

**Introduction:** Creation is currently caught up in continuous conflict. From the remnant returning from Babylonian captivity five hundred years before the birth of THE Savior-Messiah in Bethlehem to now, God's people steeped in His Word have interpreted passages in the prophets Isaiah (14:3-20) and Ezekiel (28:1-19), given in the late eighth and early sixth centuries Before Christ as describing the origins of this conflict. \*\*\* God's people know that to survive and thrive in this conflict they need to draw near to Him and dwell in His Presence. As Moses spoke his last prophetic words to the tribes of Israel he said God's people 'will dwell in safety with Him' (*Deuteronomy 33:12*). The musician-prophet Asaph declared 'as for me, the nearness of God is my good, I have made Adonai-Yahweh my refuge' (*Psalm 73:28*). And, also through Moses, Yahweh said, 'I will walk among you all, and will be your God and you all will be My people' (*Leviticus 26:12*). \*\*\* From this, we can conclude that the way to have victory in the conflict raging around us comes from *Living in the presence of God*. \*\*\* In Jesus' principal parable today, He describes the work of the enemy in sowing his sons as poisonous weeds in the midst of the good wheat seeds of Jesus' sons that He has sown. In this, He declares (speaking in the third person): *The Son of Man sows good seed*. \*\*\* Our complementary Psalm this morning is also a testimony to the blessedness of living in the presence of God where He dwells. \*\*\* Let's now investigate God's Word to get to know Him better.

**I. Jesus tells three parables about God's Kingdom.** (*Matthew 13:24-35*)

- A. The longest is about a man who had sown good seed in his field; then, his enemy sows weeds among it. (*Matthew 13:24-30*)
1. He put before them another parable, 'The Kingdom of the Heavens has been made like a man having sown good seed in his field, but when the men are sleeping his enemy came and sowed weeds in the middle of the wheat and went away' (*Verses 24-25*).  
**Good seed:** The farmer and his men sowed good wheat seeds in his field.  
**Enemy at night:** But late at night, with everyone sleeping, his enemy came.  
**Mix in weeds:** He planted seeds of a noxious weed (darnel) among the good wheat seeds. The seeds look alike but people eating darnel grain can become intoxicated.
  2. ... But when the blade sprouted and made grain, then the darnel also appeared ... (*Verse 26*)  
**Grain and weeds:** Wheat seeds and poisonous darnel seeds have both grown and produced grain.
  3. ... But the servants of the house-master, having approached, said to him, 'Lord, didn't you sow good seed in your field; 'Where then has come the darnel?' ... (*Verse 27*)  
**How weeds:** When the servants discover poisonous darnel with the wheat, they question him about the quality of his seed (knowing it is good) and wonder how the weeds got there.
  4. ... But he said to them, 'An enemy man did this'; but, the servants were saying to him, 'Then do you desire us, having gone, to pull them up?' ... (*Verse 28*)  
**Answer and question:** The house-master farmer tells them a man who is his enemy has planted the poisonous weeds; and, they offer to go to the field and pull up the poisonous weeds.
  5. ... But he is answering, 'No, that not as gathering the poisonous weeds, you would root up together with them the wheat; you all must permit both to grow together until the harvest, and in harvest time I will tell the harvesters, 'First, you all must gather the poisonous weeds, and you all must tie them in bundles to be burned; but, then you all must gather together the wheat into my barn''. (*Verses 29-30*)  
**Both together:** In order to protect the wheat from being harmed by rooting up the poisonous weeds, he will allow both to grow together.  
**First, gather weeds to burn:** Then he will first command his harvesters to gather the poisonous weeds to burn them.  
**Gather wheat to barn:** Finally, he will command his harvesters to gather wheat into his barn. The End.
- B. Then He told two short parables about a mustard seed and leaven. (*Matthew 13:31-35*)
1. He put forth to them another parable, saying, 'The Kingdom of the Heavens is being like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man having taken, sowed in his field; which indeed is being the least of all the seeds; but, when it has been grown is being the greatest of the garden plants and is becoming a tree so the birds of the air come to nest in its branches'. (*Verses 31-32*)  
**Least to greatest:** The smallest seed planted grows into the greatest garden plant becoming a tree.  
**Birds nest:** It becomes so big that birds can build nests in its branches!
  2. He spoke another parable to them, 'The Kingdom of the Heavens is being like leaven which a woman, having taken, hid three measures of wheat flour until was leavened the whole'. (*Verse 33*)  
**Good or bad:** Before this Jesus equated leaven with hypocrisy (*Luke 12:1; 13:21*). The apostle Paul equated leaven with malice and wickedness, as opposed to sincerity and truth (*1 Corinthians 5:6-8*). So, in context He may be saying leaven is similar to the poisonous weeds.
  3. All these things Jesus spoke in parables to the multitudes; and, without a parable He was speaking nothing to them; that it might be fulfilled having spoken through the prophet, saying, 'I will open my mouth in parables and will forcefully announce things which have been kept hidden from the foundation of the world' (*Psalm 78:2*). (*Verses 34-35*)  
**Continually parables:** Parables themselves hide God's Truth from those who do not have ears to hear.  
**Fulfill musician prophet:** Asaph was inspired to write the Psalm Jesus says He is fulfilling. David appointed him one of the music leaders for Solomon's Temple, and The Holy Spirit calls him a prophet (*1 Chronicles 25:1-2*).  
**Hidden:** Over time, from Moses to John, God revealed more of Himself in Scripture.

**II. The benefits of coming away from the crowds to be with God.** (*Matthew 13:36; Psalm 84:1-7; Matthew 13:37-44*)

- A. God's people are moved to praise Him in His dwelling place and receive His strength. (*Matthew 13:36; Psalm 84:1-7*)  
Transition. Then, having left the crowd, He went into the house and His disciples came to Him: 'You must explain to us the parable of the poisonous weeds in the field'. (*Matthew 13:36*)

**Away from crowds:** Jesus explained when He was alone with and close to His twelve disciples.

Our Psalm is about intimacy with God in His presence. (*Psalm 84:1-7*)

1. How beloved are Thy dwelling places Yahweh Sabaoth; My soul longs and is even consumed in the courts of Yahweh; my heart and my flesh sing for joy to the Living God. (*Verses 1-2*)

**Beloved courts:** The psalmist says the courts of Yahweh's Temple are beloved because He is there.

**Individual longs:** This is an individual longing for and consumed with being in God's presence.

**Joy:** Body and soul give a ringing singing cry of joy to the God who is eternally living.

2. Even the bird has found a house and the swallow a nest for herself, in which she has laid her young; Your altars Yahweh Sabaoth, my king and my God. (*Verse 3*)

**Birds:** The Temple of God and His altars even provide a home for birds and their young.

- 1'. Blessed with happiness are those dwelling in Thy house; They are ever praising Thee. [*Selah* – meditate on this truth.] (*Verse 4*)

**Blessed community:** Now the psalmist includes the whole family and community of God's people in the blessing of happiness coming from living with God.

**Praise:** Because they are all blessed by The Covenant God of Hosts, they perpetually praise Him. Such is the result of ...

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3. Blessed with happiness is the man whose strength is in Thee; in their heart are the highways. (*Verse 5*)

**Individual strength:** Each man who finds his strength in Yahweh is blessed with happiness; and, with other men his heart is on the highways leading to Jerusalem and the house and presence of their God.

4. They are going through the Valley of Baca (weeping), they will make it a place of springs; even the early rain will cover it in blessings. (*Verse 6*)

**Weeping to blessings:** On their way to be with God, the Valley of Weeping becomes springs; and, the spring rains will provide blessings to the pilgrims of God.

- 3'. They go from strength to strength; in Zion they will appear before the God of gods. (*Verse 7*)

**Strength together in God:** In a group gathering God's strength from each other, they appear before their God in His presence in Zion (the parched place now watered with tears of joy).

- B. Jesus fully explains the meaning of His first parable when He is alone with His chosen disciples. (*Matthew 13:37-44*)

1. But Jesus answered and said, 'The one sowing the good seed is The Son of Man ... (*Verse 37*)

**Son of Man:** Jesus refers to Himself in the third person as God in human flesh – The Son of Man.

#### **The Son of Man sows good seed**

2. ... But the field is the world; and the good seed are these being the Sons of The Kingdom; but, the poisonous weeds are the sons of the evil one ... (*Verse 38*)

**World:** Notice the field is the world, meaning all the various ethnicities of people everywhere.

**Sons of Kingdom:** Through The Son of Man, Jesus, people can be become children in God's Kingdom.

**Sons of evil one:** Those who are not IN Jesus are still under the control of the evil one, and he will do all he can to plant his dangerous and disruptive people among God's people to make them less fruitful.

3. ... The enemy who sows them is the devil (slanderer); but the harvest is the end of the age; and the harvesters angels ... (*Verse 39*)

**Enemy:** The slanderer is always speaking ill of God's people, even to God, *Job 1-2*.

**Harvest:** The harvest will be when Jesus comes to earth the second time for the final judgment.

**Angels:** Angels are the created spirit beings who stayed loyal to God when the devil rebelled and took up to a third of the spirit beings with him who became demons in their rebellion against their Creator.

4. ... Then as he gathers the poisonous weeds and in the fire they are being burned, so it will be in the end of the age: The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His Kingdom all obstacles (scandals) and those doing lawlessness, and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, and it will be there bitter wailing and gnashing of teeth ... (*Verses 40-42*)

**Evil gathered out first:** So, unlike the 'pre-tribulation rapture' when Jesus comes He will not call up His people before the judgment, but first His angels will gather out of His Kingdom all those continuing in rebellious disobedience.

**Fiery furnace:** They will be cast into an eternally burning furnace to experience bitter ongoing pain.

5. ... Then the righteous will shine like the sun in The Kingdom of their Father; the one having ears, he must hear. (*Verse 43*)

**Righteous shine:** People become righteous as the faithful Son of Man gives them faith in Him as their Savior and Lord by grace through the Holy Spirit so they can call God their Father, as Jesus does. Then through Jesus they will be eternally **Living in the presence of God.**

**Hear:** Jesus concludes that all who hear with faith received by grace, and act by grace through faith on what they have heard, will shine like the sun in God's presence forever.

**Conclusion:** Through parables Jesus teaches about The Kingdom of God in conflict with the evil one who seeks to corrupt the children of God by planting his own evil children in their midst. When He was alone with His chosen twelve, Jesus says He will allow this conflict until the end of the age when He will first bind up the children of evil and burn them in constant anguish. But, His children, who were cultivated by Him through His workers throughout the conflict, will shine with Him forever: they will enjoy His presence without any more conflict, praising Him eternally.

#### **Living in the presence of God**