

# Parables of Jesus

## 29.—The Seven Parables of the Kingdom of God.

1. Jesus came again to the Sea of Galilee, and, entering a ship, taught the multitude that stood on the shore.

2. *The Parable of the Sower.*—A man went out to sow seed. Some fell by the wayside, and the birds picked it up; some fell on stony ground, and, springing up, soon withered away, because it had no root; some fell among thorns, and was soon choked; but others fell upon good ground, and brought forth fruit—some a hundred, some sixty, some thirty-fold.

3. Jesus afterwards gave this explanation of the parable to His disciples: The seed is the word of God: that by the wayside are those who hear; but the devil comes and takes the word out of their hearts, lest, believing, they should be saved. The seed that fell upon the rock are those who, at first, joyfully receive the word, and for a while believe, but, having no roots in time of temptation easily fall away.

4. That which fell among thorns are those who hear, but, going away, are choked with the cares and pleasures of life and yield no fruit. But the seed that fell on good ground are those who, hearing the word with a good heart, keep it, and bring forth fruit in patience.

5. *The Parable of the Cockle.*—Jesus spoke another parable: A man sowed good seed in his field, and when he slept his enemy came and sowed cockle. When the blades sprang up the cockle appeared; but the master bade the servants let both grow until the harvest, when he would tell the reapers to gather the cockle into bundles and burn it, but to gather the wheat into his barn.

6. The following is the interpretation of this parable: The sower is the Son of God; the field is the world; the seed is the good; the cockle is the bad; the enemy that sowed the cockle is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As the cockle was gathered and burned, so shall the wicked be in the day of judgment.

7. *The Parable of the Mustard-seed.*—Jesus spoke another parable: The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed: it is the least of all seeds; but when it grows up and becomes a tree, the birds can rest in its branches.

8. *The Parable of the Leaven.*—A woman took leaven and hid it in three measures of meal, until the whole was leavened: so is the kingdom of God.

9. *The Parable of the Treasure.*—The kingdom of heaven is like to a treasure hidden in a field: when a man finds it, he goes and sells all he has and buys that field.

10. *The Parable of the Pearl.*—The kingdom of heaven is again like to a merchant seeking pearls: he finds one of great price; then he goes and sells all he has and buys it.

11. *The Parable of the Good and Bad Fishes.*—Again the kingdom of heaven is like a net east into the sea: it gathers all kinds of fishes; but, when it is drawn out, men select the good and cast away the bad: so shall it be at the end of the world—the angels shall separate the just from the unjust.

## 40.—The Pardon of Injuries.—The Unforgiving Servant.

1. One day Peter asked Our Savior how often he should forgive his brother. Jesus said, Till seventy times seven;" by which is meant an indefinite number.

2. To confirm His words to Peter, Jesus related the following parable: A king wished to take an account of his affairs, so he called his servants. One came who owed ten thousand talents, and, being unable to pay, the master ordered him and his wife and his children to be sold. The poor man, when he saw the misfortune that was come upon him, fell upon his knees and begged for time, promising to pay all. The master, taking pity on him, forgave the debt.

3. When this servant left the master, he met a fellow-servant who owed him a hundred pence. Seizing him by the throat, he demanded immediate payment. The servant begged for a little time. He would not give it, but cast him into prison.

4. When the other servants saw what was done, they told the master, who, calling the unforgiving servant to him, child him for his harshness, and then cast him into prison until his own debt should be paid. Christ concluded with these memorable words: "So also shall My heavenly Father do unto you, if you forgive not everyone his brother from your hearts."

## 42.—The Parable of the Good Samaritan.

1. Once, while Jesus was teaching, a lawyer came to Him, and asked what he must do to be saved. Jesus answered: "Love God with your whole heart, and love your neighbor as yourself." When the lawyer heard of his neighbor, he thought he would entrap Our Savior, and asked, "Who is my neighbor?"

2. In answer Jesus narrated the following parable: A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. On the way he fell among robbers, who stripped him, and wounding him, left him half-dead. Shortly afterwards a priest came by the same way, and, though he saw the helpless

condition of the wounded man, passed on. In like manner, a Levite also passed.

3. But a Samaritan, passing, saw the wounded man, and coming, bound up his wounds, and placing him on his own ass, took him to the inn. The next day he took two pence and gave to the host, bidding him take care of the wounded man, and promising to pay on his return whatever additional expense would be incurred.

4. When Our Savior had finished, He asked the lawyer, "Who was neighbor to the man who fell among robbers?" The Doctor answered: "He that showed mercy." Then Jesus said: "Go and do in like manner."

## 45.—The Lost Sheep and the Good Shepherd.

1. At the feast of Tabernacles, Jesus went up to Jerusalem, where He taught. Many of those who came to hear Him were publicans and sinners. When the Scribes and Pharisees saw this they began to murmur. That He might the better illustrate His own character, and at the same time teach them a lesson, Jesus gave the following parable:

2. "What man having a hundred sheep, and losing one, does not leave the ninety-nine and seek for that which was lost until he find it? When he has found it, does he not call together his friends and neighbors, and say to them, 'Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost? As a man does with his lost sheep, so does God with the sinner that repents.'"

3. "I am the good Shepherd," said Christ. "The good shepherd gives his life for his flock; but the hireling, when he sees the wolf, flies. I lay down My life for My sheep. I have other sheep that are not yet of this fold; them also must bring. There shall be but one fold and one Shepherd,"

## 46.—The Prodigal Son.

1. After Jesus had given the above parable, that so beautifully explains what a good shepherd should be, He spoke another, to illustrate the forgiving character of His Father towards a repenting sinner.

2. "A certain man," said He, "had two sons. The younger asked his father for his portion, and, having received his share, went into a far country. He was not long there till he spent what his father had given him, and the companions of his folly abandoning him when they found he had no more to spend, he was reduced to extreme want.

3. "Seeing nothing but starvation staring him in the face, he went and hired himself to a farmer, who sent him to feed swine. When the young man saw the condition to

which he was reduced, entering into himself, he rose up and returned to his father.

4. "The kind-hearted father was watching, and when he saw his poor prodigal son returning to him, hastened out to meet him, and, falling on his neck, kissed him, and welcomed him back to the home of his childhood. The son said: 'Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before thee. I am not worthy to be called thy son.'

5. "But the father ordered the servants to bring forth the best robe in the house and put it on him, and to put a ring on his finger, and shoes on his feet. Then he commanded them to hasten and bring the fatted calf, that they might kill it and make merry.

6. "The eldest son was in the fields, and when he returned, and heard music and dancing, and learned the cause, he was very angry. Calling his father, he complained that he had made so much of his disobedient and dissipated brother, whilst he had never received anything, not even a kid, with which to make merry with his friends. But his father said it was but right to rejoice, for his brother that was dead had come to life, and he who had been lost was found."

7. In this parable Jesus Christ taught the doctrine of penance. First, the prodigal son recognizes his sins, repents, and returns to his father. Secondly, he confesses, and is ready to make satisfaction for what he has done. In the same manner the sinner recognizes his sins, repents, and confesses them; then willingly accepts the penance imposed on him; and lastly, the absolution of the priest reconciles him to God.

## 47.—The Rich Man and Lazarus.

1. Jesus, continuing to preach, spoke as follows: "There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasted sumptuously every day. There was also a certain beggar, named Lazarus, who lay at the rich man's gate, begging for the crumbs that fell from his table; moreover, the dogs licked his sores.

2. "In due time the beggar died, and was carried to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, but was buried in hell. Here, lifting up his eyes, he saw Lazarus, and begged Abraham to send him to him, that he might dip his finger in water and cool his tongue. But Abraham reminded the rich man how it had been with him and Lazarus in life, and how just it was that he, who had feasted on good things, should now suffer, whilst he who had suffered should be rewarded.

3. "'Besides,' said Abraham. 'there is between us a great lake, so that no one can pass from us to you, nor from you to us.'

"As a last appeal, the rich man begged Abraham to send Lazarus to his five brothers, that they might be kept out

of hell; but Abraham refused, saying: 'They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them.'

## 49.—The Ten Lepers.

1. After the feast of Tabernacles, Jesus passed through Samaria and Galilee. On the way He met ten lepers. By the law of Moses, lepers were forbidden to live in the towns or cities, or to mingle among the people, and were required to live in the country, apart by themselves. When Jesus saw the ten lepers, He commanded them to go and show themselves to the priest. Whilst they were going they were cleansed.

2. One of them, when he saw what had happened, returned, and cast himself at the feet of Jesus; and this man was a Samaritan. Jesus asked if the other nine had not also been cleansed, and how came it that only the stranger returned to give thanks? Then Jesus, to console the grateful leper, said: "Rise: thy faith hath made thee whole."

## 50.—The Publican and the Pharisee.

1. When Jesus saw how some trusted in their own works and despised others, He spoke the following parable: "Two men went up to the Temple to pray; one was a Pharisee, the other a publican. The Pharisee, standing, prayed thus: 'O God, I thank Thee that I am not like the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers; nor am I like this publican. I fast twice a week, and I give tithes of all I possess.'

2. "But the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes, but struck his breast, saying. 'O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.'

"I say to you, the publican was justified, but the Pharisee was not; because he that exalteth himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

## 52.—The Laborers in the Vineyard.

1. After Jesus had spoken to His disciples of the rewards that awaited the faithful servant, He gave the following parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like to the master of a vine-yard. In the morning he went out to hire laborers; and, having agreed to give them each a penny a day, sent them into his vineyard.

2. "He went out at the third and the sixth and the ninth hours, and seeing men standing idle, sent them into his vineyard, telling them he would give them what was right. He did the same at the eleventh hour.

3. "In the evening the master called the laborers, and paid them each a penny. But when those who had labored from the morning came, and received only a

penny, they began to complain because the others, who had not labored as much as they, had been made equal to them.

4. "The master answered, they had agreed for a penny; he had paid them, and he did not see why they should complain because he was generous."

Then Jesus said: "So shall it be in heaven: the last shall be first, and the first last; for many are called, but few are chosen."

5. Two thousand years before the coming of Jesus Christ, the Jews were called to be the chosen people of God. They despised this call, and so comparatively but few of them have been chosen to have a part in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. When the Jews denied and rejected Jesus Christ, He turned to the Gentiles, who, in immense numbers, enrolled themselves under His banner, and thus they who were last have become first, and the Jews, who were first, have become last.

*These parables are told after Christ's Entry into Jerusalem, near the close of his ministry*

## 58.—The Parable of the Marriage Feast.

1. On the next day, while Jesus was teaching in the Temple, He said: "The kingdom of heaven is like to a king who made a marriage feast for his son. He sent his servants to call those who had been invited, but they would not come. He sent a second time, but they not only refused, but, seizing his servants, put them to death.

2. "When the king heard this he became very angry, and, sending his armies, destroyed the murderers and burnt their city.

"That his marriage feast might not be without guests, the king sent his servants into the highways and invited all, the good as well as the bad, to come.

3. "The king, going into the banqueting-hall, found a guest who had not on a wedding-garment. When asked why he had neglected to put on a wedding-garment, he was silent. Then the king ordered him to be bound hand and foot, and to be cast into exterior darkness."

4. In the East it was customary for kings to supply their guests with wedding-garments; hence the crime of the unfortunate man, who, through carelessness, had neglected to put on the proper garment, even though provided for him.

## 61.—The Parable of the Five Wise and the Five Foolish Virgins.

1. Jesus continued to speak to His disciples, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like to ten virgins who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom. Five were wise and five were foolish. The foolish took no oil with them but the wise took oil in vessels together with their lamps.

2. "Whilst the bridegroom tarried, they all slept. During the night the bridegroom came, and they rose and went forth to meet him. But soon the foolish virgins found their lamps had gone out, and, while they went to buy oil, the bridegroom entered, and the doors were shut.

3. "At length the foolish virgins came, but could not enter. When they cried out to open for them, the bridegroom answered, 'I know you not.' Watch, for you know not when the Son of Man shall come."

## 62.—The Parable of the Talents.

1. Again Jesus gave another parable: "The end of the world is like to a man who went into a far country. He called together his servants, and delivered to them his goods. To one he gave five talents; to another, two; and to another, one. Then he started on his journey.

2. "How he that bad received the five talents went and traded with them till he gained other five talents. In like manner he that had received the two gained other two; but he that had received the one talent went away and buried his lord's money.

3. "After a long time the lord returned; and he that had received the five talents came and brought with him the other five. When the lord saw this he said: 'Well done, thou good and faithful servant: because thou hest been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.' In like manner the lord spoke to him that had gained the two talents.

4. "But he that had received the one talent came and said. 'Lord, I knew thou wert a hard man, and, being afraid, I hid thy talent in the ground. Here is what is thine.' The lord reproached him for his sloth, and, taking the talent from him, gave it to him who had the ten talents. Then he commanded the unprofitable servant to be bound hand and foot and cast into exterior darkness."