

PARABLE OF THE WEEDS

Matthew 13:24–43

"Do you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division."
Luke 12:51

Jesus teaches that the Kingdom of Heaven exists among us, but is quite unlike the kingdoms of the world. The Kingdom of Heaven has its enemies and experiences opposition, but does not advance with armies and banners. And, strangely enough, disciples of the Kingdom might look and act exactly like those who fight against it.



Our Lord begins, "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a man who sowed good seed in his field." [v24] Later he explains that the sower is the Son of Man, the good seed represent the sons of the kingdom, and the field is the world. [vv.37–38] He continues, "but while his men were sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away." [v25] The enemy, of course, is Satan, and the weeds are his offspring, sons of the Evil one.

As the good grain grew, weeds sprang up among them. The servants ask the master if they should pull up the weeds. The master declines, explaining that the wheat can easily be pulled up with the weeds. Wait until the harvest, he says; then the weeds can be uprooted and burned, then the wheat can be gathered into his barn. Jesus says, *"The harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are angels."* [v38]

The lesson teaches that until the end of time, God's enemies will remain active in this world. For the time being, weeds may blend in among the wheat. Evident throughout history, the great patience of the Almighty is evident here. God allows evildoers to remain among the righteous: no cleansing of the world will occur until Jesus returns to earth. Then the wicked will be judged, and the angels, depicted as reapers in this parable, will gather them up and throw them into eternal fire.

Some interpret this parable to be about sons of the Evil one within the church. The Lord does teach that false teachers – wolves disguised as sheep – walk among his flock. The Apostle Peter writes, *"Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."* 1 Peter 5:8. But as Christ explains, the field is the world, and we are required to be patient here. Jesus told his followers, *"I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."* [John 16:33]

