**Synoptic Gospels Parables**

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| **Parables (incl. Sayings, Images, Stories)** | **Mark** | **Matthew** | **Luke** |
| **Wedding Guests** | **Mk 2:19-20** | **Mt 9:15** | **Lk 5:34-35** |
| Garments & Wineskins | **Mk 2:21-22** | **Mt 9:16-17** | **Lk 5:36-39** |
| **Beelzebul/Satan &**Strong Man | **Mk 3:23-27** | **Mt 12:24-29** | **Lk 11:15, 17-21** |
| Sower & Seed | **Mk 4:3-8** | **Mt 13:3-9** | **Lk 8:5-8** |
|     [*Why Jesus Uses Parables*] | **Mk 4:10-12** | **Mt 13:10-17** | **Lk 8:9-10** |
|     [*Interpretation of Sower & Seed*] | **Mk 4:13-20** | **Mt 13:18-23** | **Lk 8:11-15** |
| Lamp on a Stand | **Mk 4:21** | **Mt 5:15** | **Lk 8:16; and Lk 11:33** |
|     [*Sayings about Jesus' Parables*] | **Mk 4:22-25** | **Mt 10:26; 7:2; 13:12** | **Lk 8:17-18; 12:2; 6:38b** |
| Seed Growing Secretly | **Mk 4:26-29** | **[***replaced by Mt 13:24-30*] | **-** |
| Mustard Seed | **Mk 4:30-32** | **Mt 13:31-32** | **Lk 13:18-19** |
|     [*Jesus' Use of Parables*] | **Mk 4:33-34** | **Mt 13:34-35** | **-** |
| **Things That Defile** [*with explanation*] | **Mk 7:14-17, [18-23]** | **Mt 15:10-11, [15-20]** | **-** |
| Salt | **Mk 9:50** | **Mt 5:13** | **Lk 14:34** |
| **Camel & Eye of Needle** | **Mk 10:25** | **Mt 19:24** | **Lk 18:25** |
| Wicked Tenants | **Mk 12:1-11** | **Mt 21:33-44** | **Lk 20:9-18** |
| Budding Fig-Tree | **Mk 13:28-29** | **Mt 24:32-33** | **Lk 21:29-31** |
| Doorkeeper | **Mk 13:33-37** | **-** | **[***cf. Lk 12:35-38*] |
| ***Total Number of Markan Parables*** | ***13*** | ***Mt keeps all but 2*** | ***Lk keeps all but 3*** |

**Wedding Guests**

Mark 2:19-20 19 Jesus answered them, “Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? As long as they have the bridegroom with them they cannot fast. 20But the days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast on that day.

Matthew 9:15 15 Jesus answered them, “Can the wedding guests mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they will fast.

Luke 5:34-35 34 Jesus answered them, “Can you make the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? 35But the days will come, and when the bridegroom is taken away from them, then they will fast in those days.”

**Garments & Wineskins**

Mark 2:21-22 21No one sews a piece of unshrunken cloth on an old cloak. If he does, its fullness pulls away, the new from the old, and the tear gets worse. 22Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the skins are ruined. Rather, new wine is poured into fresh wineskins.”

Mathew 9:16-17 16 No one patches an old cloak with a piece of unshrunken cloth, for its fullness pulls away from the cloak and the tear gets worse. 17People do not put new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. Rather, they pour new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved.”

Luke 5:36-39 36And he also told them a parable. “No one tears a piece from a new cloak to patch an old one. Otherwise, he will tear the new and the piece from it will not match the old cloak. 37Likewise, no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins, and it will be spilled, and the skins will be ruined. 38Rather, new wine must be poured into fresh wineskins. 39[ And] no one who has been drinking old wine desires new, for he says, ‘The old is good.’ ”

**Beelzebul/Satan & Strong Man**

Mark 3:23-27 23Summoning them, he began to speak to them in parables, “How can Satan drive out Satan? 24If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. 25And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. 26And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand; that is the end of him. 27But no one can enter a strong man’s house to plunder his property unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can plunder his house.

Mathew 12:24-29 24 But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, “This man drives out demons only by the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons.” 25 But he knew what they were thinking and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste, and no town or house divided against itself will stand. 26And if Satan drives out Satan, he is divided against himself; how, then, will his kingdom stand? 27 And if I drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own people drive them out? Therefore they will be your judges. 28 But if it is by the Spirit of God that I drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 29 How can anyone enter a strong man’s house and steal his property, unless he first ties up the strong man? Then he can plunder his house.

Luke 11:15, 17-21 15Some of them said, “By the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons, he drives out demons.” 17But he knew their thoughts and said to them, “Every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste and house will fall against house. 18And if Satan is divided against himself, how will his kingdom stand? For you say that it is by Beelzebul that I drive out demons. 19 If I, then, drive out demons by Beelzebul, by whom do your own people drive them out? Therefore they will be your judges. 20But if it is by the finger of God that [I] drive out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. 21When a strong man fully armed guards his palace, his possessions are safe.

**Sower and the Seed**

Mark 4:3-8 3“ Hear this! A sower went out to sow. 4And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and the birds came and ate it up. 5Other seed fell on rocky ground where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep. 6And when the sun rose, it was scorched and it withered for lack of roots. 7Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it and it produced no grain. 8And some seed fell on rich soil and produced fruit. It came up and grew and yielded thirty, sixty, and a hundredfold.”

Mathew 13:3-9 3 And he spoke to them at length in parables, saying: “A sower went out to sow. 4And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path, and birds came and ate it up. 5Some fell on rocky ground, where it had little soil. It sprang up at once because the soil was not deep, 6and when the sun rose it was scorched, and it withered for lack of roots. 7Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up and choked it. 8But some seed fell on rich soil, and produced fruit, a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold. 9Whoever has ears ought to hear.”

Luke 8:5-8 5“A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some seed fell on the path and was trampled, and the birds of the sky ate it up. 6Some seed fell on rocky ground, and when it grew, it withered for lack of moisture. 7Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns grew with it and choked it. 8And some seed fell on good soil, and when it grew, it produced fruit a hundredfold.” After saying this, he called out, “Whoever has ears to hear ought to hear.”

**Why Jesus Uses Parables**

Mark 4:10-12 10And when he was alone, those present along with the Twelve questioned him about the parables. 11 He answered them, “The mystery of the kingdom of God has been granted to you. But to those outside everything comes in parables, 12so that ‘they may look and see but not perceive, and hear and listen but not understand, in order that they may not be converted and be forgiven.’ ”

Mathew 13:10-17 10The disciples approached him and said, “Why do you speak to them in parables?” 11 He said to them in reply, “Because knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven has been granted to you, but to them it has not been granted. 12 To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 13 This is why I speak to them in parables, because ‘they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand.’ 14 Isaiah’s prophecy is fulfilled in them, which says: ‘You shall indeed hear but not understand, you shall indeed look but never see. 15Gross is the heart of this people, they will hardly hear with their ears, they have closed their eyes, lest they see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and be converted, and I heal them.’ The Privilege of Discipleship. 16“ But blessed are your eyes, because they see, and your ears, because they hear. 17Amen, I say to you, many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

Luke 8:9-10 9Then his disciples asked him what the meaning of this parable might be. 10He answered, “Knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of God has been granted to you; but to the rest, they are made known through parables so that ‘they may look but not see, and hear but not understand.’

**Interpretation of Sower and Seed**

Mark 4:13-20 13 Jesus said to them, “Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand any of the parables? 14The sower sows the word. 15These are the ones on the path where the word is sown. As soon as they hear, Satan comes at once and takes away the word sown in them. 16And these are the ones sown on rocky ground who, when they hear the word, receive it at once with joy. 17But they have no root; they last only for a time. Then when tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. 18Those sown among thorns are another sort. They are the people who hear the word, 19but worldly anxiety, the lure of riches, and the craving for other things intrude and choke the word, and it bears no fruit. 20But those sown on rich soil are the ones who hear the word and accept it and bear fruit thirty and sixty and a hundredfold.”

Mathew 13:18-23 18“ Hear then the parable of the sower. 19The seed sown on the path is the one who hears the word of the kingdom without understanding it, and the evil one comes and steals away what was sown in his heart. 20The seed sown on rocky ground is the one who hears the word and receives it at once with joy. 21But he has no root and lasts only for a time. When some tribulation or persecution comes because of the word, he immediately falls away. 22The seed sown among thorns is the one who hears the word, but then worldly anxiety and the lure of riches choke the word and it bears no fruit. 23But the seed sown on rich soil is the one who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and yields a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold.”

Luke 8:11-15 11“This is the meaning of the parable. The seed is the word of God. 12Those on the path are the ones who have heard, but the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts that they may not believe and be saved. 13Those on rocky ground are the ones who, when they hear, receive the word with joy, but they have no root; they believe only for a time and fall away in time of trial. 14As for the seed that fell among thorns, they are the ones who have heard, but as they go along, they are choked by the anxieties and riches and pleasures of life, and they fail to produce mature fruit. 15But as for the seed that fell on rich soil, they are the ones who, when they have heard the word, embrace it with a generous and good heart, and bear fruit through perseverance.

**Lamp on a Stand**

Mark 4:21 21He said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a bushel basket or under a bed, and not to be placed on a lampstand?

Mathew 5:15 15Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lampstand, where it gives light to all in the house.

Luke 8:16 16“ No one who lights a lamp conceals it with a vessel or sets it under a bed; rather, he places it on a lampstand so that those who enter may see the light.

Luke 11:33 33“ No one who lights a lamp hides it away or places it [under a bushel basket], but on a lampstand so that those who enter might see the light.

**Saying about Jesus’ Parables**

Mark 4:22-25 21He said to them, “Is a lamp brought in to be placed under a bushel basket or under a bed, and not to be placed on a lampstand? 22For there is nothing hidden except to be made visible; nothing is secret except to come to light. 23Anyone who has ears to hear ought to hear.” 24He also told them, “Take care what you hear. The measure with which you measure will be measured out to you, and still more will be given to you. 25To the one who has, more will be given; from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.”

Mathew 10:26 26“ There-fore do not be afraid of them. Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known.

Mathew 7:2 2For as you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you.

Mathew 13:12 12w\* To anyone who has, more will be given and he will grow rich; from anyone who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

Luke 8:17-18 17For there is nothing hidden that will not become visible, and nothing secret that will not be known and come to light. 18Take care, then, how you hear. To anyone who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he seems to have will be taken away.”

Luke 12:2 2“ There is nothing concealed that will not be revealed, nor secret that will not be known.

Luke 6:38b 38Give and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing, will be poured into your lap. For the measure with which you measure will in return be measured out to you.”

**Seed Growing Secretly**

Mark 4:26-29 26 He said, “This is how it is with the kingdom of God; it is as if a man were to scatter seed on the land 27and would sleep and rise night and day and the seed would sprout and grow, he knows not how. 28Of its own accord the land yields fruit, first the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear. 29And when the grain is ripe, he wields the sickle at once, for the harvest has come.”

Matthew 13:24-30 24 He proposed another parable to them. “The kingdom of heaven may be likened to a man who sowed good seed in his field. 25 While everyone was asleep his enemy came and sowed weeds all through the wheat, and then went off. 26When the crop grew and bore fruit, the weeds appeared as well. 27The slaves of the householder came to him and said, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where have the weeds come from?’ 28He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ His slaves said to him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’ 29He replied, ‘No, if you pull up the weeds you might uproot the wheat along with them. 30 Let them grow together until harvest; then at harvest time I will say to the harvesters, “First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles for burning; but gather the wheat into my barn.” ’ ”

**Mustard Seed**

Mark 4:30-32 30He said, “To what shall we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable can we use for it? 31It is like a mustard seed that, when it is sown in the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth. 32 But once it is sown, it springs up and becomes the largest of plants and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the sky can dwell in its shade.”

Matthew 13:31-32 31 He proposed another parable to them. “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a person took and sowed in a field. 32 It is the smallest of all the seeds, yet when full-grown it is the largest of plants. It becomes a large bush, and the ‘birds of the sky come and dwell in its branches.’ ”

Luke 13:18-19 18 Then he said, “What is the kingdom of God like? To what can I compare it? 19It is like a mustard seed that a person took and planted in the garden. When it was fully grown, it became a large bush and ‘the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches.’ ”

**Jesus Use of Parables**

Mark 4:33-34 33With many such parables he spoke the word to them as they were able to understand it. 34Without parables he did not speak to them, but to his own disciples he explained everything in private.

Matthew 13:34-35 34 All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds in parables. He spoke to them only in parables, 35 to fulfill what had been said through the prophet: “I will open my mouth in parables, I will announce what has lain hidden from the foundation [of the world].”

**Things that Defile**

Mark 7:14-17, 18-23 14He summoned the crowd again and said to them, “Hear me, all of you, and understand. 15Nothing that enters one from outside can defile that person; but the things that come out from within are what defile.” [16] 17 When he got home away from the crowd his disciples questioned him about the parable. 18He said to them, “Are even you likewise without understanding? Do you not realize that everything that goes into a person from outside cannot defile, 19 since it enters not the heart but the stomach and passes out into the latrine?” (Thus he declared all foods clean.) 20“ But what comes out of a person, that is what defiles. 21From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts, unchastity, theft, murder, 22adultery, greed, malice, deceit, licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly. 23All these evils come from within and they defile.”

Matthew 15:10-11, 15-20 10He summoned the crowd and said to them, “Hear and understand. 11It is not what enters one’s mouth that defiles that person; but what comes out of the mouth is what defiles one.” 15 Then Peter said to him in reply, “Explain [this] parable to us.” 16He said to them, “Are even you still without understanding? 17Do you not realize that everything that enters the mouth passes into the stomach and is expelled into the latrine? 18But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and they defile. 19 For from the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, unchastity, theft, false witness, blasphemy. 20These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.”

**Salt**

Mark 9:50 50Salt is good, but if salt becomes insipid, with what will you restore its flavor? Keep salt in yourselves and you will have peace with one another.”

Matthew 5:13 13“ You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

Luke 14:34 34“ Salt is good, but if salt itself loses its taste, with what can its flavor be restored?

**Camel & Eye of Needle**

Mark 10:25 25It is easier for a camel to pass through [the] eye of [a] needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

Matthew 19:24 24Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the kingdom of God.”

Luke 18:25 25For it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.

**Wicked Tenants**

Mark 12:1-11 1 He began to speak to them in parables. “A man planted a vineyard, put a hedge around it, dug a wine press, and built a tower. Then he leased it to tenant farmers and left on a journey. 2At the proper time he sent a servant to the tenants to obtain from them some of the produce of the vineyard. 3But they seized him, beat him, and sent him away empty-handed. 4Again he sent them another servant. And that one they beat over the head and treated shamefully. 5He sent yet another whom they killed. So, too, many others; some they beat, others they killed. 6He had one other to send, a beloved son. He sent him to them last of all, thinking, ‘They will respect my son.’ 7But those tenants said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.’ 8So they seized him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. 9What [then] will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come, put the tenants to death, and give the vineyard to others. 10Have you not read this scripture passage: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone; 11by the Lord has this been done, and it is wonderful in our eyes’?”

Matthew 21:33-44 33“ Either declare the tree good and its fruit is good, or declare the tree rotten and its fruit is rotten, for a tree is known by its fruit. 34 You brood of vipers, how can you say good things when you are evil? For from the fullness of the heart the mouth speaks. 35A good person brings forth good out of a store of goodness, but an evil person brings forth evil out of a store of evil. 36 I tell you, on the day of judgment people will render an account for every careless word they speak. 37By your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.” The Demand for a Sign. 38 Then some of the scribes and Pharisees said to him, “Teacher, we wish to see a sign from you.” 39 He said to them in reply, “An evil and unfaithful generation seeks a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. 40 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. 41 At 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. 42At the judgment the queen of the south will arise with this generation and condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and there is something greater than Solomon here. The Return of the Unclean Spirit. 43“ When an unclean spirit goes out of a person it roams through arid regions searching for rest but finds none. 44Then it says, ‘I will return to my home from which I came.’ But upon returning, it finds it empty, swept clean, and put in order.

Luke 20:9-18 9 Then he proceeded to tell the people this parable. “[ A] man planted a vineyard, leased it to tenant farmers, and then went on a journey for a long time. 10At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenant farmers to receive some of the produce of the vineyard. But they beat the servant and sent him away empty-handed. 11So he proceeded to send another servant, but him also they beat and insulted and sent away empty-handed. 12Then he proceeded to send a third, but this one too they wounded and threw out. 13The owner of the vineyard said, ‘What shall I do? I shall send my beloved son; maybe they will respect him.’ 14But when the tenant farmers saw him they said to one another, ‘This is the heir. Let us kill him that the inheritance may become ours.’ 15 So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him. What will the owner of the vineyard do to them? 16He will come and put those tenant farmers to death and turn over the vineyard to others.” When the people heard this, they exclaimed, “Let it not be so!” 17fBut he looked at them and asked, “What then does this scripture passage mean: ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone’? 18Everyone who falls on that stone will be dashed to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.”

**Budding Fig Tree**

Mark 13:28-29 28“ Learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves, you know that summer is near. 29In the same way, when you see these things happening, know that he is near, at the gates.

Matthew 24:32-33 32“ Learn a lesson from the fig tree. When its branch becomes tender and sprouts leaves, you know that summer is near. 33In the same way, when you see all these things, know that he is near, at the gates.

Luke 21:29-31 29He taught them a lesson. “Consider the fig tree and all the other trees. 30When their buds burst open, you see for yourselves and know that summer is now near; 31in the same way, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.