

Sunday September 12th 2021
Has God Indeed Said
Part 2

1). *Ge 3:1 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden'?" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.' "4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die.*

That which God had said to Adam and the Woman about not eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil had to do with one thing only, their worthiness to rule in the 7th Day. The serpent's question, 'Has God indeed said?' and his accompanying statement, 'You will not surely die', directed at the Woman, are an attack on that which God had said concerning what was necessary to rule in that Day, a direct attack therefore on the need for faithful obedience to that which God had said and the complete emasculation of the consequences for failing to do so.

a). And with respect to rulership in the 7th Day God has also spoken to us – *Heb 1:1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; [made an orderly arrangement of the ages]*

And what He has said to us concerning rulership in the 7th Day, by His Son, is found in that which the Lord calls, the Word of the Kingdom. It is found in the good news that was given to Paul to take to the Gentiles concerning the coming Day of Christ's glory, the gospel of the glory of Christ. And these contain promised blessings of an incalculable nature for the faithful and severe warnings for those who would choose not to take God at His Word.

b). And the hope that we are promised through this good news is founded on the certainty of the resurrected Christ's return to establish His Kingdom, a return which will begin with the resurrection/rapture of the church to His Judgment seat and will be brought to completion by His literal return to the earth to overthrow Gentile world power for all time, bringing about a complete change in the present system of rulership – 2 Th 1:10 *when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.*

And as we have seen from the Matthew 13 parables, Satan has continued his concerted attack against the Word of the Kingdom to prevent or stop fruit production among those who have heard it and understood it and have organized their lives accordingly. And this attack, as it was in the Garden, is centered on the same question that he asked in the Garden, 'Has God indeed said?'

c). And the central pillar of the corrupted doctrine that comes from this question, which was introduced by the tares at the beginning of the dispensation, challenges the next event on God's prophetic calendar, the return of Christ to establish His Kingdom, the much heralded return that begins with the resurrection/rapture of the Church, all Christians from the two thousand years of this dispensation to Christ's Judgment Seat to settle matters of life or death for them in the age to come – Re 2:11 *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death."*

And the challenge to what God has said about this is found in the question asked by the tares, seen in – 2Pe 3:1 ¶ *Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds by way of reminder), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior, 3 ¶ knowing this first: that scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts, 4 and saying, "Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."*

And we had seen last week that there is a direct parallel between the actions of the Children of Israel while Moses was 'delayed' on the mountain of God and the actions of the Church while the Lord remains in the heavens.

d). In both the type and the antitype, we have seen a questioning of the promise given to return, allowing for a move to do what was right in the eyes of those waiting, that was endorsed and even encouraged by the leaders of the people - Ex 32:1b *...as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.*" [Where is the promise of his coming?].5 *So when Aaron saw it, [the golden calf] he built an altar before it. And Aaron made a proclamation and said, "Tomorrow is a feast to the LORD."* 6 *Then they rose early on the next day, offered burnt offerings, and brought peace offerings; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.*

2). Now, with respect to the Church, this same move to do what is right in their own eyes, during the time Christ has remained in the Heavens, has come from the work of the tares as they chose to stand away from the faith giving rise to the appearance of the 'scoffers' in the verses from 2 Peter Chapter 3.

a). These same 'apostate' Christians are also spoken of in Jude where they are referred to as 'mockers' - Jude 1:17 *But you, beloved, remember the words which were spoken before by the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ: 18 how they told you that there would be mockers in the last time who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts.*

The words, 'Scoffers' and 'mockers' are both a translation of the same Greek word which means to deride or belittle, to mock. And the 'ungodly lusts' these 'mockers' are said to walk in from Jude, find their expression in the 'scoffers' question, 'Where is the promise of His coming?' from 2 Peter.

b). The appearing of the 'scoffers' and 'mockers' as part of Satan's unrelenting attack on the Word of the Kingdom was something that Paul had also warned about - Acts 20:29 *For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to*

draw away the disciples after themselves. 31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.

1Ti 4:1 ¶ Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, 2 speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, 3 forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

2Ti 4:1 ¶ I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

It is standing away from the faith, which has called into question ‘the promise of His coming’, a premise which finds its ultimate expression in the present ‘Laodicean’ condition of the church. A Church that is completely ‘lukewarm’ with regards to the Word of the Kingdom, a Church that the Lord has described in - Re 3:17 "*Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' --and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—*

Now we will understand that departing from the faith is not just a denial of the literal return of Christ, but an implicit standing away from those things associated with His return. Replacing that which God has said with the fables of men. And this would, of necessity, include the coming Judgment of all Christians at His Judgment Seat, which some see as only a time of blessing with the complete absence of any negative consequence
1 Co 3:12 Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, 13 each one's work will become clear;

for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. 14 If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire. 16 Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

To reject negative consequences for unfaithful Christians is to negate the purpose for this Judgment, which is to identify those who will be the Bride of Christ, who will rule with Him during the Millennial Kingdom. There is throughout Christendom the teaching that all Christians are automatically the Bride of Christ, again contrary to the clear teaching of Scripture, that has been set in place from the foundation – Ge 2:21 *And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. 22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.*

There is the denial of a literal Millennial Kingdom – many believing that the Kingdom is here and now. And going hand in hand with this is the false teaching that being eternally saved and entering the Kingdom are one and the same thing - Ac 14:22 *strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God."*

Being found worthy to have a position with Christ in the coming Kingdom is inextricably linked to the salvation of the soul. And not only is this central focus of Biblical teaching generally ignored but it is also completely denied by those who falsely teach that man is a two-part being and not a three-part being as Scripture teaches – 1Th 5:23 ¶ *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, [whole] soul, and [whole] body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

‘Has God indeed said?’

c). And so, we could go on, but what should be obvious to us is that departing from the faith is to reject the gospel of the glory of Christ. In other words, it remains a direct attack on the Word of the Kingdom, a denial of the whole purpose of God. Which of itself, will take us back immediately to the serpent's action in the Garden.

3). Now in these last days of the dispensation where we find ourselves, the false message being proclaimed that has produced the antitype of the molded calf incident within the Church comes as a direct result of the leavening process begun by the tares, the 'scoffers' and 'mockers'. And it is a process, we will remember, that the Lord had made clear to His Church in the Matthew 13 parables, at a time before His Church had even come into existence.

a). There is a sequence of 7 parables given in Matthew 13 that are given after an event in Matthew 12 where the Scribes and Pharisees attributed the work of the Holy Spirit to Satan, which resulted in the removal of the offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens from Israel. The message that the Lord gave through the parables that followed this event is entirely for the Church, which was to come primarily from the Gentile nations – Mt 13:1 *On the same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the sea.*

Jesus gave these parables in the hearing of His disciples and the multitude of eternally saved Jews - Mt 13:10 *And the disciples came and said to Him, "Why do You speak to them in parables?" 11 He answered and said to them, "Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.*

And we will remember that the word 'parable' is a transliteration of the Greek word 'parabole' which means to lay alongside. It is a way of teaching, through figurative language, that sets a foundation in place, and then adds more information in succeeding parables alongside that already given to build a complete picture.

b). In Matthew Chapter 13 the foundation is laid with the parable of the Sower in which the subject of the parables is revealed –

Mt 13:18 *"Therefore hear the parable of the sower: 19 "When anyone hears the word of the kingdom....."*

All that then follow – the parable of the Wheat and Tares, the parable of the Mustard Seed, the parable of the Leaven and so on, all provide additional information concerning anyone who hears the Word of the Kingdom.

c). In fact, this parabolic sequence gives a complete dispensational history of the Church with respect to hearing the Word of the Kingdom.

d). If we understand the Matthew 13 parables, we will understand exactly what has happened to that which was the central message of the Church at its beginning, as the question began to be asked, 'Has God indeed said?', 'Where is the promise of His coming?'

e). Let us be in no doubt in our own minds about the central place of rulership in the 7th Day within the Scriptures. It is not an add-on but the whole purpose for God's revelation to His creation. That's why it was this message of the Kingdom that was preached to a redeemed people, Israel, at the Lord's first advent - Mt 3:1 ¶ *In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, 2 and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"*

And after John's imprisonment it was the message that Christ preached - Mt 4:17 *From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

In fact, according to Scripture, it is the very reason that Jesus had been sent - Lu 4:43 *but He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent."*

It would be good for us to remember that everything Jesus said, every sign, wonder and miracle He performed was in relation to the offer of the Kingdom of the Heavens to a redeemed people, which of itself was in fulfillment of OT prophecy that we can trace back to the promised Redeemer of Genesis 3:15 – the very reason for the restoration of the heavens and the earth, beginning in Genesis 1:2b.

f). It was the same message, to the same audience, that He sent out the twelve to preach - Mt 10:5 ¶ *These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. 6 "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'*

And then the seventy - Lu 10:1 ¶ *After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go.....8 "Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. 9 "And heal the sick there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you.'*

And it was the focus of Christ's post resurrection ministry – Ac 1:3 *to whom He also presented Himself alive after His suffering by many infallible proofs, being seen by them during forty days and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.*

And it was the only message of the early Church - Ac 8:12 *But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.*

And the message of Paul - Ac 20:25 *"And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more.*

And yet it is a message, as we have already seen by the Holy Spirit through the pen of Paul, that many would depart from, bringing us again to the Matthew 13 parables.

4). In among those who heard, had understood, and then acted upon the Word of the Kingdom, those sown in good ground in the Parable of the Sower, the enemy placed those who would depart from the faith – Mt 13:36 *Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of*

the field." 37 He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. 38 "The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. 39 "The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.

Those seen here in the second half of v38 are not the unsaved but rather, eternally saved Christians whose actions aligned them with Satan, making them 'the sons of the wicked one' rather than 'the sons of the kingdom'.

a). And the outcome of their actions, with respect to challenging and corrupting the Word of the Kingdom is shown to us in the parable of the leaven – Mt 13:33 *Another parable He spoke to them: "The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened."*

Leaven is always used in Scripture to symbolize sin and corruption. We see this in the picture of the feast of unleavened bread given to Israel in conjunction with the Passover - Ex 12:15 *'Seven days you shall eat unleavened bread. On the first day you shall remove leaven from your houses.*

From the mouth of Jesus - Mt 16:6 *Then Jesus said to them, "Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees."12 Then they understood that He did not tell them to beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees.*

And in the Epistles - 1Co 5:8 *Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.*

Three is the number for Divine perfection and meal is that which was used to make bread, giving us a picture of the Divinely perfect Bread of Life, the Word of God, specifically the Word of the Kingdom – the subject of the parables. And into the Divinely perfect Word of the Kingdom

corruption was added, 'Has God indeed said?', resulting in the Word of the Kingdom becoming completely corrupted. Just as God has said.

b). The question often asked in relation to this is, 'Why would someone who has come into a mature understanding of the Word of the Kingdom, choose to stand away from it, to deliberately and intentionally challenge the truth by teaching a false doctrine?'

c). And as always Scripture gives us the answer - Jude 1:11 *Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.*

The way of Cain can be found in – Ge 4:3 ¶ *And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.*

Cain we will remember did not act in faith in response to that which God had said about bringing an offering, but instead chose what was right in his own eyes. And the same is true for the apostates. They chose not to act by faith in response to that which God had said, offering themselves as a living sacrifice, but chose to act according to their own desires.

d). The error of Balaam for profit we find in – Nu 22:12 *And God said to Balaam, "You shall not go with them; you shall not curse the people, for they are blessed."*

Balaam we will remember was hired by Balak to curse the Children of Israel and we see in this the use of a God given gift for personal gain. When cursing failed, Balaam instructed Balak how to assimilate Israel into the nations that surrounded them, thereby turning them to idolatry and harlotry so as not to lose his financial gain. It is easy to see from this, how the church has become assimilated into the world and the huge financial profit there is for those who find the right product to market.

e). And it's no surprise that Balaam is found in - Re 2:14 *"But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam,*

The rebellion of Korah is found in – Nu 16:2 *and they rose up before Moses with some of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty leaders of*

the congregation, representatives of the congregation, men of renown. 3 They gathered together against Moses and Aaron, and said to them, "You take too much upon yourselves,

It was Korah, in conjunction with other prominent leaders of Israel, who 'rose up' against Moses and Aaron with the intent of taking the priesthood for themselves. And in this we can see the division of the church into its various denominations and strands as the apostates sought to take control of the message and the people for their own ends - Ac 20:29 *"For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. 30 "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.*

Jude 1:19 *These are sensual persons, who cause divisions, not having the Spirit.*

2Pe 2:14 *having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices, and are accursed children.*

We will note from the 2 Peter verse that the enticement is to 'unstable souls.' And the unstable soul would be the one not firmly established in the Word of truth who could be blown to and fro by every wind of doctrine - Heb 6:19 *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,*

It is the hope set before us that is the anchor to our soul, that will keep us stable and protected from drifting – Tit 2:13 *looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing [appearing of the glory] of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,*

Without this hope and all that is contained within it, our souls will be headed for shipwreck.

f). And because of the apostates corrupted message attacking the 'hope', shipwreck is exactly what has happened and will continue to

happen - 2Pe 2:1 ¶ *But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction. 2 And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. 3 ¶ By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words;*

It is in the midst of the final outworking of this process of the leaven that we now find ourselves. The corrupted message challenging God's Word introduced by the tares has now become the norm within the Church, so much so that the way of truth is blasphemed. The leaven has done its work.

g). However, we can be encouraged - 2Pe 3:17 *You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.*

If we remain, and the Lord is willing, and we have prayed, we will continue next time.