

# DARK SAYINGS OF OLD

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Psalm 78:2 says, "I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old." This is actually a prophecy concerning the method Jesus Christ would use to teach the people. It was prophesied that Jesus would speak in parables. Matthew 13:34-35 quotes Psalm 78:2 and shows how Jesus fulfilled it: "All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." An important question to consider is, *Why* did Jesus teach in parables?

## Protecting God's truth

Many people believe that Jesus spoke in parables so that the people would be able to understand better. That is actually not true at all. In fact, Jesus spoke in parables for the exact opposite reason. He spoke in parables so that the people would *not* understand. In Matthew 13:10, the disciples asked Jesus, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" "He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, *but to them it is not given*. For whosoever has, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he has. *Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand*" (Matt 13:11-13). Jesus then pointed out that the lack of understanding of that generation fulfilled prophecy by Isaiah, but the fault for this lay with the people, not God (Matt 13:14-17). God desires that every man would seek Him, repent and obey Him so that they would be saved (1 Tim 2:4; 2 Pet 3:9; Ezek 18:23,32; 33:11; John 3:16-17). But God gives every man the choice to believe and obey Him or not (John 3:16-21; Mark 16:15-16; Deut 30:19; Josh 24:15; Psa 25:12; Prov 1:29; 3:31; Heb 11:24-25). Through the creation, God has made His existence known to every person (Psa 19:1; 75:1; 100:3; 104:24; Rom 1:18-20), as there can be nothing made without a maker (Heb 3:4). No man has an excuse because all men know that there is a God, whether they admit it or not (Rom 1:20). This knowledge that all men have gives everyone the responsibility to seek their Creator, to learn His will and obey it, to serve only Him (Matt 4:10; Luke 4:8; Acts 17:24-29; Rom 1:20-25; Eph 2:10; Eccl 12:13). God has taken the first step by revealing Himself to all men. Then every man has the opportunity, responsibility

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and choice to either serve their Creator or not. God will ensure that all who seek will find Him (Matt 7:7-8; John 7:17; Acts 17:26-27; Heb 6:11; Jas 4:8). But God will send a strong delusion to those who reject Him so that they will be damned (John 12:37-40; Rom 1:24-32; 2 Cor 4:4; 2 Thes 2:10-12). These are the ones Jesus spoke in parables to. These people were not arbitrarily denied the opportunity to understand, because God does not respect faces (Acts 10:34; Rom 2:11; Eph 6:9; Col 3:25; 1 Pet 1:17). It was their own fault that they did not understand. Later, if they began to sincerely seek God, the Lord would change his response to them (2 Cor 3:16). For those with a will to do God's will, it is God's will for them to understand. These are the ones Jesus explained the parables to. Anyone who sincerely wanted to know God's will would be given the opportunity to understand the parables, but for those who had rejected God, speaking in parables would keep God's will a mystery.

## **Parables explained to the disciples**

Jesus' pattern was to teach in parables to the multitudes, and then to later explain those parables to his disciples. Concerning the people, Matthew 13:3 says, "he spake many things unto them in parables." When his disciples asked him why he spoke to the people in parables (Matt 13:10), Jesus said that it was not given to them "to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 13:11). But Jesus said that it *was* given to his disciples to know these mysteries (Matt 13:11). Therefore, Jesus spoke in parables so that the mysteries of the kingdom of God would remain a mystery to the multitudes (Matt 13:12-15). "*All these things spake Jesus unto the multitude in parables; and without a parable spake he not unto them*" (Matt 13:34). This pattern of teaching fulfilled the prophecy of Psalm 78:2 (Matt 13:35). But for all those who were sincerely seeking God with all their heart, their eyes and ears were blessed (Matt 13:16-17). To them, Jesus explained the parables to reveal the mysteries of the kingdom. "And with many such parables spake he the word unto them, as they were able to hear it. But without a parable spake he not unto them: and when they were alone, he expounded all things to his disciples" (Mark 4:33-34). With this pattern, Jesus had full control over who understood what. Those who were seeking God heard the explanations of the parables, while those who were not sincere did not understand them.