

# Matthew 13:24-30

<https://thebiblesays.com/commentary/matt/matt-13/matthew-1324-30/>

*Matthew records Jesus' second parable concerning the kingdom of heaven. He compares it to a man who sows good wheat in his field, but later an enemy sows toxic, unproductive tares. The farmer allows the two kinds of plant to grow alongside each other until the harvest. Only then does he separate the good from the bad.*

This parable is unparalleled in the other gospel accounts, although in Mark 4:26-30, *Jesus* tells what may be a simplified version of this *parable*.

Matthew continues this chapter with *another parable* (the second of seven) concerning the *kingdom of heaven* that *Jesus presented*. The first was “the *parable of the sower*” (Matthew 13:3-9.) *Jesus* compared a believer's heart as it received the word to four different types of soils where seeds were sown (Matthew 13:18-23.) The *parable Jesus presented* in this passage is known as “the *parable of the wheat and the tares*.” The *them* who *Jesus presented* this *parable to* is the crowds (Matthew 13:34). Because *Jesus* explains the meaning of this *parable* to His disciples in Matthew 13:37-43, we will only focus on the *parable's* literal elements here. We will focus on the explanation in the later passage that covers *Jesus's* explanation.

*Jesus* began the *parable*, saying *the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field*. This tells us that this *parable* teaches us something about *the kingdom of heaven*. Like “the *parable of the sower*,” “the *parable of the wheat and the tares*” is agricultural. In it, *Jesus* describes a farmer *who sowed good seed in his field*. The farmer *sowed wheat* seeds in expectation that in time they would sprout, grow, and at *harvest* they would produce *grain* that he could either eat or sell for profit.

But the farmer has an *enemy* who *came* at night *while* the farmer's workers *were sleeping and sowed tares among the wheat and went away*. *Tares* are a type of weed that strongly resembles *wheat* during its sprouting phase, but lacks fruit. This becomes evident during *harvest*. *The tares* that *Jesus* describes could be the weed we call today “darnel.” Even though they look like *wheat* for a time, *tares* do not produce *good grain*. Instead, they produce a toxic *grain* that can cause illness or even death if consumed.

After the farmer's *enemy* secretly *sowed tares among the wheat and went away*, time passed. *The tares* unknowingly grew alongside *the wheat*. But the farmer's workers noticed that *when the wheat sprouted*, that *the tares became evident* to them. These servants *of the landowning farmer came and reported to him about the tares*. They *said to him, Sir did you not [only] sow good seed in your field? How then, they asked, does it now have tares* in it?

And the farmer *said to his workers, An enemy has done this!*

*His* servants then asked their master what he wished them to *do? Do you want us, to go cut and gather all the tares in your field?* In other words, do you want us to go pluck out all the *tares*?

The farmer replied, *No, for while you gather up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them.* The reason the farmer *said this to them* was because it might be too difficult for *his men* to discern the difference between *the wheat and the tares* while the plants are young. Or perhaps too difficult to tear out one without also tearing out the other. Not only would *his workers* remove the bad *tares*, they also would remove *the good wheat* in the attempt to rid the landowner's *field of tares*. If this happened, then the farmer would lose the *good of his harvest*.

Instead, the farmer instructed *his workers*, to *allow both the wheat and tares to grow* alongside each other *until* the time of *the harvest* is ready. At which point, the farmer will say to the reapers, *first*, remove and *gather up the bad tares and bind them in bundles to be burned.* *The tares* are *burned* because they have no *good* use and may even be toxic. After the *tares* are removed, the workers can then *gather the good wheat into my barn*, where the farmer can store it for later consumption or sell it for profit.

*Jesus's parable of the wheat and the tares* has some similarities to the vision that the Lord gave the prophet Jeremiah just before Judah's final destruction and exile to Babylon (Jeremiah 24:1-10). In Jeremiah's vision, the division is not between *good* wheat and bad *tares*, but between *good* and bad figs. The *good* figs are in one basket and the bad figs are in another (Jeremiah 24:2-4). The *good* figs will be carried away to Babylon for a time where they will prosper and grow in their love for God (Jeremiah 24:5-7). The bad figs will remain in Judah and face utter destruction as they abandon God (Jeremiah 24:8-10). Jeremiah's vision of the *good* and bad figs occurred as he prophesied. In both Jeremiah's vision and Jesus's parable there is a distinction between good and bad, God is the one who makes this distinction, and there are different outcomes for each group.

Jesus later provides the explanation of this parable in Matthew 13:36-43.

### **Biblical Text**

**Jesus presented another parable to them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field. But while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went away. But when the wheat sprouted and bore grain, then the tares became evident also. The slaves of the landowner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' And he said to them, 'An enemy has done this!' The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go and gather them up?' But he said, 'No; for while you are gathering up the tares, you may uproot the wheat with them. Allow both to grow together until the harvest; and in the time of the harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather up the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them up; but gather the wheat into my barn."'"**