

¹¹ Eph. 6:19.

¹² Acts 11:27; 13:1.

¹³ Matt. 5:21.

¹⁴ 1 Cor. 15:52.