

Handout 1: Matthew Lesson 16

Matthew 11:2-12:50 is organized in a triad of thematic divisions focusing on the unbelief of the people in two sections and followed by Jesus’ invitation to come to faith and to accept Him as the Messiah in the third. Matthew 12:22-50 has the third 3-part division:

1. Unbelief/rejection (verses 22-37)
2. Unbelief/rejection (verses 38-45)
3. Invitation/acceptance (verses 46-50)

Jesus faced six challenges/accusations by the scribes and Pharisees in chapters 9-12:

1. He blasphemes (9:3)
2. He eats with tax collectors and sinners (9:11)
3. He drives out demons by the prince of demons (9:34)
4. He allows His disciples to do what is unlawful on the Sabbath (12:2)
5. He unlawfully cures the sick on the Sabbath (12:10)
6. He heals by the power of Beelzebul (12:24)

Jesus gives the Pharisees another warning using another of the covenant images of the Old Testament prophets—a tree and its fruit (12:33-37).

Image Groups	Part I Covenant relationship	Part II Rebellion	Part III Redemptive Judgment	Part IV Restoration Fulfilled
Vineyard or Fig tree	Well-tended vineyard/fruitful fig tree	Vines grow wild/failure to produce good fruit	Weeds overgrow vineyard/ ruin and destruction	Vines are replanted/ fruitfulness restored
Examples in Scripture	Isaiah 5:1-4; Ezekiel 19:10-11; Jeremiah 24:4-7	Jeremiah 2:21; Hosea 2:14; Micah 7:1-4; Joel 1:11-12; 7:1-4	Isaiah 5:3-6; Ezekiel 19:12-14; Jeremiah 8:13; Nahum 3:12-15	John 15:1-2, 4-6 <i>I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower ...I am the vine, you are the branches ...</i>

Jesus mentions the Galilean prophet Jonah 6 times in 5 verses in Matthew’s Gospel:

1. Matthew 12:39	<i>but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah the prophet.</i>
2. Matthew 12:40	<i>Just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.</i>
3. & 4. Matthew 12:41 (twice)	<i>⁴¹At the judgment, the men of Nineveh will arise with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and there is something greater than Jonah here.</i>
5. Matthew 16:4	<i>An evil and unfaithful generation seeks a sign, but no sign will be given except the sign of Jonah.</i>
6. Matthew 16:17	<i>Jesus said to him in reply, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father.”</i>

The “sign of Jonah” is the only sign Jesus’ generation will receive—the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Handout 2: Matthew Lesson 16

Jesus makes five claims in 12:6, 30, 36-37, 41 and 42 that point to His authority as the divine Messiah who brings the revelation of God to His people:

1. *“something greater than the temple is here”*
2. *“whoever is not with me is against me”*
3. *“I tell you, on the day of judgment people will render an account for every careless word they speak. By your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned”*
4. *“there is something greater than Jonah here”*
5. *“there is something greater than Solomon here”*

After the introduction, chapter 13 is divided into three sections:

- I. The Kingdom Parables (verses 3b-53)
 1. Parable of the Sower (verses 3b-9, 18-23)
 2. Parable of the Weeds among the Wheat (verses 24-30, 36-43)
 3. Parable of the Mustard Seed (verses 31-32)
 4. Parable of the Yeast (verse 33)
 5. Parable of the Buried Treasure (verse 44)
 6. Parable of the Pearl of Great Price (verses 45-46)
 7. Parable of the Sorting of Good and Bad Fish (verses 47-50)
- II. Instruction on how to understand Jesus’ teaching on the Kingdom of Heaven (verses 51-53)
- III. Jesus’ Rejection at Nazareth (verses 54-58)

Symbolic meaning of the four different kinds of soil in the Seed and the Sower Parable

1. Seed sown on the path	This person hears the word of the kingdom without making any effort to understand and embrace the truth. Since he has failed to understand, Satan is able to separate him from the truth and from his place in the Kingdom.
2. Seed sown on rocky ground	This person receives the word of God with joy, but he has no internal stability (roots) from living the faith; in a time of hardship he abandons his faith in God.
3. Seed sown among the thorns	This person hears the word does not love God above all else; the secular world pulls him away from faith and he bears no good fruit/works.
4. Seed sown on rich soil	This person hears the word, understands it, and applies it to his heart/life and bears the fruit/works of faith in abundance.

Jesus identifies five different groups/persons in His explanation of the Parable of the Weeds among the Wheat in 13:36-43. His first telling of the parable is in 13:24-32.

1. The sower of the seed	<i>He who sows good seed is the Son of Man</i>
2. The good seed/wheat	<i>the good seed the children of the kingdom</i>
3. The darnel/weeds	<i>The weeds are the children of the evil one</i>
4. The sower of the weeds	<i>and the enemy who sows them is the devil</i>
5. The harvesters	<i>and the harvesters are angels</i>

It appears that the slaves (13:27) and the harvesters (13:30) are not the same group since the master tells the slaves in 13:30 that He will tell the harvesters to first collect the weeds. The slaves may be the disciples/ministerial priesthood of the New Covenant.