

Feast of Tabernacles—Day 4 Kingdom of God in the Gospels

Fred R. Coulter—October 16, 2011

Greetings, brethren, and welcome to the Feast of Tabernacles, Day #4, 2011! After this day we'll be half way through the Feast. Time just seems to go ZIP! I think it is true that the older you get the faster time goes. Really, time is always the same, but it seems that way.

If you look at it from this point of view, when a child is born and then its first birthday and to its second birthday it's equal to 100% of the time, from the time he was born until his first birthday. The he goes from two to three and that's another year, and that's 50% of the time that it took for him to go from his birth to his first year. You do that every year and the time gets smaller and smaller. That's why it seems like time is going faster. Well, I suppose. The truth is, we're looking to live forever, so we won't have to worry about time. Right now we do.

Let's begin today by going to Malachi, the third chapter, and let's see the prophecy of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ. Malachi 3:1: "Behold, I will send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me...." We know that's John the Baptist. That's what John said when they came and asked him: 'Who are you? Are you the Christ or one of the prophets?' *No, he said, 'I'm a voice in the wilderness crying prepare the way of the Lord. And I'm sent before the Lord.'*

Notice after he has prepared the way: "...And the Lord, Whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple... [we will see that he did that] ...even the Messenger of the covenant, in Whom you delight. Behold, He comes,' says the LORD of hosts" (vs 1) In the Old Testament we find that it happens this way quite often. Here we have a Scripture that we can identify with right away when we look at the New Testament and look back at the Scripture.

But, notice v 2, because v 1 is obviously His first coming, and v 2 is obviously His second coming: "But who can endure the day of His coming? And who shall stand when He appears?..." No one is going to be able to stand. When we come to the New Testament and see the fulfillment of this—John 2—and we find that, yes, Jesus fulfilled that exactly.

John 2:13: "Now the Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.... [Here is His dramatic entrance.] ...And He found in the temple those who were selling oxen and sheep and

doves, and the money exchangers sitting *there*; and after making a scourge of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, *with* both the sheep and the oxen; and He poured out the coins of the money exchangers, and overturned the tables" (vs 13-15). That's suddenly—isn't it? That's corrective—isn't it? *Yes, it is!* That is ownership—isn't it? *Yes, it is!* None of the Pharisees would do that. None of the priests would do that.

Notice what He said, v 16: "And to those who were selling the doves, He said, 'Take these things out of here! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise.' Then His disciples remembered that it was written, 'The zeal of Your house has eaten Me up.'.... [They understood that later, but they didn't understand what He said—neither did the Jews.] ...As a result, the Jews answered and said to Him, 'What sign do You show to us, seeing that You do these things?'" (vs 16-18). 'We want a sign from heaven showing that You have the authority of God.'

Verse 19: "Jesus answered and said to them, 'Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.'" The carnal minded Jews couldn't understand that. They had no idea that He was really the Messiah. They had no idea that He was going to die and be in the grave three days and three nights, and then be raised from the dead. He was talking about the temple of His body, not the physical temple.

This temple that was being built, as they said here, v 20: "Then the Jews said, 'This temple was forty-six years in building, and You will raise it up in three days?'" This was an unusual temple here, because the one who was Herod was half-Jew and half Edomite. Very interesting combination, indeed! And he was under the authority as king from the Roman Empire. Herod decided that He was wanted to magnify and beautify the temple. Up to this time it was 46 years under that construction, and they really didn't get it finished until just a couple of years before the Roman war against Jerusalem beginning in 66 A.D. This was quite astonishing to them.

Verse 21: "But He spoke concerning the temple of His body.... [Then John explains]: ...Therefore, when He was raised from *the* dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scriptures, and the word that Jesus had spoken" (vs 21-22). Remember the Scripture, Mal. 3.

Notice what Jesus did, v 23: “Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the Feast, many believed on His name, as they observed the miracles that He was doing. But Jesus did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all *men*; and He did not need anyone to testify concerning man, for He Himself knew what was **in** man” (vs 23-25)—the law of sin and death and the spirit of evil. John trusted wholly in God the Father and Jesus Christ. We’ve seen that over and over and over again.

Let’s look at a fulfillment of this, Matthew, the eleventh chapter. As we will see, the whole Kingdom of God is all about what is taught in the Gospels, then later on through all the rest of the New Testament. The Kingdom of God is the central focus of the Bible, from beginning to end.

Here in Matt. 11_[transcriber’s correction], after John was put into prison—and remember what Mark recorded after John was put into prison—Jesus came into Galilee preaching ‘Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at hand; *believe* the Gospel.’ As we will see from Matt. 11 the preaching of the Gospel and the teaching of the Gospel becomes greater authority than the Law and the Prophets. That doesn’t mean that the Law and Prophets are done away, because Jesus said, ‘Not one tittle shall fail from the Law until everything is fulfilled.’

Let’s begin in Matthew 11:1: “And it came to pass *that*, when Jesus had finished commanding His twelve disciples, He left there to teach and to preach in their cities. Now John, having heard in prison *of* the works of Christ, sent two of his disciples, saying to Him, ‘Are You the one Who is coming, or are we to look for another?’ Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Go and report to John what you hear and see: *The* blind receive sight, and *the* lame walk; *the* lepers are cleansed, and *the* deaf hear; *the* dead are raised, and *the* poor are evangelized. And **blessed is everyone who shall not be offended in Me**” (vs 1-6).

Verse 7: “And as they were leaving, Jesus said to the multitudes concerning John, ‘What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by *the* wind? But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Behold, those who wear soft *clothing* are in kings’ houses. But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, **I tell you, and one more excellent than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written, “Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who shall prepare Your way before You.”**” (vs 7-10). Isn’t that interesting? *Yes, indeed!*

So, He verified the fulfillment of John’s ministry. John’s ministry was really not very long. His ministry up to the Baptism of Jesus was six

months long. After that it extended for another period of three months. The whole ministry of John the Baptist—the messenger sent to prepare the way before Christ—lasted nine months; then for however long after that—after he was in prison until he was beheaded.

But notice what Jesus said; look at what He said concerning him, v 11: “Truly I say to you, there has not arisen among *those* born of women *anyone* greater than John the Baptist. But the one who is least in the Kingdom of Heaven is greater than he [John the Baptist]. For from the days of John the Baptist until now, the Kingdom of Heaven is taken with a *great* struggle, and *the* zealous *ones* lay hold on it” (vs 11-12). This shows it’s not easy to get there, far different from the Christianity of the world. ‘Oh, just be nice; accept Jesus; come and attend church and you will escape the wrath to come, in the rapture.’ Isn’t that nice?

Verse 13 is a hard one for people to understand: “For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to receive *it*, he is Elijah who was to come. **The one who has ears to hear, let him hear**” (vs 13-15).

Let’s think about this, because what people assume when they read this—which is really not true—that this means that the Law and the Prophets were done away with when John came on the scene. No, it doesn’t mean that at all. What it means is that the Law and the Prophets were the authority for teaching, for men to teach the Word of God. And, of course, that included the Writings as well—or the Psalm section of the Bible. But, when John the Baptist came there was a higher authority. That higher authority was

1. John the Baptist preparing the way for Jesus Christ
2. Jesus Christ was the Messenger sent from God, Who came down from heaven

That’s why when you read in Matt. 5:18, really, there’s no contradiction with it. That’s why Jesus said, as we already referred to, “For truly I say to you, until the heaven and the earth shall pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no way pass from the Law until everything has been fulfilled.” Of course, everything hasn’t been fulfilled.

Let’s see how Jesus ended the chapter here, this gives us the first clue as to what it means. The ones who were zealous ‘take it with a struggle’ and they are overcoming. Verse 48: “Therefore, you shall be perfect, even as your Father Who *is* in heaven is perfect.” Think on that!

That’s why we are to love God and serve Him and be faithful and obey, and obey with the

Spirit of God. He's given us His Spirit, brethren. We need to use it for that struggle. We need to use it to overcome. We need to use it to have our lives changed. Let's see about the Kingdom of God in the Gospels. Jesus spoke many, many parables concerning the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 21:27: "And they answered Jesus *and* said, 'We do not know.'.... [Did John the Baptist's authority come from heaven or from men? They said, 'We don't know.'] ...He said to them also, 'Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things. But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first one and said, "Son, go work in my vineyard today." And he answered *and* said, "I will not"; but afterwards he repented *and* went. Then he came to the second *son and* said the same thing. And he answered *and* said, "Sir, I will go"; but he did not go. Which of the two did the will of the father?" They said to Him, 'The first *one.*' Jesus said to them, 'I tell you truly, the tax collectors and *the* harlots are going into the Kingdom of God before you'" (vs 27-31).

This is very interesting, because He's revealing that it's something that we *enter into*. It's not something that He was going to establish during the time of His ministry on earth. Then He refers back to John. Notice how this ties in with what we've already covered:

Verse 32: "For John came to you in *the* way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and *the* harlots believed him. Yet you, after seeing *this*, did not afterwards repent and believe him. Hear another parable: There was a certain man, a master of a house, who planted a vineyard, and put a fence around it, and dug a winepress in it, and built a tower, and *then* leased it to husbandmen and left the country.'" (vs 32-33).

This is a parable concerning God and Israel, because Israel was like a vineyard of God. Remember in the book of Isaiah God said, 'I planted a beautiful vineyard, but how did it come up with all these wild grapes?' *Well, it's because they didn't love God or do what they should have!*

Now, let's see what happens here, 34: "Now when the season of the fruits was drawing near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen to receive his fruits. But the husbandmen took his servants and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other servants, more than the first *time*; and they did the same thing to them'" (vs 34-36). This is talking about all the prophets that God sent to them.

- Would they listen?
- Would they heed?
- Would they hear?

- What did God have to do to them?
- How were they obeying God during the days of Jesus?
- *Well, they were doing the same as they always did in the past!*

Verse 37: "Then at last he sent his son to them, saying, "They will have respect for my son.".... [this is a parable of Jesus Himself] ...But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, "This is the heir; come, let us murder him and gain possession of his inheritance." Then they took him, *and* cast *him* out of the vineyard, and murdered *him*" (vs 37-39). That was a prophecy of what they were going to do to Jesus.

So, He's letting them convict themselves out of their own mouths, v 40: "Therefore, when the lord of the vineyard shall come, what will he do to those husbandmen?" They said to Him, 'Evil *men!* He will utterly destroy them, and he will lease his vineyard to other husbandmen, who will render to him the fruits in their seasons.'" (vs 40-41). Jesus had them right where He wanted them.

Notice what He says here in v 42; and it's interesting: How many times did He say this, as we find in the Scriptures? "Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures...'" This is why it's very important that you understand that the Jews in that day, very few were really following the Scriptures. They were following the traditions of the elders, not the Word of God.

{see book: *Judaism, A Revelation of God or a Religion of Men?* by Phil Neal (editor of CBCG)}

"...*The Stone that the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner. This was from the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes?*" Because of this, I say to you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and it shall be given to a nation *that produces the fruits of it*" (vs 42-43). *We are that future nation!* Remember a vineyard. What did Jesus say concerning Himself and concerning us?

Let's come back here to John 15, let's see that; this is important for us to keep in mind. Notice how Jesus compared it also to a vineyard. He says that we are to 'produce the fruits' of that. That's the fruits of the Kingdom of God.

Notice what He says in this parable, telling His disciples, John 15:1: "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. He takes away every branch in Me *that* does not bear fruit... [He takes the Kingdom of God from them and gives it to others—right? *Yes!*] ...but He cleanses each one that bears fruit, in order that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean through the word that I have spoken to

you. Dwell in Me, and I in you.... [this is the important thing] ...As a branch cannot bear fruit of itself, but only if it remains in the vine, neither *can* you *bear fruit* unless you are dwelling in Me. I am the vine, *and you are* the branches. The one who is dwelling in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; because **apart from Me you can do nothing**" (vs 1-5).

Let's come back to Matthew 21:42: "Jesus said to them, 'Have you never read in the Scriptures, "*The Stone that the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner. This was from the Lord, and it is wonderful in our eyes*"? Because of this, I say to you, the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and it shall be given to a nation *that produces the fruits of it. And the one who falls on this Stone [on Christ] shall be broken...* [symbolic of repentance] ...but on whomever it shall fall, **it will grind him to powder**"' (vs 42-44). These are the words of Jesus. Very stinging words! He spoke directly! He gave no quarter to anyone.

Notice, those priests and Pharisees and scribes standing around Him, v 45: "Now after hearing His parables, the chief priests and the Pharisees knew that He was speaking about them.... [Rather than repent, here's a classic example. Doesn't this happen, too? When people are really confronted with the Truth, do they really want to repent? *No!* They want to kill the messenger.] (Well, that's what they sought to do): ...And they sought to arrest Him, but they were afraid of the multitudes, because they held Him as a prophet" (vs 45-46). Afraid of the people!

Oh yes, by all means, we always have to be thought of nicely by the people. That happens when the people don't believe in the Truth, they don't want Truth, they don't want to do what is right. 'Get rid of Him! We don't want Him!'

Let's come back to Matthew 18 and let's see something else concerning the Kingdom of Heaven. Quite a different attitude! We go from this attitude of hatred, this attitude of mocking, and here Jesus shows the attitude that we need to have in our relationship with God. When we're dealing with men, Jesus said that we're to 'wise as serpents and harmless as doves'—correct? *Yes, indeed!* Notice what He says here:

Matthew 18:1: "At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying... [They were arguing among themselves]: ...'Who then is *the* greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven?'" They went through that many times—right? If you don't know that God the Father is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven, you don't have a clue about anything today. Isn't that true? *Yes, indeed!*

Verse 2: "And after calling a little child to *Him*, Jesus set him in their midst, and said, 'Truly I say to you, unless you are converted...' (vs 2-3). ***Conversion can only come from God!***

- with His Spirit
- with His Truth
- and the grace of God through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

See sermon series: *God's Grace and Commandment-Keeping*—this really will open your eyes as to how we need to keep the commandments of God and why we need to keep them, and why it's necessary for salvation. And why, with the proper understanding of how we are keeping the commandments of God through His Spirit, we are not seeking to justify ourselves by our works or our commandment-keeping. That's vital to realize and understand. That's the first thing the worldly Christians tell you: 'Oh, you're trying to work out your salvation by keeping law.'

Well, you need to answer that question by saying, 'Answer me this: 'Are you going to make it into the Kingdom of God if you are breaking the commandments of God and the laws of God and *sin is the transgression of the law*—are sinners going to make it into the Kingdom of God?' That will catch them on that—right?—because they won't.

Jesus said here, "'...there is no way that you shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Therefore, whoever shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven'" (vs 3-4). So that really set the record straight for the disciples—didn't it?

Matthew 22—here again is another parable that Jesus spoke to those who were the ruling class, the religious elite, and the elders who were the political elite, as well. The call went out. Jesus was calling them. They could have repented. Later, some of them did. Later, even a whole company of priests repented (Acts 6).

Matthew 22:1: "And again Jesus answered and spoke to them in parables, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man *who was* a king, who made a wedding feast for his son... [Obviously, that's God the Father and Jesus Christ.] ...and sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast; but they refused to come. Afterwards he sent out other servants, saying, "Say to those who have been invited, 'Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and the fatted beasts are killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding feast.'" But they paid no attention and went away, one to his farm, and another to his business'" (vs 1-5).

We'll see some other parables and we are going to learn that *few* are chosen, as it says down here in v 14: "For many are called, but few *are* chosen." And we will see that few want to repent and few want to obey God. Look, this is a simple invitation—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!* It was to be an invitation to something that was great, that was wonderful, that was nice—yes? *Of course!* But they paid no attention—did they.

Verse 6: "And the rest, after seizing his servants, insulted and killed *them*." Why? *Because a servant of God is to preach the Truth and let the chips fall where they may!*

- We're to preach repentance!
- We're to preach the Truth!
- We're to preach the love of God!

Notice what happened, v 7: "Now when the king heard *it*, he became angry; and he sent his armies *and* destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city." Did that happen to Jerusalem? *Yes, it did!* Were they warned? *Yes, they were!* Did God's presence leave the temple? *Yes, it did!*

Verse 8. "Then he said to his servants, "The wedding feast indeed is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy; therefore, go into the well-traveled highways, and invite all that you find to the wedding feast"" (vs 8-9). That's preaching the Gospel to the whole world. We're going to see this parable about having the right clothing shows not that someone who is not prepared is going to enter the Kingdom of God, but it shows that there is no way that you're going to get into the Kingdom of God, and there is no way that you can be there *without the right clothing!* So, everyone came, the wedding feast was filled with guests.

Verse 11: "“And when the king came in to see the guests, *he* noticed a man there who was not dressed in *proper* attire for *the* wedding feast; and he said to him, "Friend, how did you enter here without a garment *fit* for *the* wedding feast?" But he had no answer. Then the king said to the servants, "Bind his hands and feet, *and* take him away, and cast *him* into the outer darkness." There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few *are* chosen"" (vs 11-14).

So, this tells us quite a few things—doesn't it? That we are to do things the way God wants. We are to answer the call. We are to prepare. We are to be ready. And the garments of the wedding feast are what? (Rev. 19): *The righteousness of the saints!* That righteousness comes from Jesus Christ. That righteousness comes from keeping the commandments of God according to the full spiritual meaning and intent. There's a lot of meaning here in this parable.

Let's come to Luke 22; let's see another parable back here. Here's what they convicted Jesus on with the blaspheme, when He stated right from the Scriptures Who He really was, yet, did not say that He was the Christ, the Anointed One. He did, as we find in Luke 4, in the synagogue in Nazareth, He read the Scripture which says, 'The Lord has anointed Me to preach the Gospel.'

Luke 22:66: "Now as soon as it was day, the elders of the people assembled together, *with* both *the* chief priests and *the* scribes, and they led Him into their Sanhedrin, saying, 'If You are the Christ, tell us.' And He said to them, 'If I should tell you, you would not believe *Me* at all; and if I should also ask *you*, you would not answer Me at all, nor let *Me* go. Hereafter... [He really gave them the tough one here]: ...shall the Son of man be sitting at *the* right hand of the power of God.'.... [That goes right back to Dan. 7; they understood that. They realized that.] ...And they all said, "Then You are the Son of God?" And He said to them, "**I am that one, as you say**" (vs 66-70). Isn't that interesting? All has to do with the Kingdom of God.

Here was a special blessing that came to Peter, James and John. This was right after the discussion as to Who Jesus was. Let's see what Jesus told His disciples just before the vision of the transfiguration. Let's come to Matthew 16 and let's see that He told the disciples exactly the same thing that He also later told the priests, as we just read in Luke 22.

Matthew 16:27: "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall render to everyone according to his doings.... [Almost the same thing as we read; yes, indeed!] ...Truly I say to you, there are some of those standing here who shall not taste of death until they have seen the Son of man coming in His kingdom" (vs 27-28). This was going to be a special vision. It was to Peter, James and John. That's very interesting, look at the account of it in the book of Luke, it says, 'Peter, John and James.' Apparently, Luke was written after James was dead. Now, instead of James being the one next to Peter, it was John. That's what we also find in Acts 3

Here's what happened, Matthew 17:1: "And after six days, Jesus took with *Him* Peter and James and his brother John, and brought them up into a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shined as the sun, and His garments became white as the light" (vs 1-2). This was done for the special purpose so that they would always have this in mind to keep them faithful to God the Father and Jesus Christ. It was a lasting thing. Peter remembered it! John

remembered it! It was a leading thing in their being able to write and canonize the New Testament for us.

Verse 3: “Then behold, there appeared to them Moses and Elijah talking with Him. And Peter answered *and* said to Jesus, ‘Lord, it is good for us to be here. If You desire, let us make three tabernacles... [This also ties in close to the time of the Feast of Tabernacles. Peter really didn’t know what to say and he was hoping he was saying the right thing.] ...here: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah.’ While he was speaking, a bright cloud suddenly overshadowed them; and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, ‘This is My Son, the Beloved, in Whom I delight. **Listen to Him!**’ And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces in extreme terror” (vs 3-6). I guess so!

Verse 7: “But Jesus came *and* touched them, and said, ‘Arise, and do not be terrified.’ And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus alone. Now as they were descending from the mountain, Jesus commanded them, saying, ‘Tell the vision to no one until the Son of man has risen from the dead’” (vs 7-9).

They really didn’t understand about His being raised from the dead. But they understood, ‘tell the vision to no one.’ This also tells us that this was a vision and it was not that Moses and Elijah are in heaven. It’s not so. You can have a vision, and a vision is a portrayal of something that is going to be real, but is not yet real. Does this answer the question who’s going to be at the right hand and the left hand of Jesus? *Don’t know, we’ll have to wait and see!*

Verse 10: “Then His disciples asked Him, saying, ‘Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?’ And Jesus answered *and* said to them, ‘Elijah shall indeed come first and restore all things. But I tell you that Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him...’” (vs 10-12). Let’s think about this because it tells us two things:

1. There is yet an Elijah to come before the second return of Christ
2. One has already come because He explains the actions that they brought against John.

“...they did not recognize him, but they did to him whatever they desired. In like manner also, the Son of man is about to suffer from them” (v 12).

Now, let’s come to Matthew 13 where we find that there are seven parables concerning the Kingdom of God. We’ve covered this before, but this is important for us to understand so that we realize that *whatever we understand about the Word of God has got to come from God!* Human beings of and by themselves do not have the ability

to know and understand the Word of God. It just won’t work that way. Never has and never will!

That’s why when they try and read it and understand it, they can understand a few things, but I’ll tell you a very simple way so that you can begin to understand the Word of God—very simple. **When you read something that God tells you to do, and you understand it, then you must obey it.** If you do not, even that understanding will be taken from you. That’s why we have the *parable of the sower* and the seed falling into different places and so forth.

The disciples were wondering why is He speaking to them in parables, because they can’t understand it? Let’s see! This is something very important for us to realize so that we ourselves do not get complacent concerning the things of our calling, the Kingdom of God, of obeying and loving God, of growing and overcoming. No, we should not be!

Matthew 13:10: “And His disciples came to Him and asked, ‘Why do You speak to them in parables?’ And 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’” (vs 10-11). I want you to think about that! We read earlier that ‘many are called but few are chosen.’ That’s because

- few repent
- few yield to God
- few are willing to really confess their sins and really come forward and do the things that God wants

NO! Everyone wants to have God his or her way. It won’t come that way; it won’t be that way. But, it’s been given to us who have done that to know the ‘mysteries’ or the ‘secrets’ of God concerning the Kingdom of Heaven.

Then He says something else, v 12: “For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given, and he shall have an abundance...” Why is that? *Because we’re to continually grow in grace and knowledge!* If we already have understanding up to a certain point, this also tells us that we are going to understand more, and that is

- *if* we apply ourselves
- *if* we yield to God
- *if* we’re led of the Holy Spirit
- *if* we’re keeping the commandments of God
- *if* we’re doing the things that please Him.

Now notice what happens here: “...but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him” (v 12).

When you read the book *Lord, What Should*

I Do? You will see that's precisely and exactly what is happening to the Christianity of this world. What they have had is being taken from them. They have less and less and less understanding. Whereas, we need to be growing in grace and knowledge and gain more and more and more in the knowledge of God, the knowledge of the Word of God and growing in the fruits of the Holy Spirit and the character of God.

God doesn't want them to lose salvation, so that's why He does it, v 13: "For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not; neither do they understand."

If they don't, remember this ties in with what Jesus said to the Laodiceans: 'I don't want you lukewarm, I don't want you half here and half there. I want you either hot or cold.' What Jesus is doing is taking these halfhearted Christians and He is taking from them so they will be cold. Remember where we started: The zealous are the ones who are going to attain to the Kingdom of Heaven, because here's what the prophecy of Isaiah says:

Verse 14: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, 'In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you shall see, and in no way perceive... [They're not going to know!] ...for the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed... [No, I don't want to see it; I don't want to know it; I'm comfortable just the way I am.] ...lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them'" (vs 14-15).

Their day of conversion is going to come later. That's why we have the second resurrection. That's not for us. We're preparing for the first resurrection. We are preparing for ruling in the Kingdom of God.

Verse 16: "But blessed *are* your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous *men* have desired to see what you see, and have not seen; and to hear what you hear, and have not heard" (vs 16-17). That's astounding—isn't it? I mean, think of that! Think of the blessing and privilege that God has given us to understand about the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, to understand about the plan of God. That's why we have the book: *God's Plan Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days*. That is His plan for mankind.

We have that part. We are the ones who are the firstfruits, as we know by Pentecost. We are the ones who are going to rule in the Kingdom of God with Jesus Christ because we keep the Feast of

Tabernacles.

Then He explains the parable, v 18: "Therefore, hear the parable of the sower: When anyone hears the Word of the Kingdom..." (vs 18-19). The word or the message of the Kingdom, and all of the Gospels are about what? *The Kingdom of God!* The book of Acts and all the Epistles show us *how* we enter the Kingdom of God. Isn't that something! God has made it simple. When they don't understand it:

"...and does not understand *it*, the wicked one comes... [Satan is there. He wants to take it away.] ...and snatches away that which was sown in his heart. This is the one who was sown by the way" (v 19). They never really were converted. They heard the message, 'Oh, this is wonderful, this is nice. Oh, you mean I have to keep the Sabbath? The Holy Days, what are those? Oh, I can't handle that!'

Verse 20: "Now the one who was sown upon the rocky places is the one who hears the Word and immediately receives it with joy... [I'm happy to hear that. Isn't that wonderful?] ...but *because* he has no root in himself, *he* does not endure; for when tribulation or persecution arises because of the Word, he is quickly offended" (vs 20-21). Those things are going to take place—aren't they? *Yes, indeed!*

What if he comes and tells his family all about it and he says, 'Oh, I heard the most wonderful thing. This is so great. I'm so happy to hear this. Let me tell you about it.' The family reacts and says, 'We've been Baptists or Catholics all of our lives. You mean that you're going to change? *Well!* You mean, you're going to give up on us? *Well!* You mean that you don't understand that my father was a Catholic and I'm a Catholic and if we're Catholics isn't being a Catholic good enough for you? *Well, I guess so!* Or another man loses his job because of keeping the Sabbath and then quits following God because of that.

Let's see there's another problem here, v 22: "And the one who was sown among the thorns is the one who hears the Word, but the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word, and it becomes unfruitful." That's a period of time—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!* How can I give up on my wealth? You mean I've got to give money; I have to give tithes and offerings? What will the world think of me?

Verse 23: "But the one who was sown on good ground, this is the one who hears the Word and understands, who indeed brings forth fruit and produces—one a hundredfold, another sixty fold *and* another thirty fold." Here again this is an example and a teaching: *Many are called but few are chosen,*

and few really respond the way that they should according to the Word of God!

(go to the next track)

Isn't it amazing! How is it that the world believes in the immortality of the soul and going to heaven when the Bible doesn't teach that? How can they explain the Kingdom of God? *They can't!* It is truly amazing, just like we read here, that 'in seeing they see,' *but they don't*; 'in hearing they hear,' *but they don't understand!*

That's why for us in the Church of God and those of us who have the Spirit of God it is truly a miracle. God is performing His work within us. That is a fantastic miracle. We need to understand all these things that Jesus taught.

- This helps us to understand what we have gone through.
- This helps us to understand why there are people we thought were converted but weren't converted.
- This helps us understand why there are difficulties and problems in our lives.

Those are trials that come from being true Christians with the Spirit of God.

- This helps us to understand that, yes, Christ is working with us, so we produce fruit.
 - ✓ a hundredfold
 - ✓ sixty-fold
 - ✓ thirty-fold

God wants us to grow in grace and knowledge. God wants our willing participation in everything. *Yes, He does!* God has a great plan to give us eternal life and rulership in the Kingdom of God and a home in New Jerusalem.

Satan doesn't want that. We have seen how that Satan has come along and he has sown the seeds of discord among the people of God using various methods from things that sound good to outright blasphemy and lies.

Here we are. We're small! We're scattered! But, brethren, *God loves us* and we have God's Spirit. We need to **stand guard** when things become difficult within a church or a fellowship group that we may be attending. We need to **stand guard** with the Word of God, not let in false doctrines and things like this. But there are going to be those who will come into the midst of the Church of God who have been sent there by none other than Satan the devil.

Sooner or later, as Jesus said, you'll know them by their fruits. God will take care of them. Let's read this next parable here, and this will help us understand what we have lived through—and all

of us have lived through it.

Matthew 13:24: "And He put another parable before them, saying, 'The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man who was sowing good seed in his field; but while men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away'" (vs 24-25).

The enemy; Satan the devil, and Satan uses men, just like God uses men, Satan has to use men. He has his agents. He has those who are dedicated to it. Sometimes they come in as what you call 'sleepers.' Isn't it interesting, they were sleeping. Also, in sleeping we let up our guard. Then all of a sudden there's a big upheaval in the Church and the aftermath is the people are scattered and then false doctrine start to come in. It's brought out here by this parable:

Verse 26: "Now when the blades sprouted... [and the blades looked the same] ...and produced fruit, then the tares also appeared... [Because they bring no fruit.] ...And the servants came to the master of the house *and* said to him, "Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? Then where did these tares come from?".... [How did they get there?] ...And he said to them, "A man *who is* an enemy has done this."...." (vs 26-28).

Just look what has been done to the Christian churches of this world. You look at what he has done to the Churches of God. Remember, Jesus said, 'The one who endures to the end and is faithful, will be saved.' That's up to us, brethren. That's why it's so important that we have a relationship with God the Father and Jesus Christ. Those who follow men, those who are under a hierarchy are easy to lead astray.

All you have to do is just say, 'Follow the man' and then his replacement comes in and he's a tare. Then you're told, well, you've got to obey the man in charge.' That's not what the Bible says. The Bible says you *have to obey God* under all circumstances. You *have to believe Jesus Christ* under all circumstances.

"...Then the servants said to him, 'Do you want us to go out and gather them?' But he said, 'No, lest while you are gathering the tares, you *also* uproot the wheat with them'" (vs 28-29). The key is this: God is going to take care of them, and if you have your roots deep, and you are converted, and if God's Spirit is *in* you and *leading* you, and you're studying and praying and growing and overcoming, you will be able to be faithful to God in spite of what goes on. There will be others, too. However, there are times when you feel that you're utterly alone! Well, God will take care of that—no question about that!

Verse 30: “Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and at the time of the harvest...”—continue and continue and continue. We might just add one little caveat to this, by observation. Since we are compared to wheat, when we are ready—come to the time that we die—we’re put in the granary. This process will continue until the return of Jesus Christ when He is going to take all of the wheat that’s been in the granary and those that are still growing and resurrect them out of the tares of this world of Satan the devil.

There’s hope in it. And at the time of the harvest, v 30: “...I will say to the reapers... [The angels who are going to take us up. Christ is the main Reaper (Rev. 14).] ...“Gather the tares first, and bind them into bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my granary.”” I look at it this way: That is also a process that continues on up until the end of the age. There are a lot of people in the granary right now, in their place of safety.

Let’s look at another parable. There are seven parables that He gave here, all talking about the Kingdom of God. Verse 31: “Another parable He presented to them, saying, ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a *tiny* mustard seed which a man took and sowed in his field; which indeed is very small among all the seeds; but after it is grown, it is greater than all the herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and roost in its branches’” (vs 31-32).

It’s going to grow! It’s going to take over! It doesn’t matter how infinitesimal the seed of God’s Spirit is when we begin. It’s how we grow internally in love and character so that at the resurrection we are going to be able to serve in the Kingdom of God.

Verse 33: “Another parable He spoke to them: ‘The Kingdom of Heaven is compared to leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of flour until all was leavened.’” Some people don’t understand that. They may understand the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and some people may ask why is the Kingdom of God compared to leaven? Well, only during the Feast of Unleavened Bread is leaven pictured as a type of sin and vanity and puffing up.

There is a good work of leaven. That’s why on the Day of Pentecost God commanded the children of Israel to make two wave loaves leavened and wave them before the Lord to be accepted. What do these two loaves with leavening in it picture? *Very similar to what this is:* When you put in the leaven, the unseen action is likened to the Holy Spirit. No one knows what’s going on in your mind, but it’s creating you to be ready for the Kingdom of God.

- God knows!
- God is leading you!
- God is directing you!

The unseen action of God from within!

Then the loaves, once the leaven has leavened them up and they’re ready, then you bake them. When they’re baked, they’re permanently set into loaves. Before they’re baked, even if they have risen, you can punch it down and the whole process will start again. Once it is baked, it becomes a different product. It is now bread instead of dough. Likewise, when we’re resurrected, *we are changed permanently* where we’re no longer human, but we are immortal. That’s the lesson that we get out of the leaven.

Verse 34: “Jesus spoke all these things to the multitudes in parables, and without a parable He did not speak to them; so that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, ‘I will open My mouth in parables; I will utter things hidden from *the* foundation of *the* world.’” (vs 34-35). We understand; they don’t understand. There is a dividing line between us and the world.

Then the disciples wanted these things explained to them, and Jesus explained it to them. He showed right here the explanation. I will let you go ahead and read the explanation of the tares where He says about the resurrection.

Verse 43_[transcriber’s correction]: “Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. The one who has ears to hear, let him hear.” We are to hear and learn and know and grow and overcome from these things.

Then He gives a couple more parables to show the value of the Kingdom of God. Verse 44: “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to treasure hidden in a field; which when a man finds, he conceals, and for the joy of *finding* it, goes and sells everything that he has, and buys that field.” That means we leave everything behind. That ties in with Luke 14, that if we’re not willing to give up everything that we have, we’re not fit for the Kingdom of God. Being a true Christian is difficult!

Verse 45: “Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a merchant seeking beautiful pearls; who, after finding one very precious pearl, went and sold everything that he had, and bought it. Again, the Kingdom of Heaven is compared to a dragnet cast into the sea, gathering in every kind of *fish*; which after it was filled was drawn up on shore; and they sat down and collected the good into vessels, and the unfit they threw away. **This is the way it will be in the end of the age...**” (vs 45-49).

Combine everything altogether—He’s

summing it all up. "...the angels shall go out, and shall separate the wicked from among the righteous, and shall cast them into the furnace of fire... [called *The Great Tribulation!*] ...there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (vs 49-50). That's the way it's going to be! Yes, you read the book of Revelation.

Verse 51: "Jesus said to them, 'Have you understood all these things?' They said to Him, 'Yes, Lord.' Then He said to them, 'Therefore, every scribe who has been instructed in the Kingdom of Heaven is like a man *who is* a householder, who brings forth out of his treasure *things* new and old'" (vs 51-52).

That's what we do in teaching the Word of God. We bring out the old. We cover the things that we have covered in the past. We bring out things new concerning them, and together we get a more full and complete understanding. That's what God wants us to do. These parables are very important because everything that Jesus taught was about the Kingdom of God and how we get in there.

We have with the epistles, wonderful teaching from all of the apostles. It's interesting; the epistles then are like personal letters. We can look at it this way: ***All the Bible is a message from God to every man and woman who has a Bible and reads it.*** Then the questions become:

- Are we willing to listen and obey?
- Are we willing to serve God or not?
- What are we willing to do?
- Have we gone through and done what Jesus said?

Let's look at some other parables; let's come to Matthew 19. Isn't it interesting how much the book of Matthew talks about the Kingdom of Heaven, the Kingdom of God? This shows again, concerning the working of human nature, the offer that God has given, and also it show someone who was in the world was really very good—by the standards of the world and even compared to the commandments of God. They were upright. They were faithful to their wives. They didn't steal. They didn't lie; they didn't cheat. They honored their father and mother. In this case, since it was a Sabbath-keeping country, they obviously kept the Sabbath. That's why Jesus didn't mention it here in this particular case.

Let's read the parable and let's think about it as we read it. Matthew 19:16: "Now at that time, one came to Him *and* said, 'Good Master, what good *thing* shall I do, that I may have eternal life?'" Everyone wants to do good. Look at all the causes that men do; isn't it for good? *Yes!* Here he wants to know, "...what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life?"

Verse 17: "And He said to him, 'Why do

you call Me good?... [Isn't that interesting?] ...No one *is* good except one—God. But if you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments.'" Why did Jesus say that He wasn't good? He was God in the flesh—wasn't He? As long as He had human nature and human flesh, that can never be good in the sense of the goodness of God when we're spirit beings.

It's kind of like, remember the old Bill Cosby joke—the one on Noah. Noah's in their working, sawing away and a voice comes out and says, 'Noah!' *Who's that?* 'It's the Lord, Noah!' *I've been good, I've been good!* And that's the way human beings are—isn't it?

Verse 18: "Then he said to Him, 'Which?'.... [He figured 'I'm almost there. I've been a good boy.'] ...And Jesus said, 'You shall not commit murder; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honor your father and your mother; and, you shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" (vs 18-19. And the young man thought, 'Man, I've just about have it made!')

Verse 20: "The young man said to Him, 'I have kept all these things from my youth. What do I yet lack?' Jesus said to him, 'If you desire to be perfect... [Isn't that where we started in Matt. 5:48? *Become perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect!*] ...go *and* sell your property, and give to *the* poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come *and* follow Me.'" (vs 20-21).

What is the test we always all go through?

- Do we love God more than anything else?
- Have we counted the cost?
- Are we willing to carry our cross—as Jesus said—our burden?

If you do you'll have treasure in heaven, and 'come and follow Me,' Jesus said. But notice what this rich man did: Verse 22: "But after hearing this word, the young man went away grieving, because he had many possessions. Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'Truly I say to you, it *is extremely* difficult for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven'" (vs 22-23).

It's possible, because you have Joseph of Arimathea who was a rich man. He's going to be there. But it's difficult. Why? *Because in order to be successful in the world, you have got to have Godly character even in the letter of the law!* So, in order to be successful in the world, you must be what the world would consider a 'good' person. But being a 'good person' in the world does not qualify you for eternal life, to enter into the Kingdom of God.

Notice how the disciples took this after Jesus said, v 24: "And again I say to you, it is easier for a

camel to pass through *the* eye of a needle than *for* a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.” Nothing is impossible for God. He could make that happen. Just take the camel and make into one long string, pull it through the needle, put it back together on the other side and it’s gone through the eye of a needle—correct? But men cannot comprehend this. It’s difficult!

Verse 25: “But after hearing this, the disciples were greatly astonished *and* said, ‘Who then is able to be saved?’ But Jesus looked at them and said, ‘With men this is impossible; but with God **all things are possible.**’” (vs 25-26). Peter wasn’t quite satisfied with that answer. Peter always got himself in trouble. Peter always put himself out. Here’s another case that Peter’s got to speak up.

Verse 27: “Then Peter answered *and* said to Him, ‘Behold, we have left everything and have followed You. What then shall be for us?’” Look, we’ve already done this! We aren’t rich men. We were just lowly fishermen.

Verse 28: “And Jesus said to them, ‘Truly I say to you who have followed Me: in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit upon *the* throne of His glory, you also shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.... [Then He made it clear for everyone else]: ...And everyone who has left houses, or brothers, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and shall inherit eternal life. **But many of the first shall be last, and the last first**” (vs 28-30).

Let’s come to Matthew, the tenth chapter; let’s see how He brought this out again. Let’s see how He brought this out in a time of trouble and a time of persecution.

Matthew 10:16: “Behold, I am sending you forth as sheep in *the* midst of wolves. Therefore, be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.” This happened with the apostles and disciples. It’s happened in the past ages, and it’s going to happen again with us.

Verse 17: “But beware of men; for they will deliver you up to councils, and they will scourge you in their synagogues; and you shall also be brought before governors and kings for My sake, for a witness to them and to the Gentiles. Now when they deliver you up, do not be anxious *about* how or what you should speak; for in that hour it shall be given to you what you shall speak” (vs 17-19). That obviously is if you have studied and prayed on a regular basis up to that point.

Verse 20: “**For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaks in you**.... [Notice how difficult it’s going to be]: ...Then

brother will deliver up brother to death, and *the* father, the child; and children will rise up against *their* parents and *have* them put to death” (vs 20-21). I think we can see how the emotions of this present age are going right now, that this is a reality that’s going to happen. You can have secret witness calls; you don’t even have to reveal who you are.

Here’s how it’s going get, it happened then, and it’s going to happen now, v 22: “And you shall be hated by all for My name’s sake; **but the one who endures to *the* end, that one shall be saved.** But when they persecute you in this city, escape into another; for truly I say to you, in no way shall you have completed *witnessing* to the cities of Israel until the Son of man has come” (vs 22-23). That’s an ongoing command for us to do. We have to continuously

- be witnessing
- be preaching the Gospel
- be serving the brethren
- be feeding the flock

That’s the whole reason for our being, brethren; until the Son of man has come. We’re to remember this: Verse 24: “A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.” That’s the lesson we’re to learn from foot-washing every year— isn’t it?

- we don’t exalted
- we don’t get lifted up in vanity
- we don’t get puffed up in pride

No! Because ***Jesus died for us***—never forget that! We’re only here because of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the granting of repentance so we can be baptized and receive the Holy Spirit.

Then He makes a very profound point, v 25: “It is sufficient for the disciple that he become as his teacher, and the servant as his master....” That’s the whole goal. Brethren, really this is the whole goal of preaching and teaching. This is the whole goal of Sabbath services. This is the whole goal of Bible study. This is the whole goal! *Christ wants to raise us to His level!* That’s the duty of all ministers and teachers; to ensure that the brethren are taught so they can be raised to this level. Yes, we all have our part in it, that’s for sure. Yes, indeed!

Then He says, “...If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more *shall they call* those of his household?.... [Then He gives this teaching]: ...Therefore, do not fear them because there is nothing covered that shall not be uncovered, and *nothing* hidden that shall not be known” (vs 25-26). And in today’s world, yes indeed, that is true! But, at the resurrection, all of that’s going to be known—right? *Yes!* That’s why we’re under the blood of Christ; we’re under grace,

and at the resurrection for us, all of that is left on the earth.

Verse 27: “What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear in the ear, proclaim upon the housetops.” Then He makes a promise: How we are to face life, how we are to face difficulties, regardless of what they may be. In the final analysis, there is *nothing* that can be against us, IF we’re under the grace of God, the blood of Jesus Christ and have His Holy Spirit. Therefore, it doesn’t matter what takes place, because **‘all things will work together for good, to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.’**

Verse 28: “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body, but do not have power to destroy the life... [The *King James* says ‘soul’; but in most cases ‘psuche’ in the Greek is translated *life*. Other places it’s translated *soul*, but ‘life’ is the correct one, because Jesus Christ is the Author of life and that life comes from God the Father and Jesus Christ to us. They can’t take that from us.] ...rather, fear Him Who has the power to destroy both life and body in Gehenna.” Living in this age, we need to take that to heart.

Then He gives us some encouragement, v 29: “Are not two sparrows sold for a coin? And yet not one of them shall fall to the ground without your Father *taking account of it*. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Therefore, do not be afraid; you are better than many sparrows” (vs 29-31).

Then let’s read some of the rest of this to see how difficult that it is for people to enter into the Kingdom of God unless they do it the way that Jesus Christ and God has said, and unless there is a total commitment of ourselves, through the covenant baptism, to God the Father and Jesus Christ and the Truth of God.

Verse 32: “Now then, whoever shall confess Me before men, that one will I also confess before My Father Who *is* in heaven. But whoever shall deny Me before men, that one will I also deny before My Father, Who *is* in heaven. **Do not think that I have come to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword**” (vs 32-34). What is that sword? *The Word of God is a sharp two-edged sword* that ‘cuts asunder, even dividing between the soul and the spirit’ and the bones and the marrow, and is a ‘discerner of the thoughts nano intents of the heart.’ When we come to God, everything like it says there in Heb. 4, it is ‘laid bare and open to the one Whom we serve. He brought a sword!

Verse 35: “For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against

her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man’s enemies *shall be those of his own household*” (vs 35-36). How are you going to handle that? *It’s called ‘counting the cost.’ It’s called making sure that you love God the Father and Jesus Christ more than anything else!* If you do, then you can love other people as well. But you never, *never, never* put anyone between you and God!

Verse 37—even in your own family: “The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me.... [This is all a part of the teachings of the Kingdom of God.] ...The one who has found his life shall lose it; and the one who has lost his life for My sake shall find it.” (vs 37-38).

So, this verse tells us it doesn’t matter how successful you are in the world, and it doesn’t matter if you are living the perfect life in the flesh and you finally have ‘found it’; **if you do not love God and serve Him, you’re going to lose it!** Whereas, if you lose your life for Christ’s sake—that begins in baptism—and you lose your life everyday as you grow and overcome, and it may come down to the time when someone is going to take it from you, **you’ll find it!**

Verse 40: “The one who receives you receives Me, and the one who receives Me receives Him Who sent Me.” Notice that this comes right from God the Father, right down to each one of us individually.

Then He gives some encouragement so that we know that if we do the things that are right, in spite of all the odds against us, **God is for us and God loves us!** Verse 41: “The one who receives a prophet in *the* name of a prophet shall receive *the* reward of a prophet; and the one who receives a righteous *man* in *the* name of a righteous *man* shall receive the reward of a righteous *man*.... [Don’t ask me what the reward is, I don’t know what it is. Best way to find out is to be in the resurrection!] ...And *if* anyone shall in *the* name of a disciple give to one of these little ones to drink a cup of cold *water* only, truly I say to you, he shall in no way lose his reward” (vs 41-42).

These are all the parables—that we have covered today—concerning the Kingdom of God. ***The Kingdom of God is the whole focal point of the reason why we keep the Feast of Tabernacles;*** the whole reason why we are striving to enter into the Kingdom of God. We’re learning:

- What is the Kingdom of God?
- How do we get there?

- How we are faithful to the end to make sure that we enter into it?

We'll go ahead and close for today and we will see you tomorrow.

Scriptural References:

- 1) Malachi 3:1-2
- 2) John 2:13-25
- 3) Matthew 11:1-15
- 4) Matthew 5:18, 48
- 5) Matthew 21:27-43
- 6) John 15:1-5
- 7) Matthew 21:42-46
- 8) Matthew 18:1-4
- 9) Matthew 22:1-5, 14, 6-9, 11-14
- 10) Luke 22:66-70
- 11) Matthew 16:27-28
- 12) Matthew 17:1-12
- 13) Matthew 13:10-35, 43-52
- 14) Matthew 19:16-30
- 15) Matthew 10:16-42

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Acts 6
- Revelation 19
- Luke 4
- Daniel 7
- Acts 3
- Revelation 14
- Luke 14
- Matthew 5:48
- Hebrews 4

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Books:

- *Judaism—Religion of God or Religion of Men?* by Phil Neal
- *Lord, What Should I Do?* by Fred R. Coulter
- *God's Plan Revealed by His Sabbath and Holy Days* by Fred R. Coulter

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