

STORY-TIME WITH THE KING, PART 1

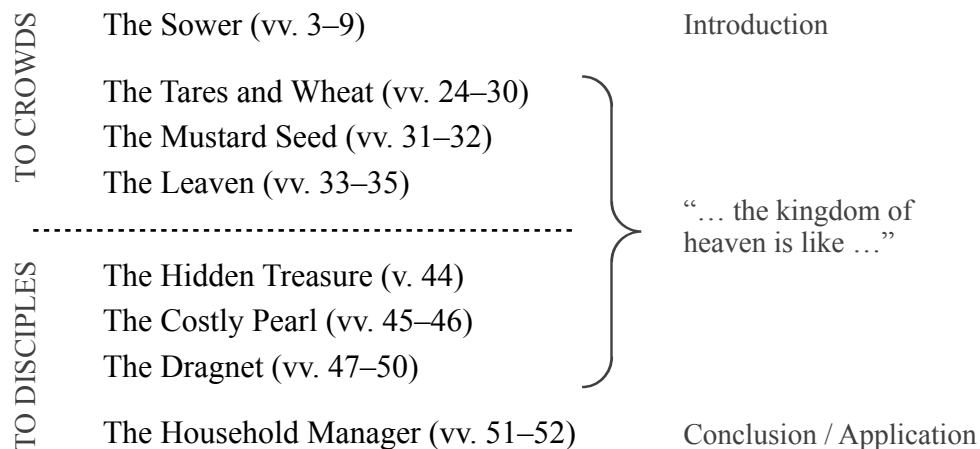
Matthew 13:1–23

Up to this point in Matthew’s gospel there has been a consistent and clear proclamation of the *nearness* of the kingdom of heaven (see 3:2; 4:17; 10:7). Jesus’s ministry had been one characterized by urgency and excitement, rebuke and invitation. However, opposition had been brewing and, in chapters 11 and 12, it came to a head as Israel’s leadership looked Jesus in the eyes and declared on behalf of the nation, “We don’t *believe* you and we don’t *want* you” (see 12:24)! This rejection was labelled by the Lord as unforgivable (12:32) and irreversible (12:37). A thoughtful reader of Matthew’s gospel has to ask at this point, *what now?* Israel, having waited centuries for their messianic King, shunned him when he finally arrived! What’s this rejected Christ going to do now? Matthew 13 records Jesus’s reaction and the necessary but calculated shift that takes place in his ministry going forward.

An EXPLANATION for the Use of Parables

vv. 1–3, 10–17

An OVERVIEW of the Parables



An INTRODUCTORY Parable

vv. 3–9, 18–23