

# **Tending the Tares**

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

A. Read: Matt. 13:24-30, 37-43

1. Reason for Parables - Matt. 13:34-35, 51-52; Psalm 78:2

B. Understanding tares: "TARES (Heb. זִנִּים, zunim), the darnel, *Lolium temulentum*, weed which grows among grain, particularly wheat. The grains resemble those of wheat so that it is very difficult to separate them by sifting, and as a result they are sown together with the wheat and grow with it in the field. Darnel flour is poisonous and gives a bitter taste to bread in which it has been mixed. The tares do no harm to birds, especially to doves (TJ, Kil. 1:1, 26d). Nobody would consciously sow tares in his field. Hence the parable in the New Testament about the peasant 'who sowed good seed in his fields... and his enemy came and sowed tares in the midst of the wheat'" (Matt. 13:24-30) (Encyclopedia Judaica <https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/tares>)

C. Martin Luther preached a sermon on the parable in which he affirmed that only God can separate false from true believers and noted that killing heretics or unbelievers ends any opportunity they may have for salvation:

1. "From this observe what raging and furious people we have been these many years, in that we desired to force others to believe; the Turks with the sword, heretics with fire, the Jews with death, and thus outroot the tares by our own power, as if we were the ones who could reign over hearts and spirits, and make them pious and right, which God's Word alone must do. But by murder we separate the people from the Word, so that it cannot possibly work upon them and we bring thus, with one stroke a double murder upon ourselves, as far as it lies in our power, namely, in that we murder the body for time and the soul for eternity, and afterwards say we did God a service by our actions, and wish to merit something special in heaven." (Sermons, Vol. II, pg 101)

2. He concluded that "although the tares hinder the wheat, yet they make it the more beautiful to behold at the harvest."

D. We may not know how the seed sprouts and grows; we simply trust that if we sow the seed, it will produce fruit by God's will and to His glory

1. Mark 4:26-30

2. The sower did not concern himself with conserving seed or with where the seed would fall; he sowed the seed - Psalm 126:5; Hosea 10:12

## **I. JESUS INTERPRETED THE PARABLE**

A. The man who sows is Jesus - Matt 13:37

1. Jesus' purpose for coming to the world - Luke 19:10; Psalms 17:8-13

2. It was Christ's joy to fulfill this task

3. Heb. 12:2; Luke 15:4-5; 1Peter 1:18-19

B. The field is the world of humankind - Matt. 13:38

1. As much as preachers speak ill of it, as much as many Christians are prejudiced against it, as much as it is fallen and filled with sinners, it is still the place that God loves, to which Christ came, and from which saints are taken

2. Ex. 19:5-6; 1John 2:2

- C. The good seed is the sons of the Kingdom - Matt. 13:38
  - 1. Those who are made disciples - Matt. 28:19-20
  - 2. And who remain disciples - Heb. 3:14-18
- D. The tares are the sons of the wicked one - Matt. 13:38
  - 1. Matt. 13:41 - They are in the kingdom and practice lawlessness.
  - 2. Once again, brethren, this is not Christians versus sinners; it is Christians versus professed members of the church
- E. The enemy who sowed them is the devil - Matt. 13:39
  - 1. Who tried to tempt Christ and failed - Matt. 4:1-11
  - 2. Who tried to kill the Christ and failed - Matt. 28:6-8
  - 3. Who is now trying to destroy Christ one Christian at a time - 1Peter 5:8
- F. The harvest is the Judgment - Matt. 13:39
  - 1. The present gospel dispensation - Col. 1:13
  - 2. Will end with the coming of our Lord - Matt. 26:31-32; 1Tim. 6:14-15
- G. The reapers are the angels - Matt. 13:39
  - 1. Angels will accompany Christ when He comes again - 2Thes. 1:7
  - 2. They will separate the wicked from among the just - Matt. 13:49

## II. LESSONS FROM THE PARABLE

- A. Matt. 13:40-41 - The problem of the tares will be addressed by the Lord, but not until the harvest
  - 1. It does not imply tolerance for the tares, but consideration for the good seed - Matt. 13:29
  - 2. They may appear to be in the kingdom now, but they will not be in the kingdom of heaven later
- B. Matt. 13:42 - The tares will be properly and completely addressed by the Lord
  - 1. In the parable, the tares were burned and the wheat was barned
- C. Matt. 13:43 - The good seed will be blessed and glorified
  - 1. The good seed needs to be patient until the Judgment. While it may be frustrating that there appears to be little difference between the faithful Christians and the pretenders among them; God knows the difference, and He will make it clear for everyone to see in the end.
- D. Matt. 13:9; Daniel 12:3; 1Cor. 15:58