

Parables

Explanation

Jesus was a masterful teacher who often used parables to convey different levels of meaning to audiences with different levels of faith or understanding. See chart 7-7 for a full list of the parables. On two occasions reported in the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus took his disciples aside and told them the deeper meaning of his parables, for those who had eyes to see and ears to hear. Chart 9-6 illustrates the explanation he gave of the parable of the sower, and chart 9-7 shows the meaning of the parable of the wheat and the tares, both found in Matthew 13. The Prophet Joseph Smith affirmed that Jesus actually explained the symbolic meaning behind each of his parables: “The parables were all plainly elucidated” by Jesus to his disciples. Chart 9-8 displays the explanations given by Joseph Smith of the meanings behind the other parables in Matthew 13.

References

- Joseph Fielding Smith, ed., *The Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book, 1972), 98–102.
- V. George Shillington, ed., *Jesus and His Parables: Interpreting the Parables of Jesus Today* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1997).

The Wheat and the Tares

Matthew 13:24–43

Symbol

Jesus' Interpretation

man which sowed good seed in his field (13:24)



Son of Man (13:37)

a field (13:24)

the world (13:38)

wheat (13:29)

children of the kingdom (13:38)

tares (13:29)

children of the wicked one (13:38)

an enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat (13:25)

devil (13:39)

harvest (13:30)

end of the world (13:39)

reapers (13:30)

angels (13:39)

