

P E A C E M A K E R



WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 18TH

“I will open my mouth and tell stories;
I will bring out into the open
things hidden since the world’s first day.”

—Matthew 13:35 MSG

READ: MATTHEW 13:24-35

What word, image, or phrase sticks out to you from today’s passage?

Draw about it or write a response to God using the space below.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

Parables have a way of bringing hidden realities into view with the help of ordinary, familiar things. In the case of these three parables, the hidden realities Jesus is exposing have to do with the nature of the Kingdom of God. What are some things that these parables help you to see?

- The Kingdom of God is...
- The Kingdom of God is...
- The Kingdom of God is...

What do you find difficult about these three parables? Can you form this into a question?

It would have been possible to pinch off the weeds early, before they had become entangled with the roots of the wheat, but many scholars believe the weed referenced in this passage was darnel which is considered a "false wheat" and looks almost identical to real wheat. Because of this the farmer would have to wait until both matured in order to separate the two with any accuracy. What might this tell us about what we can see when we look at the evil in the world, and what we can't?

There is also nothing cut and dry about Jesus' choice to reference the mustard seed and shrub in this passage. Yes it is a story of something small that gets big. But there is more to ask of it than that. The mustard plant Jesus was referencing was invasive and hard to get rid of and most wise farmers in that day would have never dreamed of planting it in their plots. So then, what more might be hidden beneath the surface of this story as we pause to consider the invasive nature of a Kingdom that may begin small, but is also invasive and impossible to get rid of? How might that inspire our hope, in times when darkness seems to be overpowering the Light?

Recently I've been dabbling in homemade sour dough, and the process of adding the "starter" to the flour is what Jesus is describing here. But one interesting thing about the starter is that when flour is added to it, its feeding the starter for the next batch which is a cycle that can continue indefinitely as long as someone feeds it. At first glance the work of human hands in this story is finite, but its actually eternal, that first loaf of bread also gives birth to an infinite supply .of breads thereafter. What might this tell us about the slow work of integrating the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven, today?

PRACTICE:

Eyes of Faith:

Read 2 Kings 6:8-23

In this passage we see the confidence of Elisha who lives, and moves, and has his being rooted in an awareness of the hidden power and presence of God, and who comforts his servant by praying that he may see the unseen protection that surrounds him even as the enemy draws near.

As you read this passage, visualize a similar army of the Lord, surrounding you. You might even want to draw and picture of yourself (a stick figure will do) and reference any of the threats or conflicts that surround you right now. Then write the words of Elisha's prayer in a circle between your stick figure you, and those threats or conflicts that you listed.

Choose three points in time throught the day to pray the following prayer. It might help to set a reminder on your phone.

Breath in: Open my eyes Lord,

Breath Out: So that I might see.

(You can also pray this prayer for someone else who may feel surrounded by enemy armies and be in need of fresh eyes.)

