

Parable of the Sower

*The Lord Sowing Christians Different Places in the World
With a View to Fruit-Bearing*

**And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying,
Behold, a sower went forth to sow;**

**And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the wayside, and
the fowls came and devoured them up:**

**Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much
earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no
deepness of earth:**

**And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because
they had no root, they withered away.**

**And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up
and choked them:**

**But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit,
some an hundredfold, some, sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.**

Who hath ears to hear, let him hear (Matt. 13:3-9).

The parable of the Sower, the first of four parables which Christ gave outside the house, by the seaside, is comprised of four parts. Each part has to do with exactly the same thing: *fruit-bearing, with the kingdom of the heavens in view* — a kingdom about to be offered (during the future time covered by this parable) to a people other than Israel (to *the new creation* “in Christ,” about to be brought into existence).

Israel — the nation to whom the kingdom of the heavens was still being offered at the time Christ gave the parable of the Sower, outside “the house” (referencing *the house of Israel, left desolate in the previous chapter*), by “the seaside” (referencing *the Gentiles*) — is subsequently represented in Matthew’s gospel by a *barren fig tree* (Matt. 21:18, 19; cf. Joel 1:7). The tree had leaves, but *no fruit*. And, because of the fruitless

condition of the tree (representing the fruitless condition of Israel), Christ pronounced a curse on the tree. He said, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever [*lit.* 'for an age']." And the fig tree, by the next day, had "withered away," showing that which was about to happen to the nation of Israel (vv. 19, 20; cf. Mark 11:13, 14, 20, 21).

The parable of the Sower looks out ahead to God's activity during an entirely separate dispensation, following the removal of the kingdom from Israel and a new nation being brought forth to bear fruit (Matt. 21:33-43). Israel, because of the nation's barren condition, was to be set aside for a dispensation; and, throughout the dispensation, God would deal with a different nation with respect to fruit-bearing and the kingdom of the heavens.

This is that "holy nation," a "peculiar people" to which Peter referred, who "in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy" (I Peter 2:9, 10). This is the new creation "in Christ," taken from both of the former two creations (both Jew and Gentile [but mainly *Gentile*, shown by "the seaside"]), though neither of the former two creations (neither Jew nor Gentile) exists within this new creation (Eph. 2:12-15).

"In Christ," all distinctions of the human race seen in both of the former two creations (in both Jew and Gentile) simply do not exist (Gal. 3:26-29). The new creation "in Christ" is exactly what the name implies — an entirely new creation in the human race (II Cor. 5:17). This is why Scripture, following this time, divides the human race into three separate and distinct segments:

"Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God" (I Cor. 10:32).

The parable of the Sower was given with a view to this new creation not only being brought into existence but also being extended the opportunity to bring forth fruit for the kingdom. The parable of the Sower looks out ahead to that time when the kingdom would be taken from Israel (because of the nation's failure to produce fruit) and given to a nation which would produce "the fruits thereof" (Matt. 21:43).

In the first three parts of the parable though, individuals comprising the one new man fail to bring forth fruit, as those in Israel had done relative to the proffered kingdom. Rather than overcoming and bearing fruit, they are instead overcome (through various means) and bear no fruit.

But in the last part of the parable, *that expected of the one new man* during the present dispensation is shown. Unlike barren Israel, *overcoming* and *fruit-bearing* are seen.

Thus, it is revealed at the beginning, before God even brought this new creation into existence, that not all those comprising the one new man — not all Christians — would bring forth fruit. *Fruit-bearing* is seen in only one part of the parable, in the last part. In the first three parts, individuals are shown to have been overcome through various means, resulting in *barrenness*.

All of these things are set forth in the parable itself. But, after responding to the disciples' question concerning why He was speaking to the multitudes in parables (vv. 10-17), Christ provided them with interpretative help to further explain the parable of the Sower (vv. 18-23). Christ went back over the four parts, briefly explaining each part.

(The reason Christ provided additional interpretative help for the parable of the Sower is obvious. This parable is *foundational* to the other six which Christ then gave. Correctly understanding the six parables which followed would be contingent on correctly understanding the introductory parable.

A properly laid foundation will allow one to properly build on the foundation. But, lay the foundation improperly, and the inverse of that will be equally true.)

Then, after giving both the parable of the Sower and interpretative help, Christ gave the second, third, and fourth parables, apart from any explanation (vv. 24-33). But, after going back inside the house, Christ, responding to another question asked by the disciples, concerning the second parable, provided additional interpretative help for this parable as well (vv. 36-43). And, once back inside the house, Christ then gave the fifth, sixth, and seventh parables (vv. 44-48), providing a very brief explanation concerning several things in the seventh and closing parable (vv. 49, 50).

All seven parables have to do *with a people other than Israel (with the one new man "in Christ" [v. 1]), with the mysteries of the kingdom of the heavens (v. 11), with the Word of the Kingdom (vv. 19-23), and with fruit-bearing (vv. 8, 23).*

All seven parables, accordingly, have to do with the gospel of the glory of Christ, not the gospel of the grace of God. And they have

to do with those to whom the kingdom is being offered during the present dispensation, following Israel's rejection of the kingdom and the kingdom being taken from the nation.

Thus, all seven parables have to do with a time following the rejection of the kingdom by Israel and the removal of the kingdom from Israel. And they have to do with the new entity, the new creation, called into existence to be the recipient of that which Israel rejected.

And further, though Christ reentered the house prior to giving the last three parables, there is *no change* in the identity of those in view, those being dealt with. The Church continues center-stage.

The last three parables depict God's summary dealings with respect to two things:

1) *His previous dealings with Christians* (throughout the dispensation and at the judgment seat).

2) *His future redemptive action* (redemption of the inheritance, resulting in the marriage of Christ to His bride [a bride previously singled out and revealed at the judgment seat] and *the subsequent separation of Christians* (immediately preceding and leading into the Messianic Era, based on previous decisions and determinations at the judgment seat).

(Different facets of the preceding are dealt with in the author's book, RUTH.)

Whether dealing with the parable of the Sower, the parable of the wheat and tares, or any of the other parables, the message of salvation by grace through faith is simply not in view. Rather, *fruit-bearing, with respect to the kingdom*, is in view. These parables have to do with God's complete dealings with an entirely new creation, about to be called into existence to bear fruit where Israel had failed.

Since this is the case, there is really *nothing* in the parables which has to do with the unsaved, their eternal destiny, etc. *Everything* has to do solely with *the saved, with a view to the Messianic Era*, when Christ will sit on His throne in the heavenly Jerusalem and co-heirs will exercise power with Him. *Everything* — the four divisions in the first parable, the two divisions in the second parable, an unnatural growth in the third parable, the whole becoming leavened in the fourth

parable, redemption of the inheritance and marriage in the fifth and sixth parables, and the separation of the good and bad in the seventh parable — has to do with *the saved alone*.

Manner of Sowing

“The Sower” in the parable (the Greek text has a definite article before “Sower” — a particular Sower) is identified in the explanation to the second parable as *the Son of Man*, a Messianic title (v. 37; cf. Ps. 8:4-6; Dan. 7:13, 14; Matt. 16:13-16). And also, in this explanation, the place where the sowing occurs is revealed to be *in the field, in the world* (v. 38). In the parable itself, this sowing occurs different places in the field, different places in the world.

And that which the Sower — the Son of Man, Christ — sows out in the world is revealed to be *individuals*, not “seeds” per se (note that the word “seeds” in the text is in italics [v. 4], indicating that it is not in the Greek text, but supplied by the translators).

In the second parable though, there *is* a sowing of “seed.” “Good seed” (vv. 24, 27) are sown by Christ in the field (which is really the same sowing seen in the first parable), but these “good seed” represent individuals. They are identified as “the children [‘sons’] of the kingdom” in the explanation (v. 38).

Thus, there is no problem retaining the word “seeds” in the English text of the parable of the Sower as long as it is understood that these “seeds” represent individuals. This is not only in line with the second parable but also in line with the correct rendering of four different verses in the explanation to the four parts of the first parable as well.

The latter part of verse nineteen, explaining the sowing in the first of the four parts of the parable (v. 4), should read, “This is he which was sown by the wayside.” The beginning of verse twenty, explaining the sowing in the second of the four parts of the parable (vv. 5, 6), should read, “But he that was sown into stony places...” The beginning of verse twenty-two, explaining the sowing in the third of the four parts of the parable (v. 7), should read, “He also that was sown among the thorns...” And the beginning of verse twenty-three, explaining the last of the four parts of the parable (v. 8), should read, “But he that was sown into the good ground...”

The Sower (the Lord Jesus Christ) has sown individuals (Christians) different places in the world, with a view to one thing — *fruit-bearing*. And this fruit-bearing has to do with one thing as well — *the kingdom of the heavens*.

(In Mark's and Luke's accounts of the parable of the Sower [Mark 4:13-20; Luke 8:4-15], both *the Word* [the Word of the Kingdom, as seen in Matthew's account] and *individuals* [as also seen in Matthew's account] are sown different places out in the world, with a view to *fruit-bearing* [as seen in Matthew's account as well]. There is, of course, no conflict in *the Word* being sown and *individuals* being sown, for the Word cannot be sown apart from a saved individual [in Luke's account, "seed" is sown (v. 5), but this "seed" is identified as *the Word* (v. 11)]. The Word is actually sown within the individual who has been sown. He hears, receives the Word [Matt. 13:19-23; Mark 4:14-20; Luke 8:11-15].

The whole of the matter is described different ways in the three different accounts, presenting one complete, composite picture of that occurring within Christendom during the present dispensation.)

Understanding this is *foundational* if one would properly understand that which should be the central focus of all activity in the lives of Christians in the world today. And, understanding this is *foundational* as well if one would properly understand that which is the central focus of all activity surrounding the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the world today — the search for the bride (Gen. 24; cf. chs. 23-25). Activity in the lives of Christians and activity in the ministry of the Spirit go hand-in-hand in this respect. They, of necessity, *must*.

The gospel of the grace of God though, as it has to do with both those sown in the field and the present work of the Spirit, is another matter entirely. An individual must pass "from death unto life" before he can be extended the opportunity, find himself in a position, to bring forth fruit for the kingdom. He must become a child of the Owner before he can possess any association with the inheritance awaiting Christ and His co-heirs (John 5:24; Rom. 8:17; Eph. 2:1-5).

Thus, unsaved man must first hear the gospel of the grace of God (from those sown in the field). And the work of the Spirit must, correspondingly, begin at this point (as seen in the foundational pattern in Gen. 1:2b-5). Unsaved man must pass "from death unto life" before

he can be dealt with relative to the inheritance out ahead.

And the Spirit of God is in the world today, first of all, to do a work in unsaved man in this respect. He is present in the world to breath life into the one who is without life, effecting *spiritual life* in that individual (cf. Gen. 2:7; Ezek. 37:1-10; John 5:24; Eph. 2:1, 5, 8).

Only then can the Spirit deal with man in relation to that which is seen in the parable of the Sower, or any of the other six parables in this chapter. And only then can the Spirit, as well, bring to completion the central purpose for His presence in the world today — to search for, find, and remove the bride for God's Son (Gen. 24:33, 36, 58-67).

Places Where Sown

The explanation to the parable of the Sower begins with the statement, "When anyone heareth the word of the kingdom..." (v. 19a). Then, in each of the four parts to the explanation, the expression is shortened to simply, "the word" — referring to the previously mentioned Word, "the word of the kingdom" (vv. 20-23).

This is a reference to a message surrounding *the same kingdom which was being offered to Israel* (Matt. 3-12). And the reference is set within a context having to do with a message surrounding this kingdom being offered *to a people other than Israel*. It is simply called "the word of the kingdom" in the explanation to the parable of the Sower, for it would be completely obvious from both the text and context exactly what message was being referenced.

The message in view is *exactly* what the text states, and it could hardly be stated any plainer. The message has to do with *the kingdom*, not with salvation by grace through faith. And the response of different individuals throughout the parable has to do with *the kingdom* as well, not with eternal verities seen in the gospel of the grace of God.

Everything in the parable of the Sower revolves around *two things*:

- 1) *The Word of the kingdom.*
- 2) *Fruit-bearing, or barrenness, on the part of those hearing this message.*

To read salvation by grace through faith into this passage, as so

many individuals do, both *corrupts* and *destroys*. It *corrupts* one facet of the good news, the gospel of the grace of God, by bringing things over into this gospel which do not belong there; and it *destroys* the other facet of the good news, the gospel of the glory of Christ, by removing things having to do with this gospel through misapplying them elsewhere.

1) Ones Sown by the Wayside

Comparing the parable and the explanation (vv. 4, 19), the ones sown by the wayside represent individuals (Christians) who hear the Word of the Kingdom but fail to understand the message. And their failure to understand the message allows the “fowls,” representing “the wicked one [Satan],” to simply come along and *do away* with the message, thus *devouring* the person (cf. vv. 4, 19; 1 Peter 5:6-9).

Those sown by the wayside, having this type experience in relation to the Word of the Kingdom, would probably represent the majority of Christians hearing this message today. Though they have a capacity to understand the message (they possess spiritual life), they show little to no interest, allowing Satan to perform his *destroying* and *devouring* work.

In Israel, when Christ was on earth the first time, the religious leaders had misled the people (Matt. 12:9-32; 15:1ff; 16:1ff; 23:13, 15). And, as a result, the prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled in the actions of the Israelites of that day:

“For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed...” (Matt. 13:15a; cf. Isa. 6:9, 10).

The Jewish people were not only in possession of the written Word of God but were also capable of spiritual perception. They were perfectly capable of understanding this Word. But the religious leaders in Israel (centrally, fundamental religious leaders — the Pharisees) had misled the people. Resultingly, when the Jewish people heard the message, their reaction was no different than the reaction of those described in the first part of the parable of the Sower.

Thus, the whole of the matter, seen almost two millenniums ago in Israel, is exactly the same as that which can be seen in Christendom today. *The religious leaders misled the people then, and the religious lead-*

ers are misleading the people today. And this is something which can be seen mainly in so-called fundamental circles (the liberals are so far removed from reality insofar as sound Biblical doctrine is concerned that they seldom even fit into the matter).

The final state of Christendom during the dispensation — seen in both the chronology of the first four parables in Matt. 13 and the seven Churches in Rev. 2, 3 — is *complete corruption and rejection* in relation to the Word of the Kingdom. That is, insofar as this message is concerned (the message seen throughout the parable of the Sower), *the whole of Christendom* (fundamental and liberal segments alike) will be as the Church in Laodicea at the end of the dispensation, *completely leavened* (cf. Matt. 13:33; Rev. 3:14-20).

Those in the Laodicean Church, as those in Israel at Christ's first coming, are seen in possession of the Word of God and capable of spiritual perception. But those in this Church are also seen in exactly the same condition as those in Israel, described in Isaiah's prophecy:

“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (Rev. 3:17).

Israel, in the nation's blinded condition, didn't heed the message; and the Church in its blinded condition is not going to heed the message either. But a number of individuals in Israel did heed the message, and their eyes were opened (cf. Matt. 13:15b, 16; Luke 24:16, 31). And a number of individuals in Christendom too have heeded and continue to heed the message, and their eyes too have been/are being opened (cf. II Cor. 3:14-18; Rev. 3:18).

2) Ones Sown into Stony Places

Comparing the parable and the explanation (vv. 5, 6, 20, 21), the ones sown into stony places represent individuals who hear the Word, understand the Word, and receive it joyfully. These are individuals who get excited about that which they have heard and learned. There is *new-found joy and excitement in their lives*, because of “the word of the kingdom” (v. 20).

But, before they can become sufficiently grounded in this Word

(they have no “deepness of earth,” they have no “root”), “tribulation or persecution” takes its toll. They endure “for awhile”; but, in the symbolism of the parable, when “the sun [‘tribulation or persecution’]” begins to beat down in all its strength, because of their lack of root (maturity in the faith), *they wither away* (vv. 5, 6, 21).

In the text, “tribulation or persecution” occurs “because of the word,” because of individuals hearing and receiving *the Word of the Kingdom*. There is no message in existence which Satan will marshal his forces against as he will against the message surrounding the coming kingdom of Christ.

This message has to do, centrally, with *a change in the government of the earth*. Satan and his angels presently rule over the earth, within the existing kingdom of the heavens; but a new order of Rulers is about to be brought forth — Christ and His co-heirs. Satan and his angels are to be put down, with Christ and His co-heirs then taking the kingdom.

The Word of the Kingdom is a message which has *this end* in view. It is a message having to do with *Christ ruling the earth* in that coming day, ruling in the stead of Satan; and it is a message having to do with *Christians occupying positions as co-heirs with Christ* in that day, ruling in the stead of angels presently ruling with Satan.

And this is something which Satan will do *all within his power* to prevent. Thus, one could only expect a message dealing centrally with this subject to come under attack *as no other message*, which is exactly the way Scripture presents the matter.

In Eph. 3:1-11 this message is seen as something presently being made known “by [*lit.*, ‘through’] the Church” to “the principalities and powers in heavenly places [Satan and his angels]” (v. 10). The message being made known has to do with the fact that Satan and his angels are about to be replaced, and it has to do with individuals presently responding in a positive manner to the invitation (being extended by the Holy Spirit in the world) to have a part with Christ, in His administration, in that coming day (*cf.* Gen. 24:36, 58).

And in Eph. 6:10ff a spiritual warfare is seen raging because of that which is presently being made known through the Church to Satan and his angels. Satan will, first of all, do everything within his power *to prevent* Christians from hearing this message; and, should

Christians hear this message, he will then do everything within his power *to do away with, destroy* this message, *devouring* Christians.

At this point, Satan brings about “tribulation or persecution” in the life of the one hearing and understanding the message. And note again the wording of the text. Tribulation or persecution arises in the life of such an individual “because of the word,” because of *the Word of the Kingdom*. He has heard and joyfully received this Word.

And this tribulation or persecution invariably comes from *other Christians*. Unsaved man out in the world can have nothing to do with all of this. He is “dead in trespasses and sins,” *completely incapable* of operating in the spiritual realm. And not only does this tribulation or persecution come from other Christians, but many times it comes more specifically from those in positions of *leadership*, exactly as in Israel when this offer was open to the nation almost two millenniums ago (*e.g.*, John 9:22).

The person, through this tribulation or persecution, is “offended [Gk., *skandalizo*, “scandalized’]” (v. 21). That which he has heard, understood, and accepted is associated with error, cultism, etc. And, because of his lack of maturity in the faith, he is overcome. He simply gives up; he quits; he falls away. And Satan wins the victory in his life.

3) Ones Sown Among Thorns

Comparing the parable and the explanation (vv. 7, 22), the ones sown among thorns represent individuals who hear the Word, but, because of worldly involvement, they bear no fruit. They “go forth” (Luke 8:14), apparently enduring for awhile, but are then overcome by the enemy.

That used to bring about their fall is revealed to be “the care of this world [‘age’], and the deceitfulness of riches.” Then Luke, in his account of this parable, adds a third — the “pleasures of this life” (Luke 8:14).

These individuals—whether through immaturity, neglect, letting their guard down, or any number of other things (we’re simply not told)—allow various things within the present world system, under Satan, to bring about their fall (*cf.* I John 2:15-17). Satan uses these things against them in the spiritual warfare.

They fail to heed the Lord’s admonition and warning concerning

where Christians are to fix their attention and keep it fixed. Christians, in the race of the faith, are to look “unto Jesus [*lit.*, ‘from, unto Jesus’]” (Heb. 12:1, 2). They are to look “from” the things of this present world system “unto” Jesus. *They are not to look back; they are not to look around; but they are to keep their eyes fixed straight out ahead, on Christ, on the Author and Finisher of their faith.*

And Christians are not only to fix their attention on Jesus, but also on exactly the same thing Christ fixed His attention as He endured the sufferings and shame surrounding Calvary. Christ fixed His attention on “the joy that was set before him” as He “endured the cross, despising the shame [considering the sufferings and shame of *little consequence* compared to His coming glory and exaltation]” (Heb. 12:2; cf. Matt. 25:21, 23; I Peter 2:21).

Christians are to “escape to the mountain [‘the mountain,’ signifying *the kingdom*],” *apart from looking back, apart from remaining in the plain* (“the plain,” signifying *the present world system*). And if they don’t, they will be consumed along with the things in the plain (Gen. 19:17; cf. Gen. 19:26; Luke 9:62; 17:32, 33).

Christians are to fix their attention on *the King and His Kingdom* — not looking back, not looking around — considering present sufferings (tribulation or persecution), or the things of this world (care of this age, riches, pleasures of life), *of little consequence* compared to the proffered glory and exaltation lying ahead. And *if they don’t*, Satan will use one or all of these things in his unceasing efforts to bring about their fall.

4) Ones Sown into Good Ground

The fourth part of the parable presents matters after an entirely different fashion. Those sown “into good ground” (vv. 8, 23) represent individuals who hear the Word (first part of the parable); they understand the Word and refuse to allow “tribulation or persecution” to deter them as they progress toward maturity in the Word (second part of the parable); and they keep their eyes fixed on the goal out ahead, rather than on the things of this present world system (third part of the parable).

They hear, understand, and grow in the Word (cf. Acts 20:32; James 1:21; I Peter 2:2). Tribulation or persecution doesn’t stop them; and they do not allow themselves to become sidetracked by the “care of

this age," the "deceitfulness of riches," or the "pleasures of life." These are individuals who refuse to become entangled "with the affairs of this life," knowing that a crown lies out ahead *for those who "strive lawfully"* (II Tim. 2:4, 5).

Thus, these are individuals who overcome and bring forth fruit. These are individuals who overcome *the world* (I John 5:4), *the flesh* (Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5), and *the Devil* (James 4:7; I Peter 5:9), rather than being overcome by one or all three. And, as a result, they bring forth fruit. They are the only ones who do bring forth fruit among the four groups mentioned, and they bring forth fruit in varying amounts — "some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold."

These individuals are the only ones who fulfill the purpose for their very existence — bringing forth fruit where Israel had failed, qualifying them to occupy positions with Christ in the coming kingdom of the heavens. These are the ones who will be allowed to ascend the throne with Christ in that coming day, occupying positions *exactly commensurate with their fruit-bearing*.

Outcome of Sowing

Positions in the coming kingdom of Christ are to be earned, not passed out in any type indiscriminate manner (Matt. 20:21-23). Individuals appearing before Christ in that day will receive *exactly what each, through fruit-bearing, has earned*. Each will receive "his own reward according to his own labor" (I Cor. 3:8).

(The word translated "reward" in the N.T. is from the Greek word *misthos* [*misthapodosia*, a cognate word, in Hebrews], which has to do with "payment," or "wages" for services rendered. And it will be *exact*. The payment will be *exactly commensurate with services rendered*.)

Individuals bringing forth no fruit will receive no payment. There will have been no fruitful labor, and, consequently, wages will not be forthcoming. Instead, they will "suffer loss" (I Cor. 3:15).

On the other hand, individuals bringing forth fruit will receive payment. There will have been fruitful labor, and, consequently, wages will be forthcoming. Each will "receive a reward" (I Cor. 3:14). There will be "a just recompense of reward [a just payment, justly earned

wages’]” (Heb. 2:2; 11:26).

Mention is made in the parable of the Sower of individuals bringing forth fruit in varying amounts—“some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold” (vv. 8, 23). And payment for the varying amounts, seen in another parable, the parable of the pounds in Luke 19:11-27, would be *exactly commensurate* with their individual fruitfulness.

In the parable of the pounds, ten servants were each given one pound. Each was given a portion of his Lord’s business to use during the time of his Lord’s absence, in order that he might be accorded the opportunity to bring forth an increase.

One servant brought forth a tenfold increase; and the Lord, upon His return, gave him authority over ten cities. Another servant brought forth a fivefold increase; and the Lord, at this time, gave him authority over five cities. But a third servant failed to use that entrusted to him, and he was not only denied governmental authority but he was also severely rebuked by his Lord.

This is not only the way Scripture plainly presents the matter, but this is also what God’s perfect justice and righteousness demands. If matters occurred any other way, God would not be perfectly just and righteous in His judgmental dealings with His servants to whom He entrusted His business during His time of absence.

(God’s future judgmental dealings with His servants, *providing exact payment for services rendered*, will be in complete keeping with the unchangeable laws of the harvest, which He Himself established:

1. *A person always reaps what he sows.* The one sowing “to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption,” and the one sowing “to his Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting [Gk., *aionios* life, referring, in the text, to ‘life in the coming age’ (Gal. 6:7, 8; cf. Gen. 1:11)].”

2. *A person always reaps more than he sows.* Sow “the wind” and one can only expect to reap “the whirlwind” [Hosea 8:7], but remain faithful over “a few things,” and one will be made “ruler over many things” [Matt. 25:21, 23].

3. *And there is a period of time between the sowing and the reaping.* One sows during the present dispensation; but the reaping, whether good or bad, dependent wholly on the sowing, awaits the coming dispensation.)