

Sermon in Parables

Wenham, in "The Structure of Matthew XIII," *New Testament Studies* 25 (1979): 517-18, offers the following structural arrangement of the Parables of Matthew 13:

- A Sower -- Parable on those who hear the word of the kingdom. (vv. 3-9)
- B Disciple's question and Jesus' answer about the purpose of parables and the interpretation of the first parable (vv. 10-23)
- C Tares -- Parable on good and evil in the kingdom (vv. 24-30)
- D Mustard seed and leaven -- a pair of parallel kingdom parables (vv. 31-35)
- E Jesus leaves the crowd and interprets the tares for the disciples (vv. 36-43).
- D' Treasure and pearl -- a pair of parallel kingdom parables (vv. 44-46)
- C' Dragnet -- Parable on good and evil in the kingdom (vv. 47-50)
- B' Jesus' question and the disciple's answer about understanding parables (vv. 51-53)
- A' Scribe -- parable on those trained for the kingdom.

Concealing Purpose of Parables

I. Passages to Consider:

1. Isaiah 6:8-13
2. Matthew 13:10-17
3. John 3:17-19
4. John 12:36-43
5. Romans 11:5-14

II. Concealment is Based on:

1. God's response to man's sin
2. Man's refusal to listen to God
3. God's foreknowledge of man's rejection
4. Mutual rejection of men and God (e.g. Pharaoh)
5. Purging of the Remnant (Isa 6:11-13; Rom 11:5-8)
6. Opening the Kingdom for the Gentiles (Rom 11:9ff)