

In this chapter, and to a greater extent in Matthew 13, are parables of the Kingdom of God (or Kingdom of Heaven). There are two ways to interpret the kingdom parables.

In the traditional view, the parable of the mustard seed, for example, symbolizes the spread of the Christian religion throughout the world as the gospel is preached and believers baptized. The mustard tree's growth is benevolent and beneficial.

The dispensational view, however, recognizes that just a few minutes earlier the Lord was using birds to depict the activity of Satan. This changes the character

of the mustard tree. It now portrays the visible church as gaining wealth and influence in the world, while providing a home for unbelievers and false teachers. This interpretation is more clearly supported in the parables of the wheat and tares and leaven in the lump in Matthew 13. (See *The Mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven* by F.W. Grant for more on this topic.)

Note that the differing views only apply to the present Kingdom. All Christians can and should look forward to a future kingdom with the King Himself on the throne and governing with perfect justice.

### Questions:

1. What is symbolized by the lamp in verses 21-22?
2. In verse 25, what is given more abundantly to those who already have the most?
3. Who is the sower of the seed in verse 26-29? Who makes it grow?
4. What is symbolized by the mustard plant in verses 30-32?

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5. In the account of verses 35-41, the Lord rebukes His disciples for their lack of faith. Faith in what?
  - a. Faith that He has the power to calm the storm?
  - b. Faith that He cares about them?
  - c. Faith that if the boat founders, He will stay with them and not walk away across the water as they drown?
  - d. Or?