

There are people who have come into the kingdom to-day at a single step, that sometimes spend years in a twilight of semi-religious life and experience. They have had their eyes touched by the Holy Ghost; they need another touch, and when the conditions are met, the Holy Ghost giveth unto them that second touch, and then they see men truly, not as trees walking in the Kingdom of God. And so I think that all these miracles are signs; that all the miracles that our Lord wrought, which are recorded by the writers of the four Gospels, especially in Mark, some thirty or forty miracles, as well as those which comprehend the greatest spiritual significance of our Lord's ministry, were signs.

Now, as to the parables of our Lord. In the year 28 he spoke no parables. In 29 he spoke seven. In the next year he spoke thirteen, and in the last year of his ministry, including only from January to April, ten parables. In the group each is distinctly defined. The line of demarkation between the provinces physically is no clearer geographically than it is between the different groups of parables our Lord spoke. As to the places where these parables were spoken: ten in Galilee, twelve in Perea—people led along by stories of our Lord to better understanding—and in Judea eight; less there than elsewhere.

John records more discourses in Judea than anywhere else. It was a clash between our Lord and the leaders of the Jewish temple. Seven in the second year of our Lord's ministry comprehend parables of the kingdom. They answer this question, what is the meaning of my kingdom? The kingdom of heaven is like unto seed cast by the sower, like unto leaven, like unto the pearl of great price, like unto hidden treasure, like unto a draw net cast into the sea. The first seven parables define the kingdom of our Lord; they are educational parables, parables of instruction. It is a lesson to me and to you, before you try to move upon the heart, inform the mind. Follow your Master in that regard. Lay down the foundation of instruction and education, and then, as our Lord did, pass into the second group of parables, and follow it up with encouragement, admonition, invitation.

The second group of parables (twelve) might be called the parables of grace or mercy. These are educational parables in answer to the question, What is my kingdom? How may one become a member of this kingdom? On what conditions may I be admitted into this kingdom? What encouragement is there to seek a place in this kingdom? The third group of parables are the parables of judgment. There hell is naked and open before the eyes. The parables of the sheep and the goats, and so on, are parables of judgment. Our Lord passes from men and from the relations of men one to the other. While nature is the basis of the first group—the tares, the seed, pearls, hidden treasure; man is the basis of the second group—the widow, the judge, two men in the temple praying, the prodigal son, the lost

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